

Education system

Germany

described and compared with
the Dutch system

This document contains information on the education system in Germany. We explain the Dutch equivalent of the most common qualifications from Germany for the purpose of admission to Dutch higher education.

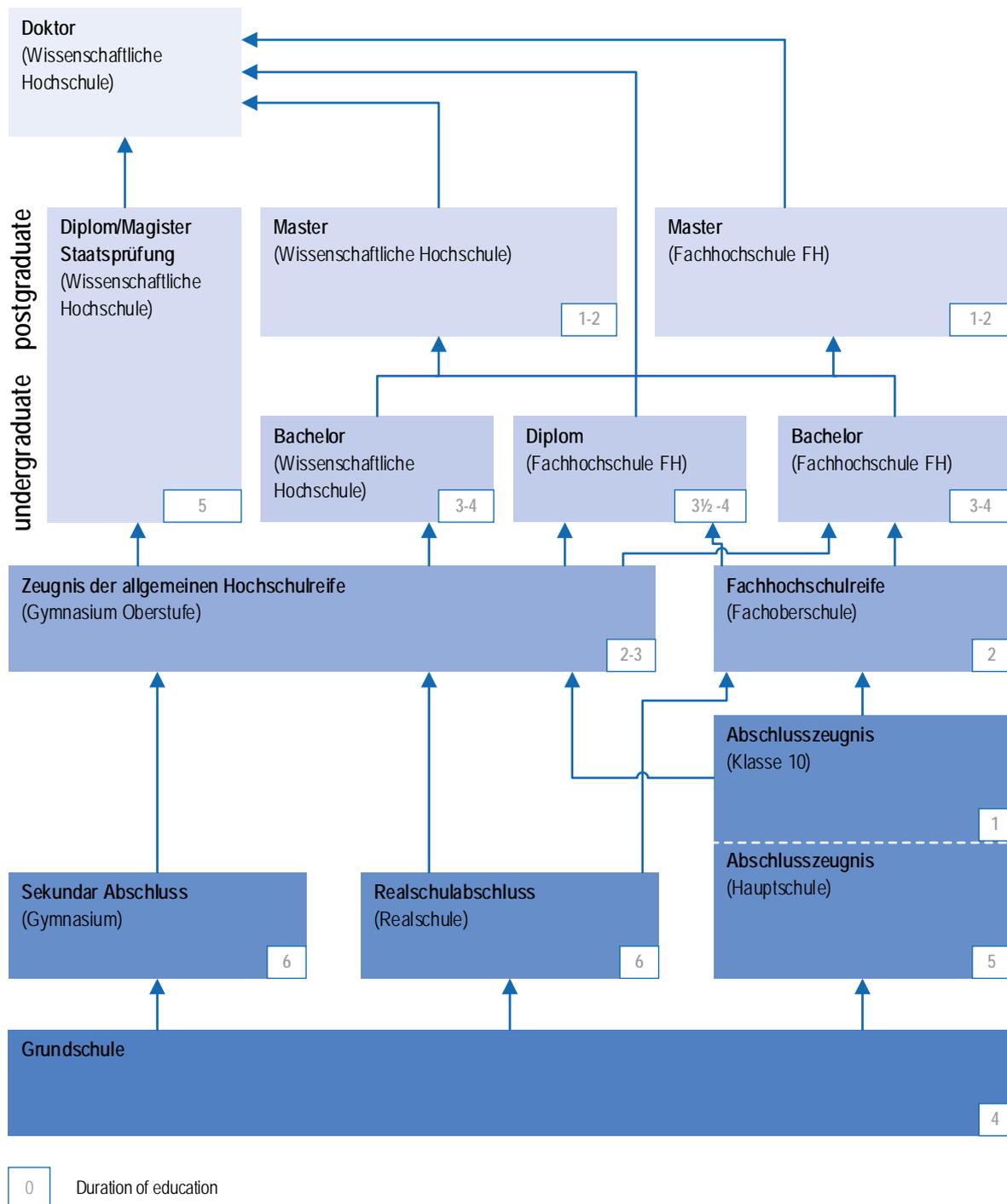
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Education system Germany



■ Evaluation chart

The left-hand column in the table below lists the most common foreign qualifications with corresponding levels in the qualifications framework in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA-QF). The other columns show the Dutch equivalent along with the comparable levels in the Dutch and European qualifications frameworks.

