



Studying in Germany: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

A handout from the
German **International** School New York
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Choice of field of study

How do I find the right course of study for me?

In order to find a suitable course of study, the Study Interest Test (SIT) on www.hochschulkompass.de or studiengaenge.zeit.de/sit is recommended. Furthermore, you can find out about various courses of study at studienwahl.de (the official study guide of Germany, published by the Foundation for University Admission and the Federal Employment Agency).

On studiengaenge.zeit.de/ranking you will also find an overview of the subjects included in the CHE University Ranking. Subject portraits explain the structure, focus and future perspectives of the program.

Some universities also offer information platforms for prospective students with compact presentations of the course content.

Do I have to commit to a course of study before starting my studies?

Yes, at German universities you have to decide on a course of study at the time of application. Some universities also offer an orientation course if you are interested in more than one subject and would like to try out whether a subject is right for you.

Is it possible to change my field of study during my studies?

Yes, it is possible to apply for a change of course of study or subject. Certain deadlines must be met. Depending on whether the desired subject is admission-restricted, the change requires prior application and admission.

Choice of university/college

Where can I find out about the current ranking of German universities/colleges?

Worldwide: e.g. THE World University **Ranking**, **QS World University Rankings**

Germany: **CHE Ranking** (General, Subject-Specific & All-Around List)

Choosing the best university is not only about the ranking, but also about what suits you and your expectations. When choosing a university, you should consider various aspects, e.g. the offer and size of the university, but also the size and cost of living of the city.

What types of universities are there?

In Germany, there are state and state-recognized universities, which are usually divided into universities, universities of applied sciences and art and music colleges. The majority of universities are financed by the state and are therefore state-funded. However, there are also universities that are run by the Protestant or Catholic Church and private universities that are state-recognized.

You can also complete a dual study program or a practical or training-integrated course of study (combination of studies and company practice), either at dual universities or at universities of applied sciences.

Read more:

studienwahl.de/studieninfos

hochschulkompass.de/hochschulen/hochschullandschaft.html

The application process

What steps should I have already taken before starting the actual application process?

In the 10th/11th and at the beginning of the 12th grade, you should familiarize yourself with the German higher education system and the different offers. The page hochschulkompass.de or studienwahl.de is particularly suitable for this purpose to get an idea of the courses of study and the different types of universities. See also the ***study interest test*** (already mentioned above in the text under Choice of subject).

Then you should inquire in good time about the application, admission criteria and documents to be submitted.

When are the application deadlines for German universities?

At German universities, you usually apply **in the same year of the start of your studies**. The deadline for applying for the winter semester (lecture periods approx. September/October to February) is usually 15 July, although it is best to inquire about the documents to be submitted well before the deadline and, if necessary, take into account pre-registration deadlines and dates for the aptitude tests.

The application deadline for the summer semester (lecture periods approx. March/April to July) is usually 15 January. Not all degree programs allow students to start their studies in the summer semester.

These dates may vary – so please always inform your selected universities early enough.

How does my German International Abitur affect the application? Do I have to take anything into account?

With the German International Abitur, you have direct access to German universities. Your school-leaving certificate is equally recognized in Germany. Therefore, only the general admission requirements of the university or your degree program apply. So you apply in exactly the same way as high school graduates in Germany (= “Bildungsinländer” status).

(A ***high school diploma***, on the other hand, is only sufficient to obtain a university entrance qualification under very specific conditions, subject combination and grade point average, more on this at: <https://anabin.kmk.org/anabin.html>).

How do I find out about the application procedures at the different universities?

In order to find out the exact details of the individual universities, it is best to inform yourself on the websites of the universities. Procedures of admission vary from college to college. For example, there are not the same restrictions everywhere (numerus clausus).

Once you have found a course of study, you should find out whether you have to go through an application process – and if so, which one.

Some courses of study are **restricted locally or nationwide**. However, there are also **admission-free** degree programs.

Some admission-free degree programs at certain universities require a prior aptitude test, an online self-test or an application/pre-registration with the responsible faculty. Participation is obligatory and timely. The evaluation criteria are very different. Therefore, you should inquire at the university of your choice whether, by when and how the application documents are to be submitted. Information can be found on the websites of the universities.

Furthermore, there are study places in the nationwide and locally admission-restricted degree programs.

