

Studying in Germany

A Guide for International Students

DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

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Introduction

Germany's higher education institutions enjoy an excellent reputation. Teaching and research provide key impulses for innovation and progress. Institutions have state-of-the-art equipment and labs to provide students with the very best conditions for successful studies.

Germany's higher education landscape is very diverse and varied. It offers thousands of degree programmes, more than 300 institutions, and lots of different degrees. This means you can choose a programme that matches your needs. You can take a research-oriented programme at a Universität (university) or a more practice-focused course at a Fachhochschule (university of applied sciences), or an artistic programme at one of the Kunst-, Film-, or Musikhochschulen (colleges of art, film or music). Many programmes and subjects are offered by all three types of institutions, which widens your choice even further. If you already hold a degree, you can also choose to enter a postgraduate or doctoral programme for advanced qualifications.

This brochure combines three earlier DAAD publications that provided information for foreigners separately on studying at German universities respectively Fachhochschulen respectively colleges of art, film and music. The information in this new single brochure now covers all three types of higher education institutions in Germany. The addresses and study opportunities in Germany have been moved from the print edition appendices to the enclosed CD-ROM with the kind support of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). The CD-ROM contains selected information from the HRK's Higher-Education-Compass on first-degree programmes and on graduate studies, plus the addresses and portraits of the higher education institutions and the addresses of the International Offices. All the information is in German and English; the brochure itself is also available in German.

The DAAD provides this comprehensive information to help you succeed with your studies at a German higher education institution.

Studying in Germany – the Higher Education System

Types of Higher Education Institutions

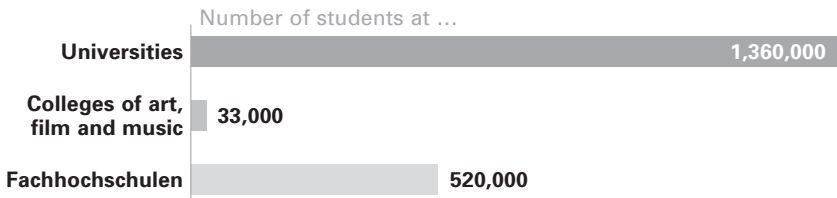
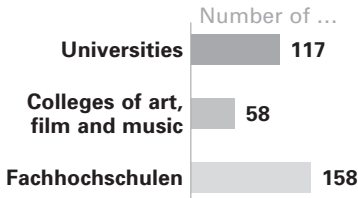
Students wishing to study in Germany can choose from more than 12,000 degree programmes and subjects offered at 333 state (public) and state-recognised higher education institutions. The German higher education system generally differentiates between three distinct types of institutions:

Universitäten: Universities and equivalent institutions focus strongly on research and teaching. Full universities offer courses in practically all subject areas. On the other hand, some unis and equivalent institutions choose to specialise in specific subject areas. Examples of such university-level institutions include the Technische Hochschule / Technische Universität (technical university / university of technology), the Medizinische Hochschule (medical school), the Sporthochschule (sport university), the Hochschule für Politik (university of politics), the Hochschule für Verwaltung (university of administrative sciences), or the Hochschulen für Wirtschaft / Wirtschaftshochschule (schools of business or management), and the Pädagogische Hochschule (university of education). Last but by no means least, the Protestant and Catholic churches also maintain a number of university-level higher education institutions. All these institutions have university status, even if they don't bear the name "university". This means that they follow Humboldt's principle of the research university that unites research and teaching. These institutions are entitled to confer doctorates.

Fachhochschulen (FH): Universities of applied sciences do not generally engage in basic research, which is more the preserve of the traditional universities. FHs were especially established to provide students with the opportunity to engage in more practical studies and applied research. The English translation of their name, "universities of applied sciences", reflects this focus. Fachhochschule programmes prepare students for specific professions. This concentrated study and the tightly-organised programmes generally enable students to graduate more quickly with an academic degree than their fellow students studying at traditional universities and equivalent institutions. Subjects offered by FHs cover fields like technology, business, IT, design, social fields, education, nursing and applied natural sciences. In addition, federal government and the states maintain a number of FHs that specifically train students for careers in the civil service. Fachhochschulen do not themselves award doctorates. However, holders of a good FH degree may be able to continue their postgraduate studies by enrolling in a doctoral programme at one of Germany's research universities. They may have to pass an aptitude test to qualify for admission.

Kunst-, Film- und Musikhochschulen: Colleges of art, film and music offer artistic-creative subjects – like fine art, industrial and fashion design, stage design, graphic art, instrumental music or singing. Special media-oriented colleges train directors, camera operators, authors, film-makers and other TV or media professionals. Students wishing to study at a college of art, film or music

State and state-recognised higher education institutions



Source: Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, as per: 28 February 2006

must demonstrate their particular artistic talent; they do this by passing an aptitude test. Students enjoy relatively many freedoms when organising their studies, and teachers provide intensive supervision and support. This approach aims to ensure that the students are able to develop their own personal art style. “College of art, film and music” is a generic term. While most of these institutions bear the name “Hochschule”, some have names that extend back to their historical roots, such as (Kunst)Akademie or Schule. In English, they use names like University of the Arts, School of Music, Academy of Film and Television, etc. Colleges of art, film or music can award doctorates to appropriately-qualified graduates who complete a programme of postgraduate studies.

Besides the state (public) higher education institutions, a number of **private**

universities also operate in Germany. These above all offer subjects from the fields of law, economics and business administration, and social sciences. Private universities often maintain close contacts with companies in order to give their graduates better career prospects in the professional world. However, this comes at a price: applicants have to pass a selection test and must be prepared to pay up to 20,000 euros per year in tuition fees. Just over 2% of all the students in Germany are currently registered at a private university. Private universities must obtain state recognition before they can offer academic degrees that are equivalent to those offered by public institutions. Practically all state-recognised German higher education institutions are listed in the database **www.hochschulkompass.de** maintained by the German Rectors’ Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz – HRK).

Academic Reforms and the Bologna Process

Germany's higher education institutions are passing through a period of extensive change. To raise the international competitiveness of European universities, the governments of 29 European countries met in the Italian city of Bologna in 1999, where they agreed to create a **single European Higher Education Area** by 2010. This involves introducing comparable programmes and degrees at institutions in the participating countries so that the range of studies offered throughout Europe is both transparent and compatible. The objectives are to increase **student mobility**, to facilitate the recognition of academic degrees abroad, and to encourage higher education institutions to compete for the "very best minds".

A total of 45 countries have meanwhile signed up to the Bologna Process. Its core element is based on **two cycles of academic study** that lead to degrees awarded on the basis of identical criteria throughout Europe: **Bachelor's programmes** (the first cycle) deliver the principles and fundamentals in a subject; **Master's programmes** (the second) enable students to deepen and extend their knowledge or to expand it across various disciplines.

Bachelor's and Master's will replace the conventional German degrees (Diplom, Magister). Additionally, the new structure focuses studies more strongly on the requirements of employers when designing programmes, i.e. by looking at what learning outcomes (competence) graduates have acquired and at how they are

prepared for the job market (employability). Those not seeking a career in academia or research will find that a Bachelor's degree gained after three or four years of study already provides a professional qualification.

Studies in these new degree programmes are divided into **modules**. Each module is made up of thematically-linked courses such as lectures, seminars and exercises and can last up to a maximum of two semesters. The conventional division into basic study stage and main study stage has been abandoned. Students who successfully complete a module score credit points based on the **European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)**, which measures the total student workload required for successful completion of the degree programme (see Box p.16).

In addition to the official degree documents (certificate and diploma), students who graduate successfully from their studies automatically receive a **Diploma Supplement**. It contains standardised information on the academic degree and on the learning outcomes associated with that degree. This aims to facilitate and improve the assessment of academic degrees, regardless of whether students continue their studies, for example in postgraduate or doctoral programmes, or whether they enter a professional career.

Further Information

► www.bmbf.de

Website of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research – BMBF – with comprehensive information on the Bologna Process

► www.bologna-bergen2005.no

Website of the Bologna follow-up conference held in Bergen, Norway, with information on the Bologna Process and on how each country is progressing with implementing the reforms

► www.hrk.de

Website of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) that also offers extensive information on the Bologna Process

International Degree Programmes (IDP)

Germany's higher education institutions have introduced international Bachelor's and Master's programmes to better meet the interests of foreign applicants. Special features of these programmes include that they are taught in a foreign language, in most cases English. Some programmes or individual courses may also be offered in other languages, like Spanish or French.

"International Degree Programmes in Germany" (IDP) stand out with their high academic level and well-structured studies. German language courses are offered parallel to or are integrated into the programme. They also provide particularly intensive support, guidance and supervision. Around half the participants in these programmes come from abroad.

The DAAD website offers further information on these 400 and more programmes in the so-called IDP Database.

Besides the international degree programmes that German higher education institutions offer, students can also choose from a large number of programmes run jointly by a German institution and a partner university abroad. Students who take one of these integrated degree programmes spend a certain number of semesters at the partner university. This student exchange is based on agreements signed by two or more universities. Credits earned at the partner university have been harmonised with the degree programme at the home institution and are fully recognised. This means that the stay at the partner university does not result in longer studies. Some of these degree programmes have become so integrated that the participants spend around half of their studies at the partner university and gain a degree from both institutions. A key prerequisite for admission to such a **double degree programme** is generally a good knowledge of the language of instruction or of the respective national language.

Further Information

► www.daad.de/idp

The DAAD's International Degree Programmes database

► www.qualifying-in-germany.de

Website maintained by GATE-Germany, a Consortium for International Higher Education Marketing jointly established by the DAAD and the HRK; database with study and research offerings

Universities and Equivalent Institutions

Universities are responsible for **promoting science and the humanities**. Research and teaching develop freely at these institutions. Studies generally last between three and five years and qualify students for various professions. But they also offer interested students opportunities for entering careers in academia. After graduating, young and early-stage researchers (generally, this means holders of a Master's or Diplom degree, in exceptions also a Bachelor's degree) enter a doctoral programme where they conduct independent research and, in many cases, also teach their first courses as well.

Besides the classical **full universities** that cover the whole spectrum of academic subjects, Germany also has so-called **equivalent institutions**. In contrast to the traditional universities, these specialise in specific subject areas. Typical examples are: technical universities / universities of technology, schools of medicine and universities of education, universities of politics, universities of administrative sciences, schools of management or business, and church-maintained colleges.

1.36 million students were registered at 117 universities and equivalent institutions in February 2006 (Figure p. 9).