Degree or qualification and EHEA-QF level		EQF level	Dutch equivalent and NLQF level		EQF level
<i>Realabschluss/ Abschlusszeugnis der Klasse 10 der Hauptschule/ Sekundarabschluss/ Mittlere Reife</i>			VMBO-T diploma	1-2	1-2
<i>Fachhochschulreife</i>			HAVO diploma	4	4
<i>Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife</i>			VWO diploma	4+	4
<i>Diplom- Vorprüfungszeugnis (Fachhochschule)</i>			1½-2 years of HBO	5	5
<i>Zwischenprüfungszeugnis (wissenschaftliche Hochschule)</i>			2 years of WO	6	6
<i>Diplom- Vorprüfungszeugnis (wissenschaftliche Hochschule)</i>			2 years of WO	6	6
<i>Vordiplomzeugnis (wissenschaftliche Hochschule)</i>			2 years of WO	6	6
<i>Fachhochschuldiplom (Gesamthochschule)</i>	1st	6	HBO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Diplom (Fachhochschule)</i>	1st	6	HBO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Bachelor (Fachhochschule)</i>	1st	6	HBO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Bachelor</i>	1st	6	WO bachelor's degree	6	6

(wissenschaftliche Hochschule)					
Magister/Diplom/ Lizentiat (wissenschaftliche Hochschule)	2nd	7	WO master's degree	7	7
Lizentiat (wissenschaftliche Hochschule)	2nd	7	WO master's degree	7	7
Staatsprüfung (wissenschaftliche Hochschule)	2nd	7	HBO or WO master's degree	7	7
Master (wissenschaftliche Hochschule)	2nd	7	WO master's degree	7	7
Master (Fachhochschule)	2nd	7	HBO master's degree	7	7
Diplom/Magister (Gesamthochschule)	2nd	7	WO master's degree	7	7

NB

- The information provided in the table is a general recommendation from which no rights may be derived.
- NLOF = Dutch Qualifications Framework; EQF = European Qualifications Framework
- The EQF/[NLOF level](#) is not so much a reflection of study load or content; rather, it is an indication of a person's knowledge and skills after having completed a certain programme of study.
- Information about Dutch equivalent qualifications can be found on our website: [the Dutch education system](#).
- [The Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market \(SBB\)](#), evaluates statements on foreign qualifications and training at VMBO and MBO level. The evaluation may vary if SBB evaluates the diploma for admission to VET schools or the labour market in the Netherlands.

■ Introduction

The Federal Republic of Germany is made up of sixteen states (*Länder*). The responsibilities of the Federal Government and the various states are set out in the constitution.

The *Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* (Federal Ministry of Education and Research) only creates general guidelines for education – the states make their own legislation. For this reason, the education system differs from state to state.

Higher education in Germany is run according to a binary system, in which a distinction is made between academic education and higher professional education. The former East German states (reunification took place on 3 October 1990) have mostly adopted the education system from the west. For programmes that were taken entirely (or for the most part) prior to reunification, please contact Nuffic.

In principle the language of education is German. However, the influence of the Bologna Process has caused an increase in the number of higher education programmes offered in English, the majority of which are master's programmes.

There are also private education institutions, of which an increasing number is recognized.

Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 15 (16 for Berlin, Brandenburg and Bremen).

The academic year runs from October to September.

