



## Table of Contents

<b>Education, Work und University Studies</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Information</b>	<b>2</b>
Information	2
Accident at work	2
Factory Act	2
Irregular and illegal employment	3
Food handling instruction	3
<b>Looking for work</b>	<b>3</b>
Access to the Job Market	3
Employment contract	8
Job applications and interviews	10
<b>Self-employment</b>	<b>12</b>
Berufsschule	13
Vocational training (dual and full-time)	15
<b>Studies</b>	<b>17</b>
University system in Germany	19
University-level study	19
Studying in Dortmund	20
Advisory services for international students in Dortmund	23
Financial aid	25
International Scientists in Dortmund	27
Links on this topic	28
<b>Recognition of credentials</b>	<b>28</b>
Recognition of foreign educational qualifications	28
Official authentication of certificates/credentials	30



## Education, Work und University Studies

### Information

#### Information

The conditions with which you may work in Germany depend on your residence status. For basic information and the relevant contact persons when looking for work, see [access to the job market](#).

If you have already completed school or vocational education abroad, you should make sure that these qualifications are recognised. For more information, see the section on [recognition of foreign qualifications](#).

In Germany there are about 400 training occupations. If you are looking for vocational training, you will find further information and contact details under [Vocational training](#) (dual and full-time school-based).

Children and youths must go to school from the age of six years old. General schooling is attended before starting training or university studies.

If you would like to study, you will find suitable information and contact persons under [University studies](#).

#### Accident at work

If you have an accident during work or on your way to work, this is defined as an accident at work.

In this case, you are insured via the company (your employer) by accident insurance.

If you go to the doctor or hospital you must tell them that it's an accident at work. The treatment will not be covered by your health insurance company but by your employer's accident insurance provider. You can find out the name of the accident insurance provider from your employer.

If you have an accident at work and

- are unfit for work for more than one day or
- require medical treatment for longer or
- get sick again at a later date

you will need to visit what is known as a "Durchgangsarzt or Durchgangsärztin" ("accident insurance doctor").

#### Factory Act

For all kinds of work, the "Arbeitsschutzgesetz" or "ArbSchG" (Factory Act) determine:

- The workplace health and safety rules for employers
- What duties and rights you have as a worker



- How the legal regulations are monitored

These occupational safety rules guarantee the health and safety of all workers.

Exact prevention measures exist for workplaces that are deemed dangerous for workers. Employers are responsible for adhering to and implementing these measures. Employees must be regularly informed about the protective measures.

Employees must uphold the protective measures, must not endanger others during their work and must report defects that may represent a danger.

## **Irregular and illegal employment**

A job that is paid but not registered with both the Finanzamt (tax office) and a health insurance provider, and for which no taxes and social security payments are paid, is deemed to be illegal and is referred to in Germany as "Schwarzarbeit" or "moonlighting" in English. It can be punished with fines and prison!

If someone receives social benefits or unemployment benefits, but still works and keeps their job secret from the Sozialamt (Social Security Office), the Arbeitsagentur (Employment Agency) or the Jobcenter, this also falls under illegal employment: As such, that person is wrongly receiving state benefits, even though they are in paid employment. This is forbidden and against the law. In German, it is known as "Schwarzarbeit". You should always inform the office where you get your benefits if you wish to start a job; you are allowed to earn money while still receiving social benefits (the benefits are then recalculated) but you must inform the case officers of all kinds of earnings and income immediately.

Taking up work even though you are forbidden to work is also regarded as illegal employment.

Depending on your country of origin and reason for staying, illegal employment can lead to you being permanently banned from working!

## **Food handling instruction**

Anyone who has direct contact with open foodstuffs on a professional basis or works in kitchens or communal catering facilities, i.e. regularly produces, treats, sells or otherwise markets foodstuffs, must be approved for work by the competent health authority before starting work; this is what is known as a "Lebensmittelbelehrung" (food handling instruction) according to section 43 of the Infection Protection Act (IfSG).

You will find further information [here](#)

Arabic, English, French, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Turkish food handling instruction sheets can be found [here](#)

## **Looking for work**

### **Access to the Job Market**



## Regulations on access to the job market

If you are looking for work and have moved from the EU, you have full access to the job market, because of freedom of movement for workers.

The type of residence permit you have will determine whether you are allowed to work as a refugee.