Further Information

► **www.university-ranking.de**

DAAD website run in cooperation with the news magazine "DIE ZEIT" and the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE) to present the results of an extensive university ranking

► **www.higher-education-compass.de**

HRK website with information on study opportunities in Germany and a list of international cooperation agreements involving German higher education institutions

► **www-en.studienwahl.de**

Website published by the Federal Employment Agency and the Bund-Länder Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion. The site offers extensive information on study opportunities in Germany.

Admissions Requirements

School Qualifications and Aptitude Tests

Students who went to school in Germany and would like to study one or more subjects of their choice at a university or equivalent institution must hold a general higher education entrance qualification called the **allgemeine Hochschulreife**.

This is the **Abitur** and is the highest school leaving certificate in Germany. It entitles holders to study at any type of higher education institution. Pupils generally gain

their Abitur after 13 years of schooling, although some federal states also award it after 12 years. (For information on the admissions requirements for foreign students see p. 32).

In the case of admissions-restricted subjects (**Numerus clausus**), universities have recently increasingly begun to select students not only on the basis of their school leaving certificate (grade point average) but also require applicants to sit a **subject-specific aptitude test**. As from 2007, universities plan to introduce a general academic or scholastic aptitude test for international applicants. The test will include an additional special section for certain high-demand subjects, such as economics, business administration and engineering. In general, it is expected that Germany's universities will increasingly consider quality and aptitude-related criteria when selecting students in the future.

Internships and Foreign Language Skills

Not all specialist literature is published in German, of course. Consequently, foreign language skills have an important role to play in practically all academic subjects. Universities often expect students to speak **English** and **French**, and in some cases **Latin** or in specific subject areas even other "old" languages like **Ancient Greek**. Generally, students can study for these language certificates parallel to their normal courses. The faculty in question will offer appropriate courses.

Some degree programmes require students to complete **internships** either as part of their qualification for admission or as a compulsory programme element. Please enquire as soon as possible whether this also applies in your academic subject.

Please check the enclosed CD-ROM for the addresses of the Admissions Offices.

Organisation of Studies

Programme Structure

Traditional degree programmes (Magister, Diplom and Staatsexamen, see pp. 16–17) are divided into a **basic study stage** and a main study stage. The basic study stage (Grundstudium) delivers the basic content and methodological principles of a subject. Students are required to attend certain courses in which they must earn credits or gain attendance certificates (compulsory and optional courses). Students who pass the intermediate exam at the end of the basic study stage are entitled to continue their studies in the main study stage. Some degree programmes only require proof that the student has completed the basic study stage; an intermediate exam is not required in such cases.

The **main study stage** (Hauptstudium) allows students a lot more freedom of choice. They can set core study areas, can specialise and can acquire competencies required for research work. At the end of the main study stage, students take an extensive examination involving written and oral sections and subsequently graduate with a degree that also counts as a professional qualification.

Bachelor's and Master's programmes

are divided into modules, i. e. study units made up of thematically-related courses, like lectures, seminars and exercises. Each module involves a student workload of six to ten hours per week. Students receive credit points for each successfully-completed module. They need to score a specific number of credit points to complete the programme and so graduate (see Box p. 16).

Start and Length of Studies

The academic year is generally divided into two six-month periods called semesters. The **winter semester** normally begins in October, the **summer semester** in April. Courses usually run over around three months in the summer semester and four months in the winter semester. Students are expected to use the non-lecture period (recess) to go over the material from past semesters and to prepare for the coming ones. They also use this time to complete internships.

Each academic subject has its own set of study regulations (Studienordnung) that specify the **standard time to degree** (Regelstudienzeit) in which the programme should or must be completed. The time to degree includes practical semesters and semesters abroad plus the final examination phase. Many degree programmes allow **nine semesters** of study for graduation.

Types of Courses

Universities offer various kinds of courses that may be variously weighted, depending on the programme or university in question. The following provides a general overview.

Lectures (Vorlesungen) involve a university teacher speaking on a specific topic. Students can prepare or follow up these lectures by reading appropriate texts (with reading lists generally provided). Students receive credits for attending lectures. In some cases, a written exam is set at the end of the semester in which students are required to demonstrate their knowledge of the material taught in the lectures.

Seminars (Seminare) enable students to work on research topics under the guidance of university teachers. Presentations of seminar papers, discussions with fellow students and the lecturer plus subsequent review play a key role. Students gain a credit (Schein) by presenting a paper, an assignment or sitting a written examination. Some universities use seminars to extend and apply the content taught in the lectures. Since this kind of course depends on students playing an active part, they should ideally be held in small groups. However, there is such demand in some subjects that early registration is required.

A **tutorial** serves to deepen and extend the content taught in lectures and seminars. Tutorials are basic study stage courses headed by advanced students (tutors). In contrast to tutorials, consolidation courses headed by university teachers, lecturers, assistants or research assistants are also sometimes called **exercises** (Übungen).

Courses in which students exchange ideas and information in the final examination phase are often called a **colloquium** (Kolloquium). Colloquia give participants opportunities to present their current work and to discuss it with fellow students and others from the field in question.

Sometimes, **revision courses** (Repetitorien) enable students to repeat and go over course contents under the guidance of a university teacher as part of their preparations specifically for the final exam. Specialists in the private (commercial) market also offer such courses. Although these are not university courses, they can be useful for revising. Some programmes offer **excursions** (Exkursionen) that can last up to several weeks.

Many degree programmes require students to complete **internships** (Praktika) in private companies, municipal authorities or educational institutions. They are supervised by university teachers and aim to help students gain an insight into and find out about various career options. Theoretical and experimental training are closely interconnected in many natural sciences subjects. For example, students work in a **laboratory** (Labor) under the guidance and supervision of research staff and so learn how to analyse chemical substances, how to do syntheses, and how to use test and measurement equipment. Students who study medicine generally need to spend several months doing a **medical traineeship** (Famulatur) in a hospital, a doctor's surgery, or similar facilities. At the end of their studies, they complete a **practical year** (Praktisches Jahr) in a hospital.

Many universities have developed **online teaching modules** to complement the traditional forms of teaching. Students take part in the lectures and seminars via the Internet and contribute to these courses with their own work, input and comments. The courses can be recorded as streams and then accessed at any time. In the meantime, even whole **degree programmes** are being completed online with recognised academic degrees awarded to successful students.

Further Information

► www.studieren-im-netz.de

Online portal launched by the federal and state governments. The service provides an overview of web-based degree programmes and courses; German only

Academic Degrees

Germany's universities will probably continue to offer **two parallel degree structures** until 2010: on the one hand, these will be the traditional but expiring degree courses that lead to a Diplom or Magister Artium degree; on the other hand, they are already offering the new two-cycle system of Bachelor's and Master's degrees and will continue to extend the range of such programmes. Exceptions or differing arrangements can be expected in some subject areas.

You may also find that your academic subject can be completed with a choice of several degrees. When making your choice, please remember that you can gain a Bachelor's degree, i.e. an internationally-recognised academic degree with professional qualification, after just three to four years of study.

Bachelor's and Master's

The **Bachelor's degree** is usually the first degree with professional qualification to be gained in Britain, the United States, Australia and other countries. Under the Bologna Process, this degree has now also been introduced at Germany's universities. To gain a Bachelor's degree, you must earn between 180 and 240 credit points in the course of your studies. The exact number of credit points depends on the study regulations for the programme. Bachelor's programmes are designed with a student workload of around 40 study hours per week completed over 45 study weeks per year. This enables students to graduate within the specified standard time to degree (Regelstudienzeit).

Students who hold a Bachelor's degree and wish to continue to specialise can take up a **Master's** programme – either directly after completing their Bachelor's or after spending a few years working in their profession. The chosen degree programme must be closely related to the Bachelor's subject. The university can provide information on which Bachelor's degree qualifies the holder to enter a Master's programme.

Graduates holding a Bachelor's degree need to earn between 60 and 120 credit points in a Master's programme to gain a Master's degree. They have to produce a Master's thesis in which they demonstrate that they competently meet the academic and research requirements of their subject. A Master's degree is roughly comparable to a university Diplom degree or a Magister or Staatsexamen degree.

ECTS Credit Points

Performance in Bachelor's and Master's programmes is assessed in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). ECTS measures the student workload required to successfully complete the programme, i.e. to graduate, – including the workload for preparing and going over courses, for gaining course credits and for preparing exams. Students score credit points and their performance is graded. These factors are considered in the final grade point average.

One credit point – sometimes also called ECTS point – corresponds to a student workload of 30 hours. Degree programmes are generally designed to require students to earn 30 credit points per semester so that they can complete the programme in the standard time to degree.

Magister Artium

A Magister Artium degree is awarded for successful completion of a programme in subjects from the fields of arts and humanities, cultural studies or social sciences; courses leading to such degrees allow various subject combinations. The final examination is taken in one major and two minor subjects or alternatively in two majors. Students are free to choose their option. Besides having to produce a Magister thesis, students also sit written and oral exams. Those who graduate with a good grade can continue their studies in a postgraduate or doctoral programme (p. 17).

Diplom

A Diplom degree is awarded for successful completion of a course in subjects from the fields: natural sciences, engineering, economics and business administration, education, and sport. (Please note that a Diplom degree in education (Diplom-Pädagoge/Pädagogin) does not count as a teaching qualification). Students complete their degree course with a Diplom thesis and written or oral exams. Diplom degrees qualify holders for careers in business and industry. Like the Magister, the Diplom also entitles holders to enter a doctoral programme (see below).

Staatsexamen

Students of medicine, law, pharmacy or teaching generally graduate with a Staatsexamen degree. Staatsexamen courses prepare students for state-supervised professions, which is why they are examined by a **state examinations board** rather than by the usual university or faculty examinations board. Since these graduates often enter the civil service, the content of their studies and the examination itself are subject to statutory regulations. In most cases, the 1st Staatsexamen involves a theory-oriented examination comparable to other academic degrees. The 2nd Staatsexamen is awarded after a period of practical postgraduate professional training.

International students can also take the Staatsexamen. However, they should first check whether this degree is recognised in their home country and whether they can enter the profession in question there.

Promotion (Doctorate)

A **doctorate** is the highest academic degree. It is accepted as proof that the holder is capable of doing independent scientific research.

Doctorates enable holders to enter careers in research and academia, while such a degree is also seen as an important quality feature in careers outside universities and science. A doctorate involves production of a dissertation (an independent research paper) that contains new scientific findings plus oral defence of the dissertation in an oral examination called Rigorosum or Disputation in German, a kind of viva voce. After gaining the doctorate, holders can use the title “Dr.”. Depending on the subject area in question, doctorates can take between two and five years.