■ Primary and secondary education

Primary education

Primary education (*Primarstufe*) in Germany is provided at a *Grundschule* (primary school, for children aged 6-10). No diploma is awarded upon completion.

Secondary education

Secondary education is usually divided into *Sekundarstufe/Sekundarbereich I* (for pupils aged 10-16) and *Sekundarstufe/Sekundarbereich II* (for pupils aged 16-19).

Sekundarstufe I

The *Sekundarstufe I* encompasses years 5-10 of the *Gymnasium*, as well as the *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* in the older states. In the new states, the *Mittelschule*, *Sekundarschule* and *Regelschule* are also part of *Sekundarbereich I*.

Upon completion of the *Sekundarstufe I*, pupils are awarded a *Realschulabschluss*, an *Abschlusszeugnis der Klasse 10 der Hauptschule*, a *Sekundarabschluss I* or *Mittlere Reife*.

In terms of level, the *Realschulabschluss/Abschlusszeugnis der Klasse 10 der Hauptschule/Sekundarabschluss I/Mittlere Reife* is comparable to a VMBO-T (theoretische leerweg) diploma.

Sekundarstufe II

The *Sekundarstufe II* encompasses the second part of the *Gymnasium* (the *Oberstufe*, covering years 11-13), the *Berufliches Gymnasium/Fachgymnasium*, the *Fachoberschule* and the various vocational programmes (*Berufsschule*, *Berufsfachschule* and *Fachschule*).

In most states, after a recent secondary education reform, the *Zeugnis der allgemeinen Hochschulreife* is conferred after 12 years. This had led to a more intensive curriculum. Detailed information is available on the [website](#) of the German ENIC/NARIC.

Diplomas that grant admission to the *Sekundarstufe II* are the *Realschulabschluss*, *Abschlusszeugnis der Klasse 10 der Hauptschule* and *Mittlere Reife*. The *Sekundarstufe I* certificate (awarded upon completion of the tenth year of non-*Gymnasium* programmes) also grants admission to the *Oberstufe* of the *Gymnasium*, provided the pupil's performance is sufficiently high (i.e. with *Qualifikationsvermerk*).

From the second half of the eleventh year onwards, education in some states is still divided into *Grundkurse* ('basic subjects' of 2 to 3 hours per week) and *Leistungskurse* ('advanced subjects' of 5 to 6 hours per week). Students must take 2 subjects at *Leistungskurse* level. Each *Kurs* (subject) lasts 1 semester. Examinations (*Abitur*) are taken in 4 subjects: 2 at *Leistungskurs* level and 2 at *Grundkurs* level.

This structure has been in place since the mid-1970s. However, changes are currently being made in several states. Baden-Württemberg, for example, has introduced the *neue Gymnasiale Oberstufe*, in which the *Leistungsfächer* have been replaced by a *Profilfach* and a *Neigungsfach* (each 4 hours per week), and examinations are taken in five subjects.

At present, a new secondary school structure has been introduced in most states, whereby the upper secondary education of the *Gymnasium* (*Gymnasiale Oberstufe*)¹ in accordance with the *Einheitliche Prüfungsanforderungen in der Abiturprüfung - APS* (Uniform Examination Standards in the *Abitur* Examination) is offered at an academic basic level (*grundlegendem Anforderungsniveau*) or advanced level (*erhöhtem Anforderungsniveau*)². At the basic level, it starts with university preparatory education. At the advanced level, the studied subjects are further elaborated, for example by using specific paradigms.

The subjects of mathematics, German language and a foreign language are taken at the advanced basic level for at least 3 times a week. One has to attend at least 2 subjects at advanced level (at least 5 hours per week) or at least 3 subjects at advanced level (at least 4 hours per week) with one of the following subjects: German, a foreign language, mathematics or a scientific subject.

The 4 or 5 subjects of the *Abitur exam* should include:

- at least 2 subjects at advanced level;
- 2 of the following 3 subjects: German, a foreign language or mathematics;
- at least 1 subject from each subject cluster (see below).