### Asylum seekers with proof of arrival or a temporary residence permit:

If you are still required live in the initial reception facility, you are not permitted to work. The Immigration Office (Ausländerbehörde) will then decide whether you are allowed to work or not. That is why you must always apply for an employment permit (Beschäftigungszulassung) from the Immigration Office.

### Asylum seekers with proof of arrival or a temporary residence permit:

You will receive a work permit at the earliest three months after you register as an asylum seeker in Germany. Asylum seekers and people with a temporary residence permit require a work permit. You can apply for this at the "Ausländerbehörde" (Immigration Office). After 48 months, you will have full access to the labour market. There are no more restrictions. This must be stated on your temporary residence permit.

### People with a temporary extension of deportation:

The Immigration Office will always make decisions on work permits in the case of immigrants with a temporary suspension of deportation. The Immigration Office can impose a work ban on you under immigration law.

### Refugees with an "Aufenthaltserlaubnis" (residence permit):

If you have a residence permit, you will have full access to the labour market without any restrictions.

### I am not permitted to work - what can I do instead?

You don't have a work permit but still want to do something useful with your time? Even without a work permit, you can work on a voluntary basis for a charity. You can find more information on this at "lokal willkommen".

There are different rules for self-employment! The prerequisite for the aforementioned applications is **ALWAYS** a specific job offer.

## Contact and advisory service centres



The following people are there specifically to provide refugees with advice and referrals within the labour market. Please note that there are also differences here depending on whether your asylum procedure is still ongoing, you have been recognised as a refugee, or you have a certificate granting you a temporary extension of deportation (Duldung).

**The Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit) and the Jobcenter are available as points of contact for all topics relating to training and work.**

### **Jobcenter Dortmund**



[Steinstraße 39](#)

44147 Dortmund



[02318429531](#)

[You will find the contact form here](#)

### **Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit) Dortmund**

 [Steinstraße 39](#)

44147 Dortmund

 [08004555500](#)



[dortmund@arbeitsagentur.de](mailto:dortmund@arbeitsagentur.de)

**In addition to other information, advice and assistance on how to access the labour market as a refugee is can be found at the following places:**

Project network “APP: Arbeit – Potentiale – Perspektiven für Flüchtlinge”:

Personal advice, German for work, work and training placements, support in employment, vocational qualification for refugees

### **EWEDO GmbH**

Detlev Becker



[Huckarder Str. 12](#)

44147 Dortmund





---

[023191443511](tel:023191443511)



[dbecker@ewedo.de](mailto:dbecker@ewedo.de)

**GrünBau gGmbH**

**Vocational coaching for young refugees**

Florian Eichenmüller



[Arnoldstr. 4](#)

44147 Dortmund



[023128863717](tel:023128863717)



[ausbildungskoaching@gruenbau-dortmund.de](mailto:ausbildungskoaching@gruenbau-dortmund.de)

**pdL - Project "Learn German" at the association VFZ e.V.**

Thomas Wild



[Münsterstr. 9-11](#)

44145 Dortmund



[023154651631](tel:023154651631)



[t.wild@vfz.de](mailto:t.wild@vfz.de)

**Stadtteil-Schule Dortmund e.V.**

Veit Hohfeld



[Oesterholzstr. 118 - 120](#)

44145 Dortmund



[02312866251](tel:02312866251)



[vhohfeld@stadtteil-schule.de](mailto:vhohfeld@stadtteil-schule.de)

### **Train of Hope Dortmund e.V.**

The "Nordchance" project



[Münsterstr. 54](#)

44145 Dortmund



[023197062647](tel:023197062647)

[tanja@trainofhope-do.de](mailto:tanja@trainofhope-do.de) [najib@trainofhope-do.de](mailto:najib@trainofhope-do.de)

### **Other advisory services:**

- [Migration counselling for adults](#)
- [Youth Migration Service \(Jugendmigrationsdienst\)](#)
- [Regional counselling for refugees](#)
- ["lokal willkommen"](#)

## **Welcome Agency with its Expatriate / Dual Career services**

### **Top researchers from science and industry are welcome in Dortmund**

- Welcome Agency with Expatriate Service
- Dual Career Service

The "Welcome Agency", which is run by "Wirtschaftsförderung Dortmund" (a business development agency in Dortmund), runs an Expatriate Service Centre. International top executives from the fields of science and business who wish to settle in Dortmund for the first time are welcomed and supported both during their preparations for, and upon arrival in, Dortmund with everyday (and more specific) questions. Through this active welcoming culture, the business development agency helps foreign specialists and managers (expatriates) to get their bearings in Dortmund in an uncomplicated manner and help them to join existing networks quickly and directly. The business development agency links top talent with local science, business and urban society – individually, committed and, for the most part, free of charge.