Anyone wishing to gain a doctorate needs to have completed a course of academic studies with **above-average grades**. In exceptions, holders of Bachelor’s degrees can also be admitted to a doctoral programme, if they can prove their aptitude in a special assessment process.

Candidates will also need to find an academic supervisor – called **Doktorvater** or **Doktormutter** – for their doctorate. Please remember that no university teacher is obliged to accept you as a doctoral candidate. This is why it is important that you inform yourself as soon as possible about which university best suits your area of research. The Higher-Education-Compass offered by the HRK offers a good overview (www.hochschulkompass.de).

Alternatively, you can do your doctorate in a **Research Training Group** (Graduiertenkolleg). These graduate schools are university facilities responsible for promoting young and early-stage researchers. They give doctoral candidates the opportunity to integrate their dissertation into a comprehensive and collaborative research programme. The programme is run by several researchers and often has an interdisciplinary focus. Degree courses serve to complement the doctoral student's individual research programmes and to specifically advance the process of academic and scientific exchange. The website of the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft – DFG) offers a list of the Research Training Groups that it currently funds (see “Further Information”).

Doctoral students can also choose from a whole range of programmes that are specifically designed for foreign (post) graduates. These offer intensive academic and non-academic supervision and support, in most cases an English supporting curriculum and often special funding programmes as well.

For example, the **International Postgraduate Programmes (IPP)** jointly offered by the DAAD and the DFG or the **International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS, www.mpg.de)** have a specific international profile. They give particularly qualified and talented German and foreign students the opportunity to prepare for their doctoral examination in centres of excellence located throughout Germany. These offer training at a high academic level and in close contact with the supervising university teachers.

Some federal states have established **Graduate Schools** which, in contrast to the Research Training Groups, are permanent facilities located at the respective universities. Graduate Schools largely deliver their teaching in English and offer highly-qualified young and early-stage researchers from home and abroad intensive individual supervision with their dissertation. These schools prepare students for positions in interdisciplinary and international science and research.

Further Information

► www.daad.de/deutschland/forschung/promotion

DAAD information on the various options available for gaining a doctorate in Germany plus experience reports and a list of recommended reading, which also contains further links

► www.daad.de/ipp

Information on the DAAD and DFG funded International Postgraduate Programmes

► www.dfg.de

DFG website with information on Research Training Groups; first click on “Research Funding”, then on “Coordinated Programmes”

Universities in Germany



Fachhochschulen (Universities of Applied Sciences)

Fachhochschulen (FHs) were founded by the federal states in the **late 1960s and early 1970s** in response to the advancing scientific-technological progress that set new standards for the qualification levels of future professionals. These universities of applied sciences, as they are officially called in English, aimed to fill the gap between academia and the working world by offering a sound academic training designed to meet the practical aspects of professional life.

Studies at a Fachhochschule combine academic standards with an **extensive practical focus**. Students do practical semesters **in companies, industry, public authorities or elsewhere** where they can apply and try out what they have learnt in their courses. Since these studies aim to prepare students as quickly as possible for career entry, the programmes are relatively tightly organised.

The 158 state and state-recognised Fachhochschulen are currently training **520,000 students**.

Range of subjects offered at Fachhochschulen

FHs offer fewer subjects than universities. They concentrate on the fields of business and management, engineering, design, social work and education, and nursing.

Further Information

► www.bmbf.de/pub/universities_of_applied_sciences_in_germany.pdf

"Die Fachhochschulen in Deutschland". Brochure published by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, available as a download

► www.fachhochschule.de

Privately-run information portal with a systematic overview of the degree programmes offered at Fachhochschulen in Germany; German only

► www-en.studienwahl.de

Website published by the Federal Employment Agency and the Bund-Länder Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion. The site offers extensive information on study opportunities in Germany.

Admissions Requirements

School Qualifications

As a rule, students wishing to study at a Fachhochschule (FH) must at least hold an FH entrance qualification (**Fachhochschulreife**) or a comparable school leaving certificate or qualification. Various federal states additionally offer other training measures aimed at enabling students to obtain this qualification.

Internships and Aptitude Tests

To qualify for admission to studies, students often have to complete a pre-study internship that relates in terms of content to the aspired degree programme. Students may be asked to spend up to one year on such an internship. Periods of vocational training are credited to pre-study internships. The Fachhochschulen have Internship Offices that help students find a place where they can gain such practical experience.

Students wishing to study design, film, photography or music at a Fachhochschule must be able to prove their particular artistic talent. Study applicants generally have to submit examples of their work (portfolio) or pass an aptitude test.

Organisation of Studies

Studies at a Fachhochschule are structured much like those at a university. This applies both to traditional degree courses and to Bachelor's and Master's programmes.

The standard time to degree at a Fachhochschule is set at eight semesters. Fachhochschulen achieve this by starting the semester one month earlier than a traditional university, which means the **winter semester begins in September** and the **summer semester in March**. So, FH students only have three to four months of recess (non-lecture period) per year.

Academic Degrees

Diplom "FH"

The academic degree traditionally awarded by Fachhochschulen is the Diplom "FH" that identifies it as a Fachhochschule Diplom rather than a university one. The finals differ in their procedure from one federal state to the next. However, they do usually require students to produce a Diplom thesis and to sit written and oral examinations. Students work on a concrete career-specific topic for their Diplom thesis and often produce it in cooperation with a company, for example, where they did an internship. Students who graduate with an outstanding Diplom degree may be able to enter a doctoral programme at a university.

Bachelor's and Master's

Fachhochschulen also offer Bachelor's and Master's programmes. The Bachelor's or Master's degree awarded is the same as that awarded by a university.

However, Fachhochschule studies do differ from university studies in terms of contentual focus. Studies at Fachhochschulen concentrate on applied sciences.

Preparation for a concrete and specific profession or career field plays a much greater role than at a university. However, these two types of higher education institutions – Fachhochschule and university – may become more alike in the future.

Graduates holding a Bachelor's degree from a Fachhochschule can be admitted to a Master's programme at a Fachhochschule or a university. FH and university Master's programmes are largely equivalent and generally open up the **same career prospects**.

Universities of Applied Sciences in Germany



Kunst-, Film- und Musikhochschulen (Colleges of Art, Film and Music)

Besides its universities and Fachhochschulen, German higher education also has a whole range of colleges of art, film and music to offer. The word “college” is used here as a generic term. While most of these institutions bear the name “Hochschule”, some have names that go back to their historical roots or traditions, such as (Kunst)Akademie or Schule. In English, they use names like University of the Arts, School of Music, Academy of Film and Television, etc.

Colleges of art, film or music are primarily responsible for developing the various arts and for preparing students for **careers in art and art education**. The 58 state (public) and state-recognised institutions currently train around **33,000 students**.

Students wishing to study at a college of art, film or music must have exceptional artistic talent. This criterion is more important than their school qualifications.

The particular value attached to artistic talent is also reflected in the study regulations. To ensure that students can fully develop their creative potential, these allow them a lot of individual freedom in how they organise their personal studies. This applies particularly in the fine arts.

Occasionally, colleges of art, film and music also offer research-oriented or FH degree programmes (for example, in media studies, musicology or aesthetics). Essentially, these programmes apply the same study conditions as in university studies.

Some **universities** and **Fachhochschulen** also offer art, design, film or music programmes. Admissions conditions and course contents are much the same as those offered at colleges of art, film or music, but may differ on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes, the proximity of other subject areas at the respective institutions makes it possible to give degree programmes a specific focus (e.g. an emphasis on theory, philosophy or history).

Further Information

► **www.hrk.de**

Website of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). Its website includes a search function for colleges of art, film and music

► **www-en.studienwahl.de**

Website published by the Federal Employment Agency and the Bund-Länder Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion. The site offers extensive information on study opportunities in Germany.

Admissions Requirements

School Qualifications

As a rule, students wishing to study at a college of art, film or music need to hold a general higher education entrance qualification called **allgemeine Hochschulreife**. Study applicants with outstanding artistic talent may also be admitted to studies without the required school leaving certificate. In this case, they have to pass an aptitude test. Please note, however, that this option is not available when studying for a teaching degree.

Internships and Aptitude Tests

The colleges have developed various ways to test the **artistic aptitude of their applicants** – such as practical exams or interviews with university teachers. In most cases, applicants must submit a portfolio of their own art or design work. Applicants wishing to study music are required to demonstrate their ability in an audition. Some other degree programmes expect students to spend **several months doing an internship**.

Organisation of Studies

Just like university and FH programmes, the courses usually offered at colleges of art, film and music are divided into a **basic study stage** and a **main study stage** (p. 13). Some institutions already test whether students are suitable for the course after just **two probationary semesters**.

Some of the teaching is delivered in the form of lectures, seminars and other kinds of courses. However, teaching in these artistic-creative fields attaches particular importance to **practical exercises** in which students get the opportunity and are expected to develop their musical skills, artistic ability and creative potential. The programme provides both individual teaching and discussion with university teachers and fellow students as a means of allowing each student to develop his or her own personal artistic style. To encourage exchange, studies are often completed as a class. Many degree programmes require students to do internships that last several months.

The **standard time to degree** in a traditional degree course is generally set at between 8 and 10 semesters. As at universities, the summer semester generally begins in April and the winter semester in October.

The **Bachelor's and Master's programmes** offered by colleges of art, film and music essentially have the same structure as similar programmes offered at universities and Fachhochschulen.

Academic Degrees

Diplom

Traditional studies at a college of art, film or music generally end with a Diplom degree. The elements required for graduation can be made up of a Diplom thesis, oral examinations, continuously assessed credits, and demonstration of artistic skills. Depending on the subject in question, students may be required to present their artwork or to perform music, drama or give similar presentations.

Institution-own Degrees

Some institutions end the studies informally, i. e. without conferring a formal degree or qualification; or perhaps they only award a Diplom degree at the express request of the student. Others may confer the “Akademiebrief”, a diploma of fine art, as the graduation certificate in subjects from that field.

Staatsexamen

Students wishing to become art or music teachers at state or state-recognised schools in Germany must graduate with a Staatsexamen (p. 17).

Meisterschüler /Konzertexamen

The highest qualification for artists in Germany is nomination as a Meisterschüler (Master Pupil) or qualification with a Konzertexamen. These distinctions can be awarded to outstanding students or graduates in the course of their academic training. Some institutions require graduates to complete a course of postgraduate studies (a Master Class) for this award, to which only particularly-qualified artists are admitted. Meisterschüler studies generally last one year. The Konzertexamen degree is the equivalent postgraduate qualification in the field of music.