At least 2 of the 3 written exams must be taken at advanced level (including one of the following subjects: German, a foreign language, mathematics or a natural science subject). The oral *Abitur exam* is conducted in a subject that has not been examined in written form. Depending on state legislation, a 5th exam (written or oral) can be taken only if one has attended this course for at least 2 semesters.

¹ In accordance with the *Einheitliche Prüfungsanforderungen in der Abiturprüfung - APS* (Uniform Examination Standards in the *Abitur* Examination)

² The denomination of the various levels may vary depending on the state.

There are 3 subject clusters (*Aufgabenfelder*), from which pupils must choose 1 examination subject:

1. *Sprache/Literatur/Kunst* – languages/literature/art (for example German, a foreign language, fine art, music);
2. *sozialwissenschaftlich* – social sciences (for example history, geography, philosophie, social sciences/politics, economics);
3. *mathematisch/naturwissenschaftlich/Technologie* – mathematics/natural sciences/technology (for example mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, information technology).

Pupils are awarded the *Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife*, provided that at least an average grade of 4 is achieved or a minimum of 280/300 points.

In terms of level, the *Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife* is comparable to a VWO diploma.

Upon completion of year 13 of the *Berufliches Gymnasium/Fachgymnasium*, pupils are awarded the *Zeugnis der Fachgebundenen Hochschulreife* (not to be confused with the *Fachhochschulreife*). The *Zeugnis der Fachgebundenen Hochschulreife* has no Dutch equivalent.

The *Fachoberschule* (which also follows on from the *Sekundarabschluss I*) includes both vocational education (in year 11) and general secondary education (year 12). Upon completion of the programme, pupils are awarded the *Fachhochschulreife* certificate. Generally, no certificate of professional qualification is awarded at the end of this programme. Those who have already completed a vocational programme may be admitted to the twelfth year of the *Fachoberschule*. The *Fachhochschulreife* can also be obtained after year 12 of the *Gymnasium* (usually following a vocational programme and/or work experience).

In some states (usually with additional requirements), the *Fachhochschulreife* can also be obtained upon completion of certain forms of vocational education (namely at the *Berufsfachschule*, following on from the *Hauptschule*, and at the *Fachschule*, following on from the *Hauptschule* and a vocational programme, usually a *Berufsschule* modern apprenticeship). A special form of education is the *Kollegschule* (only in Nordrhein-Westfalen), which not only awards a professional qualification, but also the *Fachhochschulreife* certificate.

In terms of level, the *Fachhochschulreife* is comparable to a HAVO diploma.

Students of the *Gymnasiale Oberstufe* who leave school prematurely without having obtained the *Allgemeinen Hochschulreife* can submit a request to obtain the *Fachhochschulreife (schulischer Teil)* after having completed at least 2 semesters of the *Qualifikationsphase* (the last 2 years).

This certificate does not necessarily grant admission to higher education (*Fachhochschule*) in Germany, as this usually requires a vocational qualification or an internship.

The *Fachhochschulreife (schulischer Teil)*, together with vocational training or an internship, justifies the level of the *Fachhochschulreife*. In the states of Bavaria and Saxony, this option is not provided.

■ Admission to higher education

The *Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife* grants admission to all forms of higher education. The Lisbon Convention applies. In most states, after the secondary education reform, the total length of programmes for the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* is 12 years (4+8).

The *Zeugnis der Fachgebundenen Hochschulreife* (not to be confused with the *Fachhochschulreife*) grants access to related study programmes in higher education; the Lisbon Convention applies here.

The *Fachhochschulreife* only grants admission to higher professional education (*Fachhochschule*). This certificate is most commonly obtained via a programme at the *Fachoberschule*. See also the information under [Primary and secondary education](#).

Admission to the *Fachhochschule* does not depend on the type of school attended, but rather on the diploma obtained – namely, the *Fachhochschulreife*.