## Wirtschaftsförderung Dortmund Customer Service / Investor Support / Welcome Agency

Contact person:

Ms Sabrina Heix



[02315022851](tel:02315022851)



[sheix@stadtdo.de](mailto:sheix@stadtdo.de)



[Grüne Straße 2-8](#)

44147 Dortmund



<https://www.wirtschaftsfoerderung-dortmund.de/startseite>

The range of services offered by the business development agency is supplemented by the “Dual Career Network Ruhr (DCN Ruhr)” project, which was funded by the Mercator Foundation during its start-up phase and has been coordinated by the Regionalverband Ruhr since 2020. The regional network of science, business and administration supports working partners of newly appointed professors in their job search in the Ruhr region. To this end, the DCN Ruhr networks the local universities and colleges with research institutions, public institutions, associations and companies in the region – including the Welcome Agency Dortmund – and puts them in contact with potential, highly skilled workers. The project thus contributes to increasing the national and international competitiveness of Dortmund and the Metropole Ruhr.

<https://www.dcn.ruhr/dual-career/angebot/>

### Employment contract

Anyone who starts a job gets an employment contract. This regulates the most important conditions of an employment relationship, such as working hours, holiday entitlement, salary and notice periods. Both sides – employee and employer – must abide by these agreements. Because a contract is legally binding once you have signed it, you should only sign it when you understand its content completely.

### Types of contracts:

#### Permanent job contract (Unbefristeter Arbeitsvertrag)

As a general rule, there is a probationary period of three to six months. During this time, a working relationship can be cancelled by both the employee and the employer with a short





notice period of two weeks. At the end of the probationary period, a permanent employment relationship begins with longer protection against dismissal. Working hours are usually up to 40 hours a week.

#### Fixed-term employment contract (Befristeter Arbeitsvertrag)

The employment ends at the agreed time, without the need for notice of resignation.

#### Minijob

The maximum monthly salary is €520 and is not taxed.

### **Taxes and social security payments:**

Every employee in Germany pays part of their wages as taxes to finance federal, state and local government spending. Employers, in turn, are required to pay social security contributions for their employees. The German social system therefore aims to make sure that, if people can't find work, or are no longer able to work, their key living costs will still be covered.

#### **Tax ID number:**

The tax ID is an 11-digit number and is used for income tax. Your employer needs this number. If you do not have this number in your documents, you can ask for it personally at the registration office (Meldebehörde) or in writing from the Federal Tax Office (Bundesamt für Steuern).

#### **Social security number:**

For a job, you need a social security number. This can be obtained from your health insurance provider (e.g. AOK, DAK).

#### **Undeclared work (Schwarzarbeit):**

A job that is paid but not registered with the Tax Office and a health insurer, and therefore doesn't pay any taxes or social security payments, is illegal and is referred to as 'Schwarzarbeit' in Germany. It can be punished with fines and prison! If someone receives social benefits or unemployment benefits but still works and keeps their job secret from the Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt), the Federal Employment Agency (Arbeitsagentur) and the Job Centre, this is also called 'Schwarzarbeit'. The person is therefore wrongly receiving state benefits even though they are in paid employment.

#### **Minimum wage:**

Germany has a statutory minimum wage. The current minimum wage is 9.35 EUR per hour (Version as of: 01/01/2020). The amount is increased regularly.

The minimum wage may not be reduced by working longer hours than contractually agreed without corresponding wage compensation.

The minimum wage does not apply to:

- Young people under the age of 18 without completed vocational training



- Apprentices
- Long-term unemployed persons during the first six months of their employment after the end of unemployment
- Interns in certain forms of internship (school or study-related internship or for the purposes of job orientation for up to three months)

## Payslip

If you are an employee, you will receive a salary statement or payslip after you have worked your first month. Some employers then also issue you with a payslip; others only do this when there is a change (such as Christmas money, higher insurance contributions ...).