Bachelor's and Master's

Bachelor's and Master's programmes are still quite rare at colleges of art, film and music, since the federal states have not yet issued any uniform guidelines on these. However, the process of converting most of the degree courses over to this new academic structure also has to be completed by 2010 at the latest (on performance assessment see p. 16).

The **Fine Arts** form an exception in this respect, because studies in these subjects differ greatly from conventional academic programmes. Some institutions will probably continue to offer their two-stage system of a first degree course (Diplom) plus postgraduate Meisterschüler studies.

Colleges of Art, Film and Music in Germany



Higher Education Institutions and their Facilities

The following provides information on the various facilities run by higher education institutions. Please note, however, that the facilities may differ in name and function, depending on which federal state they are located in.

Faculties

Universities are divided into faculties which are headed by an elected dean and contribute to drawing up the examination and study regulations. Each faculty is made up of various departments called “Institute” or “Seminare” in German. This is also where the respective departmental library is located.

The International Office (Akademisches Auslandsamt) – First Point of Contact for Students from Abroad

The International Office is one of the key contact points for foreign students. It is part of the university administration and is responsible for international academic relations and all related affairs, including student exchange, incoming and outgoing students, etc.

Please contact the International Office first if you have any general questions about degree programmes, admissions requirements, or about preparing your studies or financing them. The International Office staff will also give you advice on how to find a place to live plus support with bureaucratic formalities related to your stay (residence, work, etc.).

Preparation for studying abroad takes a lot of time. This is why you should contact the International Office at the institution of your choice at least 6 months (and better still 1 year) before you plan to start your studies there.

The addresses of all the International Offices in Germany can be found on the enclosed CD-ROM.

Student Representation at Institutional and Departmental Level

Various councils and societies represent student interests at higher education institutions. The Student Parliament (StuPa) is elected once a year by all the students at the institution in question. The Student Parliament then elects the representatives of the university’s Student Council, known as Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss (AStA) or StudentInnenrat (StuRa) or Unabhängiger Studierendenausschuss (USStA), depending on where you are studying.

Whatever it may be called at your institution, it is the highest representative body of the students. It represents the academic interests of students and attends to their social and cultural affairs. Students in the individual departments also elect departmental student societies called Fachschaften (like the Physics Society or History Society), which represent student interests at departmental level.

Rector, President and Senate – Executive Management and Administration of Higher Education Institutions

Higher education institutions are headed by a Rector (Rektor) or President (Präsident), several Deputy Rectors (Prorektoren) or Vice-Presidents (Vizepräsidenten), and the institution's chief administrative officer, the Registrar (Kanzler). The Academic Senate is responsible for managing overarching affairs in the field of research, teaching and studies. The Senate is made up of representatives of all university members, which means that students and non-academic staff also sit on it.

How to Study in Germany – A Guide for International Students

Admissions Requirements

Proof of Adequate School or Educational Qualifications

Higher Education Entrance Qualification

If you would like to study at a German higher education institution, you must present educational qualifications that are recognised as equivalent to a German higher education entrance qualification. Students applying to study an artistic subject may be admitted without a formal higher education entrance qualification if they can demonstrate that they have particular artistic talent. However, it is absolutely essential that you find out specifically what the requirements are in each degree programme at each university that you are thinking about applying for.

Often, a **school leaving certificate** that qualifies you for entry into higher education in your home country will be accepted as an equivalent qualification for admission to higher education in Germany. Under certain circumstances you may be required to present **further qualifications**, such as proof that you have successfully completed one or two years of academic study in your home country.

The Central Office for Foreign Education (Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen – ZaB) is based at the Standing

Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusministerkonferenz – KMK). It is responsible for issuing recommendations on the assessment of foreign educational certificates. Practically all German higher education institutions base their decisions on admitting foreign applicants on these recommendations; the higher education acts adopted by many federal states define these recommendations as the minimum requirements for admission to higher education. You can find out how your certificates will be assessed in Germany by going to the DAAD website, or for greater detail onto the website of the Central Office for Foreign Education Database: www.anabin.de.

Assessment Test (Feststellungsprüfung) and Preparatory Course (Studienkolleg)

If your educational qualifications are not sufficient for admission to studies, you may, under certain circumstances – and instead of having to prove that you have completed one or two academic years of study in your home country – be able to attend a Studienkolleg in Germany to pass the so-called **Feststellungsprüfung**. A pass in this test is considered as proof that you have the knowledge and qualifications required for studies in a specific subject area, i. e. natural sciences or engineering.

You take this test in several subjects of relevance and importance to the subject that you eventually want to study. For example, if you plan to study medicine, you will be tested in biology, chemistry and physics. The Feststellungsprüfung includes a language test. Its level meets the language proficiency requirements needed for admission to academic study in Germany.

Studienkollegs at universities and Fachhochschulen offer various courses for study applicants. The question of which **core course** applies to you depends on what subject you wish to study:

Core courses to prepare for the Feststellungsprüfung at a **university**:

- T course: for technical, mathematics and natural sciences programmes (except biological programmes)
- M course: for medical and biological programmes
- W course: for economics, business administration, and social sciences programmes
- G course: for arts and humanities, social studies, and artistic programmes; German studies
- S course: for language/linguistics oriented programmes (except German)

Core courses to prepare for the Feststellungsprüfung at a **Fachhochschule**:

- Course TI: for technical and engineering programmes
- Course WW: for economics and business programmes

- Course GD: for art and design oriented programmes
- Course SW: for social sciences programmes
- Course DÜ: for programmes leading to an interpreter/translator degree

Colleges of art, film and music do not operate their own Studienkollegs. Study applicants can attend art-oriented courses offered by Studienkollegs at nearby higher education institutions.

The core courses teach subjects which prepare you for the examination subjects that you later take in the Feststellungsprüfung, including an intensive German language course. However, basic language skills (comparable with Level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference) do represent a requirement for acceptance into such a course.

Example

Studienkolleg timetable for an applicant wishing to study mechanical engineering at a Fachhochschule

Subject	Hours per week
German	10
Mathematics	8
Physics	6
Technology	2
Technical drawing	4
Computer science	2

A core course at a Studienkolleg generally lasts **two semesters**. However, students who perform excellently can already be admitted to the Feststellungsprüfung after just one semester. Students study as a

class and receive around 30 hours of teaching per week. Participation in the courses is compulsory. Teaching is generally free of charge, although participants are required to pay the **semester fee** which all students in Germany must pay (p. 45).

Proof of German Language Proficiency

German is the language of instruction and study at German higher education institutions, with the exception of some programmes instructed in English. Besides having adequate educational qualifications, study applicants also need to have German language skills at a level that enables them to meet the language requirements needed for academic study. This means they must be able to follow and understand a lecture, review, work on and edit an academic text, and possibly also write such a text. They must also be able to converse appropriately in German on academic or related topics.

Foreign study applicants are advised to improve their German language skills as much as possible while they are still in their home country. This is possible in most countries. Germany's higher education institutions offer language courses, which may be free of charge, while others are meanwhile increasingly charging fees for such courses. Please note that the number of places on these courses is limited. Private language schools and institutes also offer German language courses that prepare students for their studies. All such courses charge fees. As a rule, study applicants must take a test to demon-

strate their German language proficiency. Beginners are urgently advised to attend a pre-study German course.

To study at a **Fachhochschule or university**, applicants who do not come from a German-speaking country and who have not completed a Studienkolleg with the **Feststellungsprüfung** must consequently pass one of the following two tests:

- **TestDaF** (Test "Deutsch als Fremdsprache") = German as a Foreign Language Test, or
- **DSH** (Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang ausländischer Studienbewerber) = German Language Test for the Admission of Foreign Study Applicants.

If you hold one of the following language certificates, however, you will generally be exempted from having to take these tests:

- Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz, 2. Stufe (DSD II),
- Zentrale Oberstufenprüfung des Goethe-Instituts, or
- Kleines or Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom des Goethe-Instituts.
- You will also be exempted if you gained your Abitur school leaving certificate at a recognised German school abroad.

Sometimes, higher education institutions dispense with the need for a language certificate. This may apply to exchange students, to applicants only wishing to spend one semester in Germany, to doctoral students, and also to students enrolled in degree programmes that are completely or largely held in English.

Occasionally, applicants do not have to present the language certificates for **admission** to a higher education institution at this stage. However, they must certainly be presented when **registering / matriculating** at the institution.

The requirements at **colleges of art, film and music** differ from one institution to the next. Sometimes, they also require applicants to hold a DSH or TestDaF certificate; in some cases, lower level language skills may also be accepted.

Because the rules and regulations differ so much, please do make sure that you inform yourself in good time by contacting the International Office or by going onto the website of your chosen institution.

German as a Foreign Language Test (Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache – TestDaF)

TestDaF is offered at **licensed test centres in Germany and in more than 80 other countries**. This standardised test is made up of written and oral sections that enable you to demonstrate that your German language skills are of a sufficient level for academic study. One of the advantages that TestDaF has over the DSH is that you can take the test in your home country. This means that you can compile all the papers and documents that you need for admission to higher education even before you leave for Germany.

The test results are graded at three levels (TDN 3, 4 and 5). Candidates who score the middle **TestDaF level (TDN 4)** in all test sections fulfil all the language requirements needed for admission to higher education. Whether a level TDN 3 score in one or more of the test sections is still sufficient for admission generally depends on the higher education institution's admissions policy. **So, please make sure that you contact the relevant International Office as soon as possible to get all the information you need.**

The test costs between 100 and 130 euros in most countries and is held six times a year. The registration deadline is always 4 weeks before the next test date.

The website **www.testdaf.de** lists all the test centres and test dates, and gives useful tips on how best to prepare for the test.

German Language Test for the Admission of Foreign Study Applicants (Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang – DSH)

The DSH test can generally only be taken in Germany. Many higher education institutions offer it: students usually sit the test three to four weeks before the semester starts. Although the DSH tests differ from one institution to the next, they are subject to general guidelines that apply for all higher education institutions in Germany and so are comparable. The DSH also involves a written section and an oral section to determine whether the candidates meet the language requirements for admission to higher education in Germany.

The test results are graded at three levels: DSH-1, DSH-2 and DSH-3. Students wishing to be admitted to higher education must pass it with at least a **DSH-2** level score. Depending on what the objective of your studies is, a DSH-1 score may also be accepted, although you may, in such cases, only be given conditional admission, meaning that you have to take German language courses parallel to your normal studies. You can again contact the International Office at your institution of choice to find out what language level it requires you to have.