In some cases, some states offer the possibility of admission to the *Hochschule* or *Fachhochschule* without a *Fachhochschulreife*, for example after completion of vocational programmes (such as *Meister* or *Techniker*) in related specializations. However, this in no way constitutes a general right to admission; please contact Nuffic to discuss individual cases.

■ Higher education

Germany has over 160 universities, *Kunsthochschulen* (art schools) and *Musikhochschulen* (conservatories), as well as around 200 *Fachhochschulen*. At least 70 of the nationally recognized higher education institutions belong to the private sector. Within the binary German system, higher education programmes in art and music (which are counted as higher professional education (HBO) in the Netherlands form a separate category.

The entrance requirements for this type of education are the same as those for admission to research oriented education (WO). Moreover, these programmes also award academic degrees. However, in terms of function, these programmes are more comparable to higher professional education in the Netherlands. A combination of academic and higher professional education is offered by *Gesamthochschulen*.

Since 1998, Germany offers bachelor's and master's programmes. A small number of programmes are offered in line with the traditional educational structure.

■ University education

The following institutions are part of the university system: *Universitäten*, *Technische Universitäten/Hochschulen* and other *Wissenschaftliche Hochschulen* of similar level, such as *Pädagogische/Erziehungswissenschaftliche Hochschulen*, *Medizinische Hochschulen* and *Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschulen*.

Magister/Diplom programmes

The nominal duration of these traditional programmes is around 9 semesters, which includes preparation time for examinations. Some programmes that consist of two stages have an initial academic programme lasting 3½ to 4½ years (such as some teacher-training and law programmes).

Programmes usually contain a 2-year *Grundstudium* and a 2-year *Hauptstudium*, plus the time required to prepare for examinations. The *Grundstudium* is completed through interim examinations, for which the *Zwischenprüfungszeugnis*, *Diplom-Vorprüfungszeugnis* or *Vordiplomzeugnis* certificates are awarded.

In terms of level, the *Zwischenprüfungszeugnis*, *Diplom-Vorprüfungszeugnis* and *Vordiplomzeugnis* certificates are comparable to 2 years of university education (WO).

The programmes award the following titles:

1. *Magister*: programmes awarding this title are usually those in arts or social sciences (rarely in the natural sciences). The programme focuses on a single major and 2 minors, or 2 majors.
2. *Diplom*: programmes in the natural or social sciences usually award this title; these are programmes with a single major.
3. *Staatsprüfung* (state examination): the academic part of programmes in law, food chemistry and teacher-training programmes conclude with the *Erste Staatsprüfung* (first state examination).

Following that, a predominantly practical programme leads to the *Zweite Staatsprüfung* (second state examination), which grants the legal right to professional practice. The pharmacy *Staatsprüfung* is made up of 3 sections (*Abschnitten*). The third section marks the completion of a 1-year practical programme following the academic programme.

Lizentiat/Licentiatius

This degree is usually awarded in theological disciplines.

In terms of level, the *Magister*, *Diplom* or *Lizentiat* (EHEA-QF 1st + 2nd cycle/EQF level 7) is comparable to a WO master's degree. See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

In terms of level, the *Staatsprüfung* (EHEA-QF 1st + 2nd cycle/EQF level 7) is comparable to an HBO or WO master's degree, depending on the type of study programme. See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

Bachelor's-master's programmes

The nominal duration of bachelor's programmes at a *wissenschaftliche Hochschule* is usually 6 semesters. Upon completion of the bachelor's programme students are awarded the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science (or variations on these names, such as *Bakkalaureus/Baccalaureus Artium* and *Bakkalaureus/Baccalaureus Scientiae/Scientiarum*).

In terms of level, the Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science, *Bakkalaureus/Baccalaureus Artium* or *Bakkalaureus/Baccalaureus Scientiae/Scientiarum* (EHEA-QF 1st cycle/EQF level 6) obtained at a *wissenschaftliche Hochschule* is comparable to a WO bachelor's degree.