These details must be shown in the salary statement or payslip:

- Name and address of the employee
- Name, address, date of birth of the employer
- Insurance number of the employee
- Date of beginning the employment
- Tax category and tax identification number
- Accounting period
- Gross salary (salary without deductions – gross tax amount and gross social security amount)
- Type and amount of surcharges or bonuses
- Type and amount of deductions
- Net amount (after all deductions)

The net amount is usually the amount you receive. Exception: If there were advance payments, or loans from the company or salary seizure (if you have debts), further amounts will be removed from the net amount.

## Job applications and interviews

If you would like to start a vocational training programme (Ausbildung) or get a job in Germany, you need to submit a written application.

Usually, you apply to a company that posted a job vacancy online or in a newspaper. Posting a vacancy means that the company is looking for new employees. The job advertisement describes what type of work or vocational training it involves and what the company expects of the employee. It is also stated there where and how you have to apply.

## Unsolicited applications

If you would like to work in a particular company but it does not have a position advertised, you can submit an unsolicited application to that company.

That is because vacancies become available all the time in companies. In such cases, companies often first go to the applications they have already received. That is why unsolicited applications are well worth it! An unsolicited application consists of the same component parts as a normal application. However, there are certain details that need to be noted. Tips on how to do this can be found online, for example:



[www.bewerbung.com/initiativbewerbung](http://www.bewerbung.com/initiativbewerbung)  
[www.azubiyo.de/bewerbung/initiativbewerbung](http://www.azubiyo.de/bewerbung/initiativbewerbung)  
[www.karrierebibel.de/initiativbewerbung](http://www.karrierebibel.de/initiativbewerbung)

## **Job interview**

If the company is interested in you, you will normally be invited to a job interview, which gives you a chance to introduce yourself in person. Please schedule enough time for the interview and always make sure to arrive on time for your appointment. Before the interview, you should prepare thoroughly and research the company. Visit the website and read through the company's history; find out about the products or services. Arriving on time for your appointment and asking questions during the interview demonstrates your motivation for and interest in the vocational training programme or job.

### More tips for a successful interview:

1. Express yourself clearly and concisely
- 2.2. Do not talk too much, but rather briefly and factually
- 3.3. Let your interviewer lead the conversation
- 4.4. Be confident
5. Anticipate critical questions that your conversation partner may ask

[www.karrierebibel.de/vorstellungsgespraech-fragen](http://www.karrierebibel.de/vorstellungsgespraech-fragen)  
[www.karrierebibel.de/bewerbungsfragen](http://www.karrierebibel.de/bewerbungsfragen)

## **An application usually consists of three parts:**

### **Cover letter:**

In your personal cover letter, you briefly introduce yourself and say why you are suitable for the vacant position. For example, describe what previous experience you have gained in your home country. Find out about the company and explain why you want to work there. Your covering letter should fit on one page. Sign your covering letter. There are many templates and guides online. It is important not simply to copy something you find. Your cover letter needs to be unique to you and suitable for the position.

### **Curriculum vitae (CV):**

The CV lists your entire professional experience and is set out in the form of a table. Write the dates during which you worked with each company. Include where you undertook training or a course of studies. Specify where you went to school and what type of qualification you left with. You do not have to include a photo in your CV, but many companies prefer it if you do.

### **Certificates and references:**

It is very important that you include copies of your credentials and references in the application (do not send the original documents!). They include your school- leaving certificate, your university degree and any job references from the past. They should be in German or English – if they are not, you should have them translated. You should also send certificates from any internships, work-relevant professional development courses, or German courses you have taken.



💡 The job advert provides information about how to apply. Please read it carefully.

### **In writing:**

Buy a nice application folder and insert your cover letter, CV, and credentials and references. Then mail the application to the address mentioned in the job advertisement.

### **E-Mail:**

Many applications are now sent via email. Bring your covering letter, your CV and your certificates and references together into a single PDF file. Add the PDF file as an attachment to the email. Write a short text in the email to the person who will receive your application.

### **Online:**

Large companies have their own website through which you have to apply. You need to register with your email address before you can send your application through the website.

### **Tips:**

🔗 You can find some more helpful tips for your application at [Planet Beruf \("Planet Career"\)](#).

🔗 [Europass](#) is a multi-lingual online portal (over 20 languages) that helps immigrants to make their skills and knowledge visible. This is a free online tool for creating a "language passport" or CV. You can also find important tips on writing good applications on Europass.