Some higher education institutions do not charge for the DSH test, while others charge up to 130 euros. The institutions set the test dates themselves.

Most higher education institutions offer **language courses** that prepare students for the DSH. However, you do already need to have a certain level of German to be able to attend these courses. Demand for the courses is very great indeed, meaning that not all applicants can be admitted.

Further Information

► www.daad.de/zulassung

Website offering extensive information on admissions conditions; this is where you can find out whether your higher education entrance qualification entitles you to direct admission to a degree programme at a German higher education institution or whether you first have to pass an assessment test called the Feststellungsprüfung

► www.learn-german.net

Website with information on online learning methods, materials, course providers, plus a list of all recognised German language tests

► www.anabin.de

A database published by the KMK with information on the recognition of foreign educational certificates; to find out what recommendations apply to certificates from your home country, use the option “Land wählen”; German only

► www.goethe.de

Goethe Institute website with information on various language certificates

► www.studienkollegs.de

Website of the Studienkolleg directors – Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Direktoren der Studienkollegs – run in cooperation with the DAAD; German only

► www.testdaf.de

Website of the TestDaF Institute

► www.fadaf.de

Website of the German as a Foreign Language Unit (FADAF) with information on language tests and certificates, and a list of German course providers; German only

► www.deutsch-uni.com

An interactive learning platform with course material on the German language and aspects of cultural and everyday knowledge and life

Application and Registration

There are various ways to apply for a study place at a German higher education institution. Which of these options is best for you depends on which subject you choose and at which higher education institution you would like to study. Your **country of origin** may also play a role.

As far as admissions regulations are concerned, the following study applicants will be largely treated on the same basis as German applicants:

- Applicants from a contracting state to the **European Economic Area (EEA)**; the EEA covers the member states of the **European Union plus Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway**;
- **Bildungsinländer** (foreign applicants holding a German higher education entrance qualification, i. e. foreigners who gained their higher education entrance qualification in Germany or who hold a school leaving certificate awarded by a German school abroad).

European Union member states

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom

Applying to your chosen Higher Education Institution: Directly or via uni-assist

Often, study applicants from abroad must apply direct to the **International Office** at the higher education institution at which they would like to study (for addresses see enclosed CD-ROM). The application form can be obtained from the higher education institution or downloaded from the DAAD website.

Higher education institutions expect you to enclose certain documents and papers with your application. As a rule, this includes an officially-certified **copy of your school leaving certificate plus language certificates**. You will also be required to provide personal details in a curriculum vitae or résumé plus information on how you plan to finance your studies (proof of sufficient financial resources). Please note that the higher education institution will only process your admissions application once you have submitted all the required papers. The **application deadline** generally ends several months before the semester start date. Therefore, please ensure that you contact the International Office as soon as possible, so that you can obtain any documents that you may still need in good time, i. e. before the closing date.

Around 90 German higher education institutions only process international study applications once these have been formally **pre-checked by "uni-assist"** (a certification service for international student applications). The advantage for international study applicants lies in the fact that they only need to contact one central office to apply for a study place at several higher education institutions at once with just one set of application papers. The service provided by uni-assist promises to check the papers quickly and to contact the applicant without delay if any papers are missing. If all the papers have been submitted in full and the applicant meets the formal academic requirements, the application will be forwarded to the selected higher education institutions. Applicants from the European Economic Area (EEA) pay 25 euros for processing the first application to one higher education institution; Chinese applicants who passed the certification process at the Academic Evaluation Centre in Beijing (APS) pay 20 euros. All other applicants pay 50 euros. Each application for an additional institution costs 15 euros. For further information, please check the uni-assist website: **www.uni-assist.de**.

Institutions are increasingly selecting students on the basis of quality criteria. Selection factors differ from one federal state to the next and from institution to institution. Please contact the institution of your choice for information and details. A fixed proportion of study places are reserved for students from abroad who have to pass through a different admissions procedure to that required for German and equivalent status students (see above).

Applying through the Central University Admissions Service (ZVS)

So-called nationwide **admissions restrictions** (Numerus clausus) apply to subjects that have more applicants than places throughout Germany. Germans and equal status foreigners (i. e. EU foreigners and foreigners who gained their school leaving certificate in Germany or at a German school abroad) must initially send their application to the **Central University Admissions Service** (Zentralstelle für die Vergabe von Studienplätzen – ZVS, **www.zvs.de**). All other applicants should send their application direct to their chosen higher education institution or to uni-assist.

Registration / Matriculation (Immatrikulation)

As soon as you've received your **letter of admission** (Zulassungsbescheid) from the International Office or the ZVS, you can go and register at the specified institution. Please note that the registration deadlines can often be quite short and that you mostly have to go in person to your institution to register.

You have to take a number of specific papers and documents with you to register – for example, proof that you have **health insurance** and that you have paid the **semester fee** (p. 45). The International Office will tell you whether you have to bring any other papers along. Once you have done this, you will soon receive confirmation of your registration by post.

As a registered student you can attend courses at the institution, take exams and gain an academic degree. You have access to all the facilities at your institution – library, sports facilities, computer rooms – and can vote at elections to the student parliament.

Further Information

► www.daad.de/zulassung

Provides information on uni-assist and application forms

Entry and Residence Provisions

Visa and Residence Permit

In general, foreign students and study applicants from abroad need a **national visa** to enter Germany. For longer stays, they additionally need to obtain a **residence permit**.

Exceptions apply for students and study applicants from the following countries:

- Citizens of countries belonging to the **European Economic Area** (EEA, p. 37) only need to present an **identity card** or comparable proof of identity, such as a passport, for entry. After arriving, they must go to the registration authority (Meldebehörde) in their new place of residence to register their address. They then receive a **certificate confirming their right of residence** (Bescheinigung über das Aufenthaltsrecht). Under certain circumstances, they may also have to prove that they are able to maintain themselves (i. e. that they have enough money to cover their living expenses) and that they have health insurance cover.
- Students and applicants from Andorra, Australia, Canada, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, Monaco, New Zealand, San Marino, Switzerland and the United States of America are also **exempted from the visa requirement**. However, they do need to obtain a **residence permit** (Aufenthaltserlaubnis, p. 42) if their stay lasts longer than three months.
- Nationals from the following countries may enter Germany for three months without a visa: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Malaysia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Romania, Singapore, Uruguay, Vatican City, Venezuela. However, if you plan to stay in Germany for **more than three months**, then you must enter Germany with a **visa**. Anyone entering Germany without a visa must leave the country again after three months and return to their home country to apply for a visa.

Applicant Visa (Visum zur Studienbewerbung)

Applicants who have **not yet been admitted** to a higher education institution or a Studienkolleg can often already apply for an applicant visa to the German mission abroad (embassy, consulate) in their respective home country (the addresses of these missions can be found on the Federal Foreign Office website: **www.auswaertiges-amt.de**). The visa is valid for **three months** and is meant to give you the opportunity to collect any information you need about studying in Germany and to meet the requirements for admission. If the three months are not enough, the length of stay can be extended by a maximum of six months. If you are admitted to a course of studies or to a Studienkolleg in this time, you will be able to apply for a student **residence permit**.

There are no uniform provisions on which **papers and documents** you need to enclose with your visa application. They may be the same as for the student visa (see below; but since you do not yet have the letter of admission specified there, a higher education entrance qualification recognised in Germany will be accepted). Please contact the German mission in your country as soon as possible to find out which documents you need so that you do not waste any time unnecessarily.

Student Visa (Visum zu Studienzwecken)

If you have already been **admitted to a degree programme or a Studienkolleg**, you need a student visa. Generally you will have to submit the following papers along with your visa application:

- Letter of admission from the higher education institution; this can be substituted by confirmation from the institution that there is good reason to expect admission to be granted;
- Proof of health insurance cover (pp. 46–47);
- Proof of financial resources (p. 42);
- Proof of previous educational qualifications and academic credits;
- Proof of any German language skills you may have or of plans to take an intensive language course in Germany.

The student visa is generally issued for a period of **three months**. If your studies or project are going to last longer, you must contact the foreigners authority (Ausländerbehörde) at your German place of residence to apply for a residence permit.

Residence Permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis)

Generally, your studies, your project or your course at a Studienkolleg will last longer than three months. If you do not come from an EU country or from a country of equivalent status, you must go to the **foreigners authority** (Ausländerbehörde) in the town in which you are studying to apply for a residence permit. This is initially issued for **two years**, but can be extended each time by a further two years, subject to appropriate academic progress.

Your application for a residence permit must be supported by the **letter of admission** from your higher education institution, by proof of **health insurance cover**, and by proof that you have sufficient **financial resources** to maintain yourself (living expenses) while studying in Germany.

After graduating successfully in Germany, you can apply for a one-year extension to your **residence permit for the purpose of looking for a job**. This application must be accompanied by proof that you have enough finances to maintain yourself and that you are seriously endeavouring to find a job that corresponds with your qualifications. However, Germans and applicants of equal status (citizens from the EEA and Switzerland) have priority in the allocation of jobs. But once you have found such a position, you will get a residence permit that allows you to take up gainful employment in Germany.

A useful tip

If you want to study in Germany, never enter on a tourist visa, because you cannot subsequently convert this visa into a student or applicant visa.

Financial Requirements

Before starting your studies, you must prove that you are able to **finance yourself**. As a rule, you already need to prove that you have sufficient financial resources available to you when you apply for a **visa**; but you must certainly present this proof at the latest when you apply for a **residence permit**.

As a rule, you will be required to prove that you have at least **585 euros per month** (equal to 7,020 euros per year) available to you. Some federal states may set different sums. You can **prove that you have sufficient financial resources** (Finanzierungsnachweis) by presenting a scholarship award letter or an overview of your parents' income and assets (e. g. bank statements), by depositing a bank guarantee at a bank or by presenting other securities. The German mission abroad or the foreigners authority in Germany will give you details on exactly what the requirements are. Students from EU and equivalent status countries generally only need to make a **written statement** at the registration authority in which they confirm that they have sufficient financial resources at their disposal.

Medical Examination (Gesundheitsuntersuchung)

When you apply for an entry visa, you may be required to present a health certificate. The German mission abroad will provide you with information on this.

You may have to present a medical certificate when you want to extend your residence permit in Germany. However, the regulations on this differ from one federal state to the next. The foreigners authority at your place of study will inform you accordingly.

Working and Studying

Students from the **EEA** and **Switzerland** who wish to work in Germany do not need a work permit. They have the same status as German students in this respect. Special regulations apply for citizens from the **new EU countries** (except for Malta and Cyprus; see Box p. 37): they will be treated as students from third (non-EU countries) for a transitional period.