See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

The subsequent master's programmes last on average 1½ to 2 years, meaning that a bachelor's programme plus an associated master's programme will last no longer than 5 years. The titles awarded are Master of Arts and Master of Science, (or the variants *Magister Artium* and *Magister Scientiae/Scientiarum*).

In terms of level, the Master of Arts / Master of Science, *Magister Artium* or *Magister Scientiae / Scientiarum* (EHEA-QF 2nd cycle/EOF level 7) obtained at a *wissenschaftliche Hochschule* is comparable to a WO master's degree. See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

PhD

All final university examinations (except those for bachelor's programmes) and (first) state examinations grant admission to doctorate programmes. The average duration of such programmes is 2 to 4 years. Graduates of doctorate programmes are awarded the degree of *Doktor*. Following the doctorate, graduates can complete the *Habilitation*, which qualifies them for professorship. A *Doktor* degree is comparable to a doctorate in the Netherlands.

■ Higher professional education

In Germany, *Fachhochschulen* are responsible for higher professional education.

Diplom programmes

These programmes last 3½ to 4 years: 6 semesters, to which an additional semester must be added in order to prepare for examinations, as well as usually 1 (or sometimes 2) work-experience semesters, or an integrated study programme of 8 semesters. As with academic university programmes, those at the *Fachhochschule* usually consist of a 1½ to 2-year *Grundstudium* awarding the *Diplom-Vorprüfungszeugnis* or *Vordiplomzeugnis*, as well as a 1½ to 2-year *Hauptstudium*, awarding a *Diplom*. This title must be distinguished from the university *Diplom*, and does not grant the same rights. To indicate this difference, various states (but not all) place the letters *FH* (*Fachhochschule*) after the title.

In terms of level, the *Diplom-Vorprüfungszeugnis* obtained at a *Fachhochschule* is comparable to 1½ to 2 years of higher professional education (HBO). See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

Graduates with a *Diplom-Sozialpädagoge/Sozialarbeiter* are only granted the legal right to professional practice after passing the *Staatliche Anerkennung* following a year of work experience, either integrated into or following the study programme.

In most states, *Fachhochschulabsolventen* (*Fachhochschule* graduates) are also eligible for entry into doctorate programmes (provided they are especially qualified).

Bachelor's-master's programmes

The nominal duration of bachelor's programmes at a *Fachhochschule* is usually 6 semesters, after which graduates are awarded a Bachelor of Science/Arts or a Bachelor of Engineering/Business Administration. The associated master's programmes last between 1 and 2 years, after which graduates are awarded a Master of Science/Arts or a Master of Engineering/Architecture/Business Administration.

In terms of level, the Bachelor of Science/Arts or a Bachelor of Engineering/Business Administration (EHEA-QF 1st cycle/EQF level 6) obtained at a *Fachhochschule* is comparable to an HBO bachelor's degree. See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

In terms of level, the Master of Engineering/Architecture/Business Administration (EHEA-QF 2nd cycle/EQF level 7) obtained at a *Fachhochschule* is comparable to an HBO master's degree. See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

Gesamthochschulen

Gesamthochschulen offer cooperative and integrated forms of academic and higher professional education. These combined specializations include professional programmes (4 years, including a work-experience and examination semester) and academic programmes (with a nominal duration of 4½ years, including exam preparation). This type of education is only available in Hessen and Nordrhein-Westfalen.

