



thinkING.

# Start your studies in Germany!

Information sheet for EU citizens

## Requirements

### UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE QUALIFICATION

In order to study in Germany, you need a higher education entrance qualification. Typically, the school-leaving certificate, i.e. the Abitur, the entrance qualification for universities of applied sciences or a similar school-leaving certificate from the home country is sufficient. The recognition process varies depending on the degree programme and university. It is therefore important to obtain information at an early stage to ensure a smooth start to your studies. You can check if your school-leaving certificate qualifies you to study at a German university [on the information portal anabin](#).

### VISA

You do not need to apply for a visa or residence permit. However, as your studies will last longer than three months and you are required to register in Germany, you must register your place of residence with the residents' registration office. They will also check whether you have health insurance and proof of financial means. The Residents' Registration Office will issue a certificate of right of residence directly.

### LANGUAGE CERTIFICATE

In order to study at a German university, you must prove your German language proficiency. This also applies to a dual study programme in cooperation with a company. Your language skills should be at level C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). There are various examinations that can be taken either in your home country or in Germany:

#### TestDaF

The Test of German as a Foreign Language, „TestDaF - Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache“, is accepted by all German universities and can be taken in your home country. The test is offered in special centres in 100 countries. You can register for the upcoming dates via the websites.

#### DSH

The German Language Examination for University Admission of Foreign Applicants, „DSH - Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang ausländischer Studienbewerber“, is taken directly at the German university at which you wish to study. Information on dates can therefore be found on the respective university website.

In addition to these two tests, there are other ways to prove sufficient German language skills:

- Abitur from a German-speaking school
- Goethe Certificate C2: Large German Language Diploma taken at a Goethe-Institut
- German Language Diploma (Level II) of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs
- Passed telc German C1 university exam

### **Attendance at a Studienkolleg (Preparatory college)**

If you attend a Studienkolleg before studying at a German university you must already have some German language skills. The Studienkolleg helps

strengthen both your subject knowledge and language proficiency. The assessment test, which is taken after one year, is therefore also recognised by the universities as sufficient proof of language skills. All information on the preparatory courses can be found [here](#).

### **Exception: International degree programmes**

Many German universities also offer international degree programmes that are taught in English. In most of these programmes, no proof of German language skills is required. However, exceptions confirm the rules: You should therefore always take a close look at the admission requirements for the degree programme of your choice.

## **Admission to a degree programme**

### **SCHOOL-LEAVING CERTIFICATE**

In Germany, the Abitur (general or technical) or an equivalent recognized qualification, such as vocational training plus further education, entitles you to study at a university. In most cases, the school-leaving qualification that also enables you to study at university in your home country qualifies you to study in Germany. High School Diploma, Matura, A-Levels and Bachillerato, for example, are assessed in the same way as the German Abitur. You can use [on the information portal anabin](#) to check whether your school-leaving certificate really entitles you to study at a German university.

Students who have completed their Abitur at a German school abroad have the same university entrance qualification as German citizens.

### **OTHER EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Depending on the university and admission requirements, there are opportunities to study in Germany without an Abitur, particularly in engineering subjects.

### **Studying without A-levels**

Especially in engineering subjects, it is also possible to study without an Abitur. For example, if you have already completed a technical apprenticeship and can demonstrate professional experience in the relevant field. In this case, however, you can only study at a university of applied sciences (Fachhochschule/ Hochschule für angewandte Wissenschaften). Universities of applied sciences usually have more practical relevance than universities. You should enquire directly at the respective university of applied sciences as to whether your training and professional experience are sufficient for a degree programme.

### **Foreign degrees**

If you have already obtained a degree in your home country and wish to pursue further studies, for example a Master's degree, in Germany, you can have your degree recognised. Thanks to the Bologna Process, the recognition of Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes is usually not a problem. The International Office at your chosen university is the best point of contact for all matters relating to the recognition of academic achievements

## **APPLICATION DEADLINES**

Most degree programmes in STEM subjects in Germany start in the winter semester. For degree programmes with restricted admission, the deadline is 15 July for the winter semester and 15 January for the summer semester.

For non-restricted degree programmes, you can usually enrol directly at the university. The deadlines for this are 15 May for the winter semester and 15 September for the summer semester. However, it is important to ensure that you fulfil all the necessary

requirements. For some engineering degree programmes, for example, internships must be completed before the start of the course.

### **Application deadlines for dual study programmes**

Most dual study programmes and apprenticeships in companies start every year between 1 July and 1 October. Companies also advertise vacancies for the following year during this period. If you wish to complete a dual study programme in Germany, you must therefore apply to the companies a year in advance.

## **Living in Germany**

### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

If you want to study and live in Germany, you need health insurance. Proof of this must be presented when enrolling at the university and at the residents' registration office. Most statutory (and some private) health insurance policies from member states of the European Union and the European Economic Area are recognised in Germany. Many people have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The insurance from the home country must be recognised by a German health insurance company. Prospective students then receive a certificate that exempts them from compulsory insurance in the German statutory health insurance system.

However, this does not apply to students who want to do an internship or a part-time job alongside their studies. In this case, German health insurance must be taken out.

### **Dual students**

Dual students are employed by the company in all four dual study models and are subject to compulsory insurance as employees. This means that social security contributions must be paid, including health insurance. These contributions

are paid by the employer directly via the salary. German health insurance is usually required for this. Applicants should clarify the issue of health insurance directly with their new employer

### **WORK PERMIT**

International students from the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are treated the same as German students when it comes to part-time jobs. They have free access to the labour market. Most students do not work more than 20 hours per week. If you work more than 20 hours per week, your studies are no longer considered your main occupation and you must pay insurance contributions.

Students may also work full-time during the lecture-free period. However, a limit also applies here to avoid paying any further insurance contributions: The job must be limited in time to a maximum of 70 days per year.

This does not apply to dual students. As they are permanently employed by a company for the duration of the dual study programme, they are liable for all social security contributions.



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