Students who do not come from the EEA or Switzerland are only allowed to work for a maximum of **90 full or 180 half days per year**. Any work exceeding these limits must be approved by the local Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) and foreigners authority (Ausländerbehörde). Jobs related to higher education can be taken without any time limits, but must be reported to the foreigners authority. The authority then decides if a job can be classified a student employment and so is not subject to the above ruling.

Please contact the foreigners authority at your place of study for exact information on the employment legislation provisions.

Further Information

► **www.daad.de/deutschland/download**

Information on the Statutory Frameworks applicable to the Pursuit of Gainful Employment by Foreign Students, Academics and Researchers; Information Sheet can be downloaded

► **www.daad.de/deutschland/download**

Information on the Statutory Frameworks applicable to Entry and Residence by Foreign Students, Academics and Researchers; Information Sheet can be downloaded

► **www.daad.de/deutschland**

For answers to important questions on entry and residence provisions

► **The Federal Employment Agency in your university town**

► **The foreigners authority in your university town**

► **www.auswaertiges-amt.de**

Look here for the address(es) of the German mission(s) in your home country

Costs, Fees, Sources of Funding and Scholarships

What Does it Cost to Study?

Cost of Living

Germany is not expensive compared to other European countries. Food and drink, accommodation, leisure activities, cultural events and so on all cost around the EU average. Compared with other countries like France, Britain and the Netherlands, prices are actually quite low.

It's difficult to say how much money a student generally needs per month in Germany. The amount will differ from one town to the next and will depend not least on the student's personal leisure activities. Students who live with their parents have around 770 euros per month available to them on average (as determined by the 17th Social Survey of the

Deutsches Studentenwerk (Association of German Student Services Organisations). But students who find inexpensive accommodation and lead an otherwise moderate life can also make do with less than 600 euros per month.

Most of the monthly budget goes on **rent**. Yet, rents differ greatly, with students paying between 180 and 325 euros per month for accommodation, depending on which university town they live in. Rents in major cities, like Hamburg, Munich or Frankfurt/Main, tend to be higher than average. If you want to save money, try subtenancy or lodging or looking for a room in a hall of residence or a shared flat (see Table; further information on looking for a place to live on pp. 50–52).

Cost of Living (approximate values as per 2006)

Cost of	Amount in euros
Accommodation in a hall of residence/dormitory	180.00
Room in a shared flat	230.00
Own flat	300.00
Refectory/student restaurant meal	1.50–2.00
Loaf of bread (1 kg) – various varieties	2.00–3.00
Milk (1 litre)	0.70
Daily paper (per month with student subscription)	12.00–18.00
100 km rail journey	15.00–23.00
Cinema	4.00–8.00

Students can make use of various **special rates**. State theatres, museums and opera houses offer cut-price or discount tickets, and in some cases theatres, cinemas, municipal libraries and other cultural facilities are free of charge. Daily papers and magazines are also cheaper with a student subscription. Holders of a “Semesterticket” (see below) can use buses, trams, suburban and local trains in and around their university town without having to pay any extra.

Semester Fee and Re-Registration Fee

All students in Germany pay a **Semester Fee** (Semesterbeitrag) for each semester of study; the amount can differ from one institution to the next:

- “Social contributions” are charged for using the social facilities maintained by the student services organisations (Studentenwerke), like refectories (the student restaurant), cafeterias, student halls of residence, and sports facilities;
- a financial contribution towards the student representations (for example, the student parliament);
- a payment for the “Semesterticket”: the semester ticket allows the holder to use local transport in and around the university town at no extra cost (not available at all higher education institutions).

Some federal states additionally charge an “administrative fee” or “re-registration fee”. Depending on the institution in question, this can amount to between 40 and 75 euros per semester.

Typical example

Semester Fee in the Summer Semester 2005 at the University of Bielefeld

Cost of	Amount in euros
Social contributions	47.75
Student representation	10.00
Semester ticket	69.86
Sum total	127.61

General Tuition Fees

Since January 2005, when the Federal Constitutional Court lifted the ban on tuition fees for first degree courses (undergraduate) and consecutive Master’s programmes, a growing number of federal states have been planning to introduce general tuition fees: Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia will be the first states to introduce these – as from the winter semester 2006/2007, followed in the summer semester 2007 by Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg and Hamburg, and then in the subsequent winter semester by Hessen and Saarland. Since the level of these fees will differ from one federal state to the next, and with developments in this field also progressing very quickly at the moment, it is advisable to contact the institution of your choice to find out exactly whether tuition fees are charged and, if so, how much. The following trends can be seen to be emerging at present:

- The ceiling for general tuition fees has been set almost everywhere at 500 euros; however, Hessen plans to allow higher education institutions to charge up to 1,500 euros from non-EU students enrolled in structured doctoral programmes or in consecutive Master's programmes.
- Some federal states (currently Bavaria and North Rhine-Westphalia) allow the higher education institutions themselves to set the level of their fees up to the general ceiling. Institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia are also at liberty to completely dispense with tuition fees.
- Doctoral candidates have generally been exempted from having to pay tuition fees (exception: structured doctoral programmes in Hessen, see above).

In addition, some higher education institutions require foreign study applicants to pay **application fees** (usually around 50 euros). Some institutions also plan to introduce so-called **student support fees** to pay for the special services offered to foreign students.

Some federal states require students who have clearly exceeded the **standard time to degree** in their subject or who take up a **second degree course** to pay fees of between 500 and 1,500 euros.

A regularly updated list of the fees charged in the various federal states can be found at: www.daad.de/gebuehren.

Health and Accident Insurance

Students who study in Germany must have **health insurance cover** and must pay contributions for nursing care insurance. Students who cannot prove that they have both these types of insurance cannot register/matriculate at a higher education institution.

There are two kinds of health insurance: statutory (public) health insurance (Gesetzliche Krankenversicherung – GKV) and private health insurance (Private Krankenversicherung – PKV). If you have not yet turned 30 years of age or have not yet spent more than 14 semesters in academic study (Fachsemester) you can be insured with a statutory health insurance carrier. Statutory health insurance carriers offer particularly favourable rates for students. The health insurance contribution, including nursing care insurance, currently amounts to around 55 euros per month. Doctoral students are not accepted by the statutory health insurance carriers, unless they have already been insured there (as a student) for at least one year.

Statutory health insurance carriers pay most of the treatment costs. However, insured persons are required to pay an excess (additional sum) for prescription drugs, in-patient treatment, and psychotherapy. If they need out-patient treatment, they pay a medical consultation fee of 10 euros per quarter direct to the doctor or dentist prior to treatment.

The statutory health insurance carriers credit any statutory qualifying periods acquired in EU/EAA countries on the basis of social security agreements and bilateral insurance agreements.

Students from EU/EEA countries with valid health insurance from their home country (European Health Card) should take out supplementary insurance in their home country, since the home insurance only covers medically necessary treatment costs (i. e. emergency treatment).

Students do not need to take out **accident insurance**. They are covered by law against accidents during their training at the higher education institution and on the way to and from the institution. Additional insurance may be a sensible option if you plan to take up competitive sport, for example.

Further Information

► **Ziel Deutschland / Destination Germany**

Booklet with extensive information on studying and living in Germany; please order from the DAAD

► **www.daad.de/deutschland**

For answers to important questions concerning costs

► **www.deutsche-sozialversicherung.de**

Website of the European Representation of the German Social Insurance System which explains the five pillars of the German social insurance system (illness/health, accident, unemployment, nursing care and old age)

► **www.internationale-studierende.de**

Website of the Deutsches Studentenwerk, the national association of German student services organisations, with information on student finances and on other general questions, such as residence and employment law, health insurance, etc.

► **www-en.studienwahl.de**

Information portal on study and career choices for students

► **www.studis-online.de/StudInfo/Gebuehren/tuition_fees.php**

Student portal, includes information on tuition fees, scholarships and grants, and other financial questions

How Can I Finance My Studies?

Grants and Scholarships

International students can apply to numerous organisations for grants or scholarships, such as the DAAD, political foundations, religious organisations, or business and industry organisations. Higher education institutions themselves also offer a certain number of scholarships or grants, such as for students at partner institutions who are in their study completion phase or are doing a doctorate at a graduate school.

To qualify for financial support, applicants must primarily demonstrate above-average **academic ability in the subject in question** and particular **political or social commitment**; an applicant's personal, social circumstances only play a secondary role.

The most extensive range of scholarship programmes for German and foreign students, (post)graduates and researchers is offered by the **DAAD**. The web-based scholarship database provides a convenient way of researching the various kinds of scholarships, including those offered by other funding organisations (additional contact points listed below under "Further Information").

Funding for a full course of studies from the first to the last semester is not generally possible with the DAAD or with most other organisations.

State Training Assistance

German students from low-income families receive state support based on the Federal Training Assistance Act (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz – **BAföG**). BAföG is paid half as a grant and half as an interest-free loan that only needs to be repaid in instalments once the holder has taken up employment. The German government also offers students in the advanced stages of their studies or training the opportunity to take up a **low-interest loan**.

Foreign students may also apply for BAföG payments or student loans (Bildungskredit). Yet, you generally have to meet a number of conditions. For example, you must have been **resident in Germany** before you started studying or you are a recognised refugee or have asylum status or you come from an EU member state or from Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway and were working in Germany before the start of your studies. Your work and academic subject must be related in terms of content. Other conditions may also apply.

Please contact the student services at your institution to find out whether BAföG training assistance or another kind of student loan (for example, as offered by state banks called Landesbanken) is available to you.

The government-owned **KfW Banking Group** will offer a **student loan of up to 650 euros per month** from the winter semester 2006/2007. Germans and EU foreigners who have been living in Germany for at least three years may apply.

Part-Time and Temporary Jobs

If you wish to study in Germany, you must be able to prove that you can maintain yourself, i. e. that you have enough money to live on (“Proof of financial resources” p. 42). This means that you are not essentially dependent on part-time or temporary work. However, if you would like to earn some extra cash, you can find **job offers** at the local Employment Agency, in local papers or on the noticeboards at uni or in cafés. However, you must not expect it to be easy to find a job. The number of jobs offered for students is quite small.

A part-time or temporary job has a number of advantages, like more money and new contacts. But it also bears a number of risks. Students who work and study must expect this to delay their graduation. Some federal states charge fees for long-term students, which can become very expensive.

Students who are not nationals of an EU or EEA member state can only work to a limited extent in Germany. You can find information on the employment legislation provisions on p. 43.