The programmes are structured according to two models (the duration given below does not include work-experience or exam-preparation semesters):

1. A common *Grundstudium* of 4 semesters, followed by a
 - 1-year *Hauptstudium (I)*, allowing students to obtain a *Fachhochschuldiplom*, or a

- 2-year *Hauptstudium (II)*, allowing students to obtain a university certificate (*Diplom/Magister*). Before qualifying for admission to the *Hauptstudium II*, those with a *Fachhochschulreife* must complete additional subjects (*Brückenkursen*) and sit a *Zwischenprüfung* (interim examination).
2. A common *Grundstudium* (1 year) and *Hauptstudium* (2 years) concluding with the *Diplomprüfung I*, allowing students to obtain the *Fachhochschuldiplom*. This is followed by a 1 to 2-year programme culminating in the *Diplomprüfung II*, allowing students to obtain their university certificate (*Diplom/Magister*).

In terms of level, the *Fachhochschuldiplom* (EHEA-QF 1st cycle/EQF level 6) is comparable to an HBO bachelor's degree.
See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

In terms of level, the *Diplom / Magister* (EHEA-QF 1st + 2nd cycle/EQF level 7) obtained at a *Gesamthochschule* is comparable to a WO master's degree.
See also the full [description](#) of learning outcomes.

Aufbau-, Zusatz- and Ergänzungsstudien

Numerous institutions (*Hochschulen* and *Fachhochschulen*) offer 1 to 2-year programmes (mostly postgraduate) that do not culminate in the awarding of a doctorate.

NB *Berufsakademien* offer a combination of theoretical and practical programmes, usually lasting 3 years, to holders of a *Fachhochschulreife*.

Berufsakademien only fall under higher education in Baden-Württemberg, Berlin, Niedersachsen and Sachsen. They award a *Diplom (BA)*, and the programmes usually confer no rights under the equivalence agreement.

■ Assessment systems

The secondary and higher education systems use a numbered system from 1-6. An exception to this is the *Gymnasiale Oberstufe*, which uses the numbers 1-15 (in reverse order!).

Numerical grade	<i>Gymnasiale Oberstufe</i>	Description	Meaning
1	15/14/13	<i>Sehr gut</i>	Very good
2	12/11/10	<i>Gut</i>	Good
3	9/8/7	<i>Befriedigend</i>	Quite satisfactory
4	6/5/4	<i>Ausreichend</i>	Satisfactory
5	3/2/1	<i>Mangelhaft</i>	Almost satisfactory
6	0	<i>Ungenügend</i>	Unsatisfactory

In Germany, the highest mark (1) is awarded more often than in the Netherlands (10). In the context of admission to higher education, the following formula has been used for many years to convert Dutch secondary education examination results into German results:

$$x = 1 + 3 \cdot (N_{\max} - N_d) / (N_{\max} - N_{\min})$$

where x = the German exam result, N_{\max} = the highest possible pass mark in the Netherlands, N_{\min} = the lowest possible pass mark in the Netherlands, and N_d = the candidate's result.

Initially, N_{\min} was set at 6 and N_{\max} at 10. However, this produced results that were far too low compared to those obtained in Germany. For this reason, based on statistical research, in 2001 the *Gremium der Kultusministerkonferenz* decided to set N_{\max} at 8.5.

For the purpose of converting higher education examinations results, N_{\max} has been set at 9 since 2011.

In principle, bachelor's and master's programmes use the *European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System* (ECTS). To a lesser extent, this system is now also in use among traditional *Diplom/Magister* programmes. The old *Semesterwochenstunden* ('semester week hours', SWS) can be converted to ECTS by multiplying the SWS by 1½.

The ECTS Grades (A-F) may be used by institutions instead of the German number system, as follows:

ECTS	Numerical grade	German equivalent
A – excellent	1.0 -1.5	<i>Hervorragend</i>
B - very good	1.6-2.0	<i>Sehr gut</i>
C – good	2.1-3.0	<i>Gut</i>
D – satisfactory	3.1-3.5	<i>Befriedigend</i>
E - sufficient/pass	3.6-4.0	<i>Ausreichend</i>
FX/F – fail	4.1-5.0	<i>Nicht bestanden</i>

More information on the ECTS system is available in the [ECTS User's Guide](#) issued by the European Commission.

