

8.4 Organization and Structure of Studies

The following programs can be offered by all three types of institutions. Bachelor's and Master's study courses may be studied consecutively, at different higher education institutions, at different types of higher education institutions and with phases of professional work between the first and the second qualification. The organization of the study programs makes use of modular components and of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) with 30 credits corresponding to one semester.

8.4.1 Bachelor

Bachelor degree study programs lay the academic foundations, provide methodological skills and lead to qualifications related to the professional field. The Bachelor degree is awarded after 3 to 4 years. The Bachelor degree program includes a thesis requirement. Study courses leading to the Bachelor degree must be accredited according to the Law establishing a Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany.

First degree programs (Bachelor) lead to Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), Bachelor of Engineering (B.Eng.), Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) or Bachelor of Music (B.Mus.).

8.4.2 Master

Master is the second degree after another 1 to 2 years. Master study programs must be differentiated by the profile types "more practice-oriented" and "more research-oriented". Higher Education Institutions define the profile of each Master study program.

The Master degree study program includes a thesis requirement. Study programs leading to the Master degree must be accredited according to the Law establishing a Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany.

Second degree programs (Master) lead to Master of Arts (M.A.), Master of Science (M.Sc.), Master of Engineering (M.Eng.), Master of Laws (LL.M.), Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) or Master of Music (M.Mus.) or Master of Education (M.Ed.). Post-graduate Master courses may have other designations (e.g. MBA).

8.4.3. Integrated "Long" Programmes (One-Tier): Diplom degrees, Magister Artium, Staatsprüfung

An integrated study program is either mono-disciplinary (Diplom degrees, most programs completed by a Staatsprüfung) or comprises a combination of either two major or one major and two minor fields (Magister Artium). The first stage (1.5 to 2 years) focuses on broad orientations and foundations of the field(s) of study. An Intermediate Examination (Diplom-Vorprüfung for Diplom degrees) is prerequisite to enter the second stage of advanced studies and specializations. Degree requirements include submission of a thesis (up to 6 months duration) and comprehensive final written and oral examinations. Similar regulations apply to studies leading to a Staatsprüfung. The level of qualification is equivalent to the Master level.

- Integrated studies at Universitäten (U) last 4 to 5 years (Diplom degree, Magister Artium) or 3 to 6.5 years (Staatsprüfung). The Diplom degree is awarded in engineering disciplines, the natural sciences as well as economics and business. In the humanities, the corresponding degree is usually the Magister Artium (M.A.). In the social sciences, the practice varies as a matter of institutional traditions. Studies preparing for the legal, medical, pharmaceutical professions are completed by a Staatsprüfung.

In some federal states this also applies to teaching degrees. The three qualifications (Diplom, Magister Artium and Staatsprüfung) are academically equivalent. They qualify to apply for admission to doctoral studies. Further prerequisites for admission may be defined by the Higher Education Institution, cf. Sec. 8.5.

- Integrated studies at Fachhochschulen (FH)/Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) last 4 years and lead to a Diplom (FH) degree. While the FH/UAS are non-doctorate granting institutions, qualified graduates may apply for admission to doctoral studies at doctorate-granting institutions, cf. Sec. 8.5.

- Studies at Kunst- und Musikhochschulen (Universities of Art/Music etc.) are more diverse in their organization, depending on the field and individual objectives. In addition to Diplom/Magister degrees, the integrated study programme awards include certificates and certified examinations for specialized areas and professional purposes.

8.5 Doctorate

Universities as well as specialized institutions of university standing and some Universities of Art/Music are doctorate-granting institutions. Formal prerequisite for admission to doctoral work is a qualified Master (UAS and U), a Magister degree, a Diplom, a Staatsprüfung, or a foreign equivalent. Particularly qualified holders of a Bachelor or a Diplom (FH) degree may also be admitted to doctoral studies without acquisition of a further degree by means of a procedure to determine their aptitude.

The universities respectively the doctorate-granting institutions regulate entry to a doctorate as well as the structure of the procedure to determine aptitude. Admission further requires the acceptance of the Dissertation research project by a professor as a supervisor.

8.6 Grading Scheme

The grading scheme in Germany usually comprises five levels (with numerical equivalents; intermediate grades may be given): "Sehr Gut" (1) = Very Good; "Gut" (2) = Good; "Befriedigend" (3) = Satisfactory; "Ausreichend" (4) = Sufficient; "Nicht ausreichend" (5) = Non-Sufficient/Fail. The minimum passing grade is "Ausreichend" (4). Verbal designations of grades may vary in some cases and for doctoral degrees.

In addition institutions may already use the ECTS grading scheme.

8.7 Access to Higher Education

The General Higher Education Entrance Qualification (Allgemeine Hochschulreife, Abitur) after 12 to 13 years of schooling allows for admission to all higher educational studies. Specialized variants (Fachgebundene Hochschulreife) allow for admission to particular disciplines. Access to Fachhochschulen (UAS) is also possible with a Fachhochschulreife, which can usually be acquired after 12 years of schooling. Admission to Universities of Art/Music may be based on other or require additional evidence demonstrating individual aptitude. Higher Education Institutions may in certain cases apply additional admission procedures.

8.8 National Sources of Information

- Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) [Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany]; Graurheindorfer Str. 157, D-53117 Bonn; Fax: +49(0)228/501-777; Phone: +49(0)228/501-0
- Central Office for Foreign Education (ZaB) as German NARIC; www.kmk.org; E-Mail: zab@kmk.org
- "Documentation and Educational Information Service" as German EURYDICE-Unit, providing the national dossier on the education system ((http://www.kmk.org/dokumentation/deutsche-eurydice-stelle-der-laender.html))
- Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK) [German Rectors' Conference]; Ahnstrasse 39, D-53175 Bonn; Fax: +49(0)228/887-110; Phone: +49(0)228/887-0; www.hrk.de; E-Mail: post@hrk.de
- "Higher Education Compass" of the German Rectors' Conference features comprehensive information on institutions, programmes of study, etc. (www.higher-education-compass.de)

- 1 The information covers only aspects directly relevant to purposes of the Diploma Supplement. Information as of 1 July 2005.
- 2 Berufsakademien are not considered as Higher Education Institutions, they only exist in some of the Länder. They offer programs that integrate practice terms in cooperation with enterprises and similar non-industrial companies. Berufsakademien offer Bachelor degree programs that, as long as they are accredited by a German accreditation body, finish with a Bachelor degree equal to the Bachelor degree awarded by higher education institutions.
- 3 Qualification Framework for German university degrees Resolution of the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs 21 April 2005).
- 4 Cross-national requirements for the accreditation of Bachelor and Master programs (Resolution of the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of 10 October 2003 as amended on 04 February 2010).
- 5 Law establishing a Foundation 'Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany', entered into force as from 26 February 2005, GV.NRW. 2005, no. 5, p. 45 in connection with the Declaration of the Länder concerning the Foundation: Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany" (Resolution of the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of 16 December 2004).
- 6 See note No. 5.
- 7 See note No. 5.