Further Information

► **DAAD-Scholarships for Foreign Academics and Students**

DAAD brochure with an overview of available scholarship and grant programmes

► **www.daad.de/offices**

DAAD Branch Offices see p. 66

► **www.funding-guide.de**

In addition to providing information on DAAD programmes, the scholarship database also lists funding opportunities for international students, graduates and postdocs offered by other selected organisations

► **Employment Agencies in your university town**

Job agency and advice

► **www.arbeitsagentur.de**

Website of the Federal Employment Agency with job exchanges and special information for students and graduates; German only

► **www.auswaertiges-amt.de**

Website of the Federal Foreign Office with the addresses of the German missions in your home country from which you can obtain information about scholarships and grants

► **www.bafoeg.bmbf.de**

Website of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research – BMBF – with information on BAföG training assistance; German only

► **www.bildungskredit.de**

Website of the Federal Administrative Office – Bundesverwaltungsamt – with information on student loans; German only

► **www.kfw-foerderbank.de**

Website of the KfW Banking group with information on student loans (see section on “Education” for more details)

How Best to Start Your Studies

Student Accommodation

Anyone who studies in Germany is personally responsible for finding a place to live. Only in exceptions, such as at private universities, will you be able to find a system like in other countries, where students live “on campus”.

Since only little inexpensive accommodation is available in many university towns, you should start searching for a flat or room **as soon as possible**. Please contact the **International Office** to find out what you have to be aware of when looking for a place to live and where vacant rooms or flats are advertised. Ask about the addresses of student halls of residence and dormitories as well as about other organisations that can help you in your “flat hunting”. You will often be able to find some initial tips on the International Office website.

The First Few Nights

If you have to travel to your future university town to look for a flat, you need to find some temporary accommodation. You can get some information on your options in the town by contacting the **International Office**.

In some university towns, **student services and various religious and faith groups** offer inexpensive overnight stays for students seeking a room or flat. In some cases, you can take a room in a private **guesthouse** for 15 euros per night, including breakfast. **Youth hostels (www.jugendherberge.de)** charge between 12 and 22 euros per night in a multi-bed, i.e. shared room. However, you need to be a member of the German Youth Hostel Organisation (Deutsches Jugendherbergswerk) or of another member organisation of the International Youth Hostel Federation (12 euros per year if you are no older than 26 years of age).

Student Halls of Residence and Dormitories (Studentenwohnheime)

The student services organisations, religious and faith groups, and private organisations run student halls of residence in practically all university towns. They generally offer reasonably-priced accommodation.

They also offer **flats** for one or two persons plus rooms in shared flats (**Wohngemeinschaften = WG**). Some rooms or flats are **furnished** and are equipped with inexpensive Internet access. Many of these “halls” have **leisure and recreation rooms** that all the residents share. **Washing machines** are often available for you to use at a charge.

Unfortunately, it is often difficult to find a place in a hall of residence. If you are interested in such an option, you should apply as soon as you get the letter of admission from your higher education institution. The sooner you do this, the greater your chances will be.

Special Student Services

Many student services (Studentenwerke) help international students living in their halls of residence to a smoother start in their studies by offering a number of special services. They provide tutors to help new students with everyday questions – like dealing with the authorities, problems with others living in hall, or questions on their living in hall, or questions on how best to organise leisure activities. The Studentenwerke also have a special Service Set that includes a room in hall plus the semester fee, arrangement of health insurance and the provision of cutlery, crockery and bedlinen; depending on which services are taken, the set costs between 205 and 375 euros per month. The Studentenwerke also operate a specific website for international students: www.internationale-studierende.de

Private Accommodation Market

Most students find a place to live on the private accommodation market. They either rent a **flat of their own**, a **room in a shared flat** or move in as a **subtenant or lodger** (Information on rent costs on p. 44). Several people live together in a WG and share the costs, like rent, standing charges for phone and Internet, and so on. A lodger or subtenant is somebody who rents a flat and then rents out part of that flat (i. e. a room) to another person.

You can start looking for a place to live whilst you are still at home. Some shared flat agencies and flat exchanges have specialised in student accommodation and offer this via the Internet, for example:

- ▶ www.mitwohonzentrale.de
- ▶ www.homecompany.de
- ▶ www.studenten-wg.de
- ▶ www.studenten-wohnung.de

If you don't succeed with this, you will have to travel to Germany and look for accommodation. You'll find most offers in the **daily papers** (and mostly in the Saturday edition), **city magazines** and **student or university mags**. Get your edition as early as possible, since good offers are often taken up quickly. Flats or rooms that become vacant are often advertised at the **institution** through notices posted outside the student council offices (AStA), at the cafeterias, or on the noticeboards known in German as "schwarze Bretter", although they are seldom black.

A Tip

There is no uniform format for setting rents. So when comparing prices, please pay attention to what exactly the euro sum includes: **Kaltmiete** means the base rent for the accommodation, while **Warmmiete** means base rent plus extra costs for water, road cleaning, waste disposal, etc.

Of course, you can also ask a professional estate agent to look for a flat for you. But remember that the agency fee can amount up to three monthly rent payments.

Planning Your Studies

Students wishing to study in Germany need to be able to work, i. e. study, independently. The study regulations allow students a lot of freedom in the organisation of their studies (particularly, students enrolled at universities). However, it also means that you need to show a lot of **personal initiative and self-discipline** if you wish to reach your academic goal. This is why it is important that you inform yourself about your studies and your degree programme as soon as possible.

Study Regulations and Course Catalogue

It is absolutely essential that you carefully read the **study** and **examination regulations** at the start of your studies. In some cases, they are also published on the Internet, but of course you can request them from your future higher education institution as well. Once a semester, each higher education institution publishes a course

catalogue (Vorlesungsverzeichnis) that lists the courses offered in all subjects. Often, individual faculties and departments will also bring out **annotated course catalogues** (kommentierte Vorlesungsverzeichnisse – KVV). Many institutions have meanwhile placed these on the Internet as well. The KVV contains more detailed information on seminars, courses and lectures as well as recommended reading lists to help you prepare for the semester.

Any changes made at short notice to the range of courses are published on the **noticeboard** (“schwarzes Brett”) in your department. This is also where you will find the lists into which you must enter your name if you want to attend certain courses.

Advice and Support

Introductory events are offered for all new students – German and foreign – at the start of each semester. They are organised by the **university’s student council** (AStA) and by the **departmental student societies** (Fachschaften) and provide important information on the institution itself and on the structure of your degree programme.

In addition, the **International Office** will offer an **orientation meeting** for new students from abroad. This is really important for your study planning, which is why you should not miss it under any circumstances. You will get the invitation to this meeting together with your letter of admission.

If you have any other special questions about your academic studies, please don't hesitate to contact the appropriate offices in your faculty, above all the **faculty administration** (Fakultätsverwaltung) and the **departmental student advice services** (Studienberatung der Fachschaft). If you have any general questions about studying – change of degree programme, how to organise your study workload, support for women – then the **Central Student Advice Service** (Zentrale Studienberatung – ZSB) is the place to ask.

Some institutions also run special **support, counselling and guidance programmes** (Betreuungsprogramme). German students help new students from abroad find their way around and settle in to the institution and new town. Make sure you use opportunities like these, if they are offered at your institution. A quick and uncomplicated solution can often be found to any problems there may be.

Student Life

Of course, you can do much more than just study at a higher education institution – in fact, they also offer really extensive range of leisure activities. The semester normally starts with **parties** organised by the departmental student societies or the university's student council. **Sports activities** at higher education institutions are very popular, ranging from football via sailing through to yoga; participation is largely free of charge. Those who would rather **engage in art** will find that the theatre groups, choirs, orchestras and university radio stations offer plenty of opportunities. Some departmental student societies

organise regular **roundtables** (“Stammtische”) where students meet in the same pub or bar each week for a “cocktail” of friends and shop talk.

Outside uni, you will find that many German towns and cities offer a very diverse and varied range of **cultural and leisure activities**. Information and dates can be found in the daily papers, the city magazines and student or uni mags. Sometimes, the International Offices also publish programmes of events of special interest to foreign students (daytrips, weekend outings, evening get-togethers, and so on)

Religious Communities and Faith Groups

Most higher education institutions have a **Protestant and Catholic student chaplaincy**. Larger institutions, in particular, may have other **faith groups** as well. Since these communities and groups are interested in exchange with other cultures and religions, they are also often open to members of other faiths and religions.

The student or university chaplaincies and faith groups offer religious services, send out invites to panel discussions, and organise various leisure activities. For information, just go to the respective website or check the course catalogue published by your institution. You can also sometimes find the contact addresses listed in the phone book under “Churches” (Kirchen).

Internships in Germany

Doing an internship in Germany is an interesting option if you would first like to use a shorter stay to get to know the country and its people, the working world and higher education institutions. Many young people use internships before, during and after their training to gain **practical career experience** in a company or organisation. Depending on what was agreed, an internship can last several months. Please note that interns generally receive no payment or only very little for this work.

Employers attach great importance to internships abroad, because your decision to gain such experience shows that you are flexible and willing to learn. If you then plan to study in Germany, you should find it relatively easy **to start your studies**: you've already settled in and the German language doesn't present any major difficulties anymore.

You can find internship places on the websites of many **organisations and companies** and on the job exchange of the **Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit)**. However, remember that demand for places is very great – your search could take a while. The greater your personal initiative and motivation are, the better will be your chances of getting an internship. You can also make use of **exchange, study and EU programmes** like “Leonardo da Vinci”; further information on this is

available from the DAAD and from the European and International Hotline of the Federal Employment Agency.

Further Information

► www.eu.daad.de

DAAD website on EU educational programmes

► **Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency)**

Europa- und Auslandshotline (European and International Hotline): Tel. 01805-22 20 23; 12 cents per minute

► www.aiesec.org

AIESEC website, an international student organisation with lots of information for students, including about an international internship programme

► www.arbeitsagentur.de

Federal Employment Agency website with an internship exchange service; first go to “Arbeits- und Ausbildungssuchende”, then click “Stellenangebote suchen”; at “Art der Nachfrage” and “Land” please select the appropriate entries; German only

► www.students-at-work.de

Advisory service offered for working students by the Federation of German Trade Unions – Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund; German only

► www.unicum.de/beruf/praktikum

Website offering internships and jobs for students plus lots of other information; German only

Appendix

Statistics: Foreign Students at German Higher Education Institutions

The following statistics aim to provide an overview of the origin and subject focuses of foreign students in Germany. For statistical purposes, the following divides foreign students into *Bildungsinländer* and *Bildungsausländer*:

- **Bildungsinländer** gained their higher education entrance qualification at a school in Germany or at a German school abroad.
- **Bildungsausländer** gained their higher education entrance qualification at a foreign school. In some cases, students additionally had to attend a *Studienkolleg* (preparatory course) to qualify for entry to higher education in Germany.