If it is a nationwide admission-restricted course of study at universities (medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, pharmacy), then ***www.hochschulstart.de***, the portal of the Foundation for University Admissions, is responsible for applying for and allocating study places.

If there is a local admission restriction for the subject of your choice, you must apply by the deadline at the relevant university and/or via the Internet portal of the Foundation for University Admissions. For detailed information, please refer to the websites of the universities.

More information can be found at:

studienwahl.de/bewerbung/auswahlverfahren/oertlich

Can I apply for a specific course of study at several universities?

Yes, you can apply for a specific course of study at several universities at the same time.

In some cases, it is possible to apply for different courses of study at a university. In this case of multiple applications, however, there may be different restrictions on the maximum number of applications depending on the university. Therefore, inquire in advance at the university of your choice whether there is an upper limit on the number of application applications.

This information comes from: studienwahl.de/bewerbung/auswahlverfahren

Via the dialogue-oriented service procedure (DoSV), applicants may send a maximum of twelve applications per application period.

"There is only one restriction on the nationwide allocation of study places (for medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and pharmacy) and on the locally restricted and admission-free degree programmes participating in the DoSV: you can submit a maximum of twelve wishes/applications here. A special feature is that all applications for a nationwide admission-restricted course of study are recorded as a single request in the logic of the DoSV and mapped accordingly. If, for example, you apply for a winter semester for all four nationwide admission-restricted degree programs, you will always have eight study wishes left in the DoSV (regardless of the number of locations mentioned in each case). (Citation on May 19, 2023 taken [here](#)).

How are the study places allocated in the subjects with nationwide admission restrictions?

Places for the courses of study in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and pharmacy are allocated centrally throughout Germany by the Foundation for University Admission (SfH). This means that the application process for these subjects is always carried out via **hochschulstart.de** – no matter which university you want to study at. To apply, you must first register on the website, then enter your details in an area specially created for these degree programs and then send your documents by post to the SfH. You can find out exactly how to do this along with other important information on **hochschulstart.de**. Please always look at the pages of the universities of your choice.

Where in Germany are there many locally restricted subjects (NC subjects) and where are they not?

The Numerus Clausus Check of the Centre for Higher Education Development (www.che.de) provides up-to-date information on this: www.che.de/projekt/check-numerus-clausus/

Information on the housing situation

How do I apply for a place in a student dormitory?

The places in the dormitories of the Studentenwerke are very popular - and therefore always quickly assigned. It is recommended to contact the student office of the university location in good time and before the start of the semester. You apply directly to the local student union. General information: www.studentenwerke.de/de/content/wohnen

What are the options outside of student residences?

Since students are not guaranteed a place in a dormitory, you should be prepared for waiting times and look for a room or apartment on your own. Internet portals such as **wg-gesucht.de**, which offer rooms in shared flats for students, are suitable for this purpose. On **www.studentenwerke.de** there are also tips on how to find accommodation on the open market and also on the websites of the universities.

Contact persons in New York

In addition to the DAAD New York, the German House New York also has liaison offices of German universities.

The following universities have a branch office in the USA (office in New York):

- Campus OWL (Universität Bielefeld, Universität Paderborn, Hochschule Bielefeld – University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Technische Hochschule OWL, Hochschule für Musik Detmold)
- Universität Freiburg
- Universität Heidelberg
- Universität zu Köln

- Universitätsallianz Ruhr (TU Dortmund, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Universität Duisburg-Essen) UAS 7 – sieben forschungsstarke Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften (in Berlin, Bremen, Köln, Hamburg, München, Münster und Osnabrück)
- Hasso Plattner Institute New York
- Technische Universität München (Außenstelle in San Francisco)

An overview of the universities that have a representation in New York can also be found on the website of the DAAD New York, including contact information:

www.daad.org/en/about-us/network/university-liaison-offices/

Do you still have questions?

Klaus Himmelstein (career and study advisor at GISNY) will be happy to help you with any questions you may have about studying in German-speaking countries.

E-Mail: khimmelstein@gisny.org

HINT:

The contents of this study information are compiled with the greatest possible care. However, the provider assumes no liability for the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of the content provided and recommends that you access the current information on the respective pages of the universities and under hochschulstart.de and studienwahl.de.