

8. INFORMATION ON THE GERMAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM¹

8.1. Types of Institutions and Institutional Control

Higher education (HE) studies in Germany are offered at three types of *Hochschulen*²

- *Universitäten* (Universities), including various specialized institutions, comprise the whole range of academic disciplines. In the German tradition, universities are also institutional foci of, in particular, basic research, so that advanced stages of study have strong theoretical orientations and research-oriented components.
- *Fachhochschulen* (Universities of Applied Sciences): Programs concentrate in engineering and other technical disciplines, business-related studies, social work, and design areas. The common mission of applied research and development implies a distinct application-oriented focus and professional character of studies, which include one or two semesters of integrated and supervised work assignments in industry, enterprises or other relevant institutions.
- *Kunst- und Musikhochschulen* (Colleges of Art/Music, etc.) offer graduate studies for artistic careers in fine arts, performing arts and music; in such fields as directing, production, writing in theatre, film, and other media; and in a variety of design areas, architecture, media and communication.

¹ The information covers only aspects directly relevant to purposes of the Diploma Supplement. All Information as of 1 Jan 2000.

² Hochschule is the generic term for higher education institutions.

HE institutions are either state or state-recognized institutions. In their operations, including the organization of studies and the designation and award of degrees, they are both subject to HE legislation.

8.2 Types of programs and degrees awarded

- Studies in all three types of institutions are traditionally offered in integrated "long" (one-tier) programs leading to *Diplom-* or *Magister Artium* degrees or completion by a *Staatsprüfung* (State Examination).
- In 1998, a new scheme of first- and second-level degree programs (*Bakkalaureus/Bachelor* and *Magister/Master*) was introduced to be offered parallel to or *in lieu* of established integrated "long" programs. While these programs are designed to provide enlarged variety and flexibility to students in planning and pursuing educational objectives, they enhance also international compatibility of studies.
- For details cf. Sec. 8.41 and Sec. 8.42, respectively. Table 1 provides a synoptic summary.

8.3 Approval/Accreditation of Programs and Degrees

To ensure quality and comparability of qualifications, the organization of studies and general degree requirements have to conform to principles and regulations jointly established by the Standing Conference of Ministers of

Institutions, Programs and Degrees in German Higher Education