The figures come from the DAAD publication “Wissenschaft weltoffen 2006” and refer to academic year 2005. Further sources are the official higher education statistics compiled by the Federal Statistical Office and the Social Surveys of the Deutsches Studentenwerk.

**German and foreign students at German
higher education institutions**

	Number in 2005	Percentage change over 2004
German students	1,716,774	+3.2
Bildungsausländer	186,656	+3.5
Bildungsinländer	59,678	-9.4
Total	1,963,108	-2.7

**Bildungsausländer by type of higher education institution
(as a percentage)**

Universities, colleges of art, film and music	10.8 %
Fachhochschulen	6.3 %

**Bildungsausländer students:
regional origin**

	Number in 2005	Percentage of all Bildungsausländer students in Germany
Africa	20,475	11.0
America	10,330	5.5
Asia	58,913	31.6
Europe	96,108	51.5
Australia and Oceania	312	0.2
Stateless or unknown	518	0.3

**Bildungsausländer students:
the 10 key countries of origin**

	Number in 2005	Percentage change over 2004	Percentage of all Bildungsausländer students in Germany
China	25,987	+7.9	13.9
Poland	12,209	+5.4	6.5
Bulgaria	12,467	+7.6	6.7
Russian Federation	9,594	+7.7	5.1
Morocco	6,986	+2.9	3.7
Turkey	6,587	+1.7	3.5
Ukraine	6,532	+12.1	3.5
France	5,512	-1.5	3.0
Cameroon	5,245	+2.6	2.8
Austria	4,148	-3.3	2.2

Tips and Information

Where to Go with Your First Questions

Contact the following institutions in your home country for advice on studying in Germany:

- The **German missions abroad** (embassies, consulates). These provide information on degree programmes and study opportunities, on entry formalities and entry conditions.
- The **DAAD Regional Offices** (addresses pp. 66–68). These offer lots of information, including sources of funding and scholarships.
- The **DAAD Information Centres (ICs)** located in almost 50 countries around the world (p. 68).
- The **DAAD Lektors and lecturers** placed at universities abroad will be pleased to provide you with information and advice.
- The **Goethe Institutes** have 144 branches in 78 countries and perform language and cultural work for Germany. If no DAAD-placed Lektors or lecturers are working in the town in question, the local Goethe Institute will also provide information and advice normally given by these.
- **Germany's universities.** The International Offices or other relevant offices at universities in Germany will respond to your inquiry by sending you all the material you need, such as information on study opportunities and degree programmes, on admissions requirements, and on any other conditions you have to meet. The addresses are contained on the enclosed CD-ROM.
- **DAAD Head Office** in Bonn. Staff at head office will be pleased to advise you on questions relating to a study stay in Germany (address p. 66).
- The German missions abroad, the DAAD Lektors and lecturers, and the Goethe Institute will also tell you which **official agencies or authorities in your country** are responsible for international academic contacts and where you can receive further information on sources of funding and scholarships.

Recommended Reading

The DAAD publishes **information material** on studying in Germany. The following lists some publications that you can request from the DAAD and its Regional Offices or Information Centres. You can also obtain information from the Goethe Institutes and the German missions abroad.

► **Studieren und Forschen in Deutschland. Kommentierte Weblinks / Study and Research in Germany. Annotated Weblinks**

available in German and English

► **Ziel Deutschland / Destination Germany**

bilingual edition: German-English

► **DAAD-Scholarships for Foreign Academics and Students**

bilingual edition: German-English

► **International Degree Programmes in Germany**

English only

► **Summer Schools in Germany**

bilingual edition: German-English

► **Degree Courses at Institutions of Higher Education in Germany**

English only

► **Deutsch als Fremdsprache. Die deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang. Zielsetzung, Verfahren, Beispiele**

German only

► **Information on TestDaF**

Flyer; available in German and English

Further literature sold by good book shops (not available from the DAAD):

► **Studien- und Berufswahl**

ed.: Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung [BLK] und Bundesagentur für Arbeit; German only

► **Universitäten in Deutschland / Universities in Germany**

eds.: Christian Bode, Werner Becker and Rainer Klofat; bilingual edition: German-English

► **Fachhochschulen in Deutschland / Fachhochschule Institutions in Germany**

eds.: Christian Bode, Werner Becker, Claudius Habbich and Rainer Klofat; bilingual edition: German-English

► **Kunst- und Musikhochschulen in Deutschland / Colleges of Art and Music**

eds.: Christian Bode, Werner Becker, Claudius Habbich; bilingual edition: German-English

► **Wissenschaft weltweit 2006: Facts and Figures on the International Nature of Studies and Research in Germany**

ed.: DAAD; bilingual edition: German-English

Evaluation of Foreign Higher Education Entrance Qualifications

The most important prerequisite for admission to studies at a German higher education institution is that you hold a secondary school leaving certificate or qualification that you gained personally and that entitles you to study in your home country. If your home country additionally requires you to pass a university entrance exam, you must also prove that you have passed such an exam before you can enter a course of academic studies at a higher education institution in Germany.

Your second step is to check carefully how the higher education entrance qualification (known in Germany as the Hochschulzugangsberechtigung or HZB) you gained in your home country compares with the German school leaving qualification called “Abitur”. This differs and depends on your country of origin and on your school leaving certificate. Essentially, there are three evaluation levels:

- your HZB qualifies you for **direct admission to higher education**, i. e. you can choose to study practically any subject;
- your HZB only qualifies you for **subject-specific admission to higher education**, i. e. within a specific subject group, for example in the natural sciences, which means you can choose to study physics, chemistry, etc.;

- your HZB does not qualify you for direct admission to higher education, which means you must first attend a Studienkolleg (**preparatory course**) and pass the **Feststellungsprüfung (assessment test)** see pp. 32–34 before you can be admitted to higher education; alternatively and under certain circumstances, proof of having successfully completed one or two years of academic (university) study in your home country may also be accepted as a qualification.

To find out which category applies to your higher education entrance qualification, please go to www.anabin.de. Click on “Land wählen” to see a map where you can choose your country. You then get a list of countries and can click on yours. Finally, click on “Zeugnisse” to find the information. The DAAD offers general initial information on how certificates from all countries of origin are evaluated on its website: www.daad.de/zulassung. Please note, however, that this does not include all special cases or agreements.

The admissions decision is generally made by the higher education institution to which you are applying. The institution is autonomous in its decision. So it is always advisable to contact the International Office first to obtain information about the specific requirements at the chosen institution.

German Schools Abroad

The German Government allocates funds to the Federal Foreign Office to support 117 German schools abroad (Auslandsschulen). In addition to these, another 370 schools abroad receive special support in the field of German language teaching. In most cases, students who complete the secondary stage at a German school abroad can gain the Abitur qualification. In many cases, schools offer a national school leaving certificate or alternatively an International Baccalaureate parallel to this.

Students who leave these schools with an Abitur certificate (general higher education entrance qualification) are treated on the same basis as German applicants as far as admission to higher education is concerned. Students who gain a national school leaving certificate, but have also passed the Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz (known as DSD II), are exempted from the requirement to provide proof of their German language proficiency.

Further Information

► www.auslandsschulwesen.de

German only

DAAD

Goals, Roles and Programmes of the DAAD

The DAAD is a joint organisation of Germany's higher education institutions and is responsible for promoting international academic relations, primarily through the exchange of students, academics and researchers. Its programmes are generally open to all disciplines and all countries and equally benefit foreigners and Germans.

The DAAD also supports the international activities of Germany's higher education institutions by providing a number of services. These include information and publication programmes, marketing, consultancy, support and guidance services, plus an increasing number of institutional programmes that serve to raise the international profile and worldwide appeal of Germany's higher education institutions. And, finally, the DAAD advises the German government on the formation of its policies in the fields of international cultural relations and academic relations at European and international level, as well as on questions of national higher education and development cooperation. The predecessor to the German Academic Exchange Service, the "Austauschdienst der Hochschulen", was first established in 1925 in response to an initiative in academic circles. It was dissolved in 1945 and newly established

in 1950 as a registered association under private law. The DAAD's full members are – on application – the higher education institutions represented in the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz – HRK) and the student bodies of these institutions. At the end of 2005, DAAD membership numbered 232 higher education institutions and 127 student bodies, with all the various types of higher education institutions represented.

Five strategic objectives give the various DAAD programmes their long-term orientation:

- 1. Scholarships for foreigners:** To promote studies and research by outstanding young foreign students and academics at German universities and research institutes.
- 2. Scholarships for Germans:** To promote young German professionals in their studies and research abroad (including ERASMUS).
- 3. Internationalising the higher education institutions:** To raise the appeal of Germany's higher education institutions (including marketing and funding to raise the international dimension of German higher education).

4. Supporting German studies and the

German language abroad: To promote German language and culture and encourage a knowledge of and interest in Germany as part of the process of global cultural exchange.

5. Educational cooperation with devel-

oping countries: To promote higher education development in developing and reforming countries as means of supporting their economic and democratic reform processes.

The DAAD also performs a number of special responsibilities that aim to encourage and fund Europe-wide mobility by students, academics and professionals. The DAAD is the so-called “national agency” for the EU programme **SOCRATES** (general education). In this capacity, it awards scholarship funds to participating German students and advises the higher education institutions on the programme. The DAAD also supports the two programmes **LEONARDO DA VINCI** (vocational education) and **TEMPUS** (cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe) by operating a national information and advice service.

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Information Centres (ICs)

The DAAD maintains Information Centres (ICs) all around the world. They currently number 48 and can be found in the following cities:

Africa

Accra, Johannesburg, Khartoum

Asia

Abu Dhabi, Almaty, Baku, Bangkok, Bishkek, Chennai, Damascus, Dushanbe, East Jerusalem, Guangzhou, Ho Chi Minh City, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Mumbai, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Taipei, Tashkent, Tbilisi, Tehran, Yerevan

Europe

Ankara, Athens, Barcelona, Budapest, Bucharest, Istanbul, Kiev, Minsk, Novosibirsk, Prague, Riga, Rome, St. Petersburg

North and Central America

Havana, San Francisco, San José, Toronto

Australia

Sydney

South America

Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Santiago de Chile, São Paulo

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Please note: a continually updated list of the addresses is available on the DAAD website from: www.daad.de/offices

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