See also our [website](#) for information about grading systems.

■ Bologna process

Legislation enacted in 1998 made it possible for higher education institutions to offer bachelor's and master's programmes on a voluntary basis based on modules and the ECTS, and accreditation by the new, independent *Akkreditierungsrat*. In contrast to the situation in the Netherlands, German higher education institutions have not converted *en masse* to the bachelor's-master's structure. However, the number of bachelor's and master's programmes is increasing each year: in 2011, 85 per cent of all programmes were structured according to the bachelor's-master's system. Information on the current situation can be found on the official European Higher Education Area ([EHEA website](#)).

■ Qualification frameworks

In 2005, the Bologna Framework (overarching framework for qualifications of the European higher education area) was adopted. Development of a complete national qualifications framework, is under way. Information on the current developments can be found on the [website](#) of the *Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen (DQR)*, dem *gemeinsamen Internetportal des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung und der Kultusministerkonferenz*.

■ Quality assurance and accreditation

Although Germany has no official rankings, since 2002 the Center for Higher Education Development (CHE), in cooperation with the *Stern* weekly magazine,

has published an annual rankings list that includes a large number of German institutions.

The principal task of the independent *Akkreditierungsrat* is to accredit subject-specific accreditation organizations that evaluate education programmes. The *Akkreditierungsrat* has seventeen members, representing the federal states, higher education institutions, students, employers, employees and also containing international representatives. Only in exceptional circumstances can the *Akkreditierungsrat* accredit programmes itself.

If you wish to verify whether a programme is accredited, please visit the [website](#) with the *Hochschulkompas*.

■ International treaties

The March 1983 equivalence agreement between the Netherlands and Germany applies to both academic and higher professional education, and states that for further study or doctorate programmes, candidates are exempt from Dutch examinations if they take German examinations in equivalent specializations; exemptions must also be awarded for periods of study of equal length (see Appendix 2). Germany signed the Lisbon Convention in 1997, and ratified it in 2007.

■ Diploma Supplement

In collaboration with the federal states, the *Hochschulrektorenkonferenz* has created a German Diploma Supplement that is available to all higher education institutions. The European version of the Diploma Supplement can also be used.

More information on the Diploma Supplement is available on the [website](#) of the European Commission.

■ Composition of file

Secondary school diplomas usually contain several pages. Graduates of higher education programmes are usually issued two documents: one certificate stating the examination results (such as a *Diplomprüfungszeugnis* or *Magisterprüfungszeugnis*) and a certificate awarding the title (such as *Magister Artium* or *Diplom-Ingenieur*). Detailed subject overviews are usually not issued.

■ Overview of higher education institutions

[Website](#) of the *Hochschulrektorenkonferenz* containing a complete and up-to-date overview of all institutions in Germany.

■ Useful websites

- [Website](#) of the German ENIC/NARIC, the *Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen (ZAB) im Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (KMK)*.
- [Website](#) of ANABIN, *Anerkennung und Bewertung ausländischer Bildungsnachweise*, established by the ZAB in collaboration with a number of other organizations. This database contains information on the education systems, degrees and qualifications of a large number of countries (including their value in Germany).
- [Website](#) of the *Hochschulrektorenkonferenz* (German Rectors' Conference), the association of German higher education institutions.
- The Higher Education Compass [website](#) (offered by the German Rectors' Conference), containing a complete and up-to-date overview of all institutions and study programmes in Germany.
- [Website](#) of the German *Akkreditierungsrat*.
- [Website](#) of the *Kultusminister Konferenz* (KMK) with information in English about the German education system.
- [Website](#) of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.
- [Website](#) of the *Bundesagentur für Arbeit* containing a complete and up-to-date overview of vocational study programmes in Germany.
- [Website](#) of the *Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen (DQR)*, *dem gemeinsamen Internetportal des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung und der Kultusministerkonferenz*.