🔗 You can generate a free CV and cover letter at [Bewerbung.net](#), [StepStone](#) or [Lebenslauf2go](#). You may also be able to import your data from Xing or LinkedIn. It is also possible to write your own text within the template or import files.

🔗 You can find more information and templates for cover letters and CVs here: [Bewerbung2go](#), [BewerbungsWissen](#), [Karrierebibel](#)

### **Language practice**

🔗 You can find exercises for practising job applications and general aspects of starting a career on the [VHS learning portal "I want to learn German"](#) and on the [Goethe-Institut's website "German for you"](#). You can learn more about the professional world and improve your German language skills.

## **Self-employment**

### **Who can start their own business in Germany?**

If you are still in the process of having your asylum claim recognised, your application has been turned down or you have a temporary extension of deportation ("Duldung"), self-employed work is prohibited. All others who do not want to be employed by an employer basically have the option of becoming professionally self-employed.

## **STARTERCENTER NRW – Westfälisches Ruhrgebiet in Dortmund.**



You should gather the necessary information yourself in advance, because the path to self-employment involves being well prepared. The “STARTERCENTER NRW des Westfälischen Ruhrgebiets in Dortmund” will help you to implement the “getting started” phase on a step-by-step basis and complete all the necessary start-up formalities.

### **Handwerkskammer Dortmund (Chamber of Trade)**

📍 [Ardeystraße 93](#)

44139 Dortmund

☎ [02315493444](tel:02315493444)

✉ [unternehmensberatung@hwk-do.de](mailto:unternehmensberatung@hwk-do.de)

### **Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Dortmund (Dortmund Chamber of Commerce and Industry)**

📍 [Märkische Straße 120](#)

44141 Dortmund

☎ [02315417101](tel:02315417101)

✉ [info@dortmund.ihk.de](mailto:info@dortmund.ihk.de)

### **Wirtschaftsförderung Dortmund**

📍 [Grüne Straße 2-8](#)

44147 Dortmund

☎ [02315029244](tel:02315029244)

✉ [startercenter@wirtschaftsfoerderung-dortmund.de](mailto:startercenter@wirtschaftsfoerderung-dortmund.de)

### **More information**

- [STARTERCENTER NRW Homepage](#) – Westfälisches Ruhrgebiet
- [“GründerZeiten” online guide](#) (German and Arabic)
- [Business start-up portal](#) (German, French, Italian, Russian and Turkish)
- [Homepage of the IQ Competence Centre for Migrant Entrepreneurship](#) (six languages).

### **Berufsschule**

Vocational schools offer teenagers and young adults over the age of 15 a variety of opportunities after they stop attending a general-education school . Vocational schools train students for a specific profession , and there is also the option of completing general-education school degrees . Children and adolescents in Germany are required to attend school until the age of 18 (compulsory education)!

### **The following types of schooling exist at vocational schools:**

**career-entry (Berufseinstiegsjahr - BEJ) year or career-preparatory year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr - BVJ)**

These are programmes for students with or without a certain type of secondary-school diploma (Hauptschulabschluss) who are not yet sure what kind of career they are interested in and do not yet have a vocational training placement (apprenticeship) . They are introduced to various professions and can build on either a secondary school certificate (Hauptschulabschluss) or a



certificate that is the equivalent to a “Hauptschulabschluss” in terms of level of education.

### **Vocational school (Berufsschule):**

At these schools, training is through a dual-track system. This means that part of the vocational training focuses on theory, which is learned at the school, while the other part involves getting practical experience at a company that provides vocational training.

### **Vocational schools for specific professions (Berufsfachschule):**

This type of vocational school provides 1 to 3 years of basic vocational education, preparation for a specific profession or professional qualification. Students can obtain a degree ranging from a secondary school degree one level above the one they have to a basic secondary school degree. Vocational schools are usually split into the following professional fields:

- commercial/business professions
- home economics/socio-educational care or nursing
- business/technical professions

### **Preparatory training school (Fachschule):**

This type of preparatory training school offers one- or two-year programmes for professional development. This means that students build on their previously completed vocational training programme and corresponding employment, and further develop the qualifications they have already acquired. These schools prepare students for mid-level management or self-employment. The preparatory training schools (Fachschulen) are also divided into the following subject areas:

- Engineering
- Economics
- Social work
- Agricultural economics
- Design

### **Vocational college (Berufskolleg):**

Vocational colleges, which run programmes of between one and three years, build on basic secondary-school certificates, and students aim to achieve a more advanced professional qualification or qualification for higher education at a technical university (eligibility for university study). There are vocational colleges for the following fields:

- Engineering
- Economics and administration
- Social education
- Health and nursing
- Home economics

### **Upper secondary vocational school (Berufsoberschule):**

To attend an upper secondary vocational school, you need to have already completed a vocational training programme (apprenticeship) and, at minimum, a basic secondary school



degree (mittlerer Schulabschluss). These schools' programmes usually last two years and prepare students for a subject-specific university entrance certificate or, if they speak a second foreign language, a general university entrance certificate. This makes them eligible to study at a university. The following types of upper secondary vocational schools exist:

- Technical upper secondary school (Technische Oberschule)
- Upper secondary school for economics (Wirtschaftsoberschule)
- Upper secondary school for social work (Oberschule für Sozialwesen)

### **Vocational grammar school (Berufliches Gymnasium):**

Students with a basic secondary-school degree and an average grade of 3.0 in the main subjects may attend a three-year vocational grammar school. Vocational grammar schooling culminates in a general university entrance certificate (Abitur) which makes the student eligible to study at any research university or university of applied sciences. This type of school is likewise split up into corresponding subject areas:

- Technical subjects
- Economics
- Social work and healthcare
- Agricultural sciences
- Biotechnological subjects
- Nutritional science

### **Vocational training (dual and full-time)**

#### **Dortmund Youth Vocational Centre**

The first port of call when looking for a training place is the **Dortmund Youth Vocational Centre**.

You can access the contact form for the Youth Vocational Centre [here](#), or you can use the following contact information:

#### **Dortmund Youth Vocational Centre**



[Steinstraße 39](#)

44147 Dortmund



[02318429800](tel:02318429800) (Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 18:00)



[dortmund.jugendberufshaus@arbeitsagentur.de](mailto:dortmund.jugendberufshaus@arbeitsagentur.de)



In Germany, it is a great advantage to have a **vocational qualification** before going to work. People with a vocational qualification earn more money on average over the course of their lives, are less likely to become unemployed and are less likely to have fixed-term employment contracts than people who are looking for work without a vocational qualification.

## Dual vocational training

Dual vocational training is a speciality in Germany. Around a third of dual vocational training takes place at a [vocational school](#) and around two thirds at a training company. This means that you learn theory and practice at the same time and earn money in a company during your training.

Depending on the type of occupation you would like to learn in a dual vocational training programme, you should contact the appropriate office:

### Chamber of Crafts (HWK)

The Chamber of Crafts (HWK) is responsible for skilled trades. This includes professions such as baker, bricklayer or painter.

#### Dortmund Chamber of Crafts

**Department: Training counselling & apprenticeship placement**

☎ [02315493333](tel:02315493333)

✉ [ausbildungsberatung@hwk-do.de](mailto:ausbildungsberatung@hwk-do.de)

### Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK)

The Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) is responsible for professions in industrial production, trade and services.

These include, for example

Plant mechanic

Management assistant in wholesale and foreign trade

#### Dortmund Chamber of Industry and Commerce

📍 [Märkische Str. 120](#)

44141 Dortmund

☎ [023154170](tel:023154170)

✉ [info@dortmund.ihk.de](mailto:info@dortmund.ihk.de)

🌐 [www.dortmund.ihk24.de](http://www.dortmund.ihk24.de)

## Pre-school training at a vocational school

In Germany, there is not only dual training, but also full-time school-based training at a vocational school.

Here, students learn theory and practice without an apprenticeship in a company.

Important information:





Duration: usually 2 to 3.5 years

Teaching: full-time

Subjects: vocational and general subjects

Each vocational school has its own requirements and training programmes. It is a good idea to enquire directly at the school.

You can find more information [here](#)

---

## Training coaching for young refugees and new immigrants

### Ausbildungscoaching für junge Geflüchtete und Neuzugewanderte | GrünBau gGmbH

📍 [Speicherstraße 15, 44147 Dortmund](#)

✉️ [@abc@gruenbau-dortmund.de](mailto:abc@gruenbau-dortmund.de)

☎️ [+49 \(0\) 23122616230](tel:+49(0)23122616230)

🌐 <https://gruenbau-dortmund.de/angebote/querschnitt...>

Have you recently fled or immigrated to Dortmund and are at least 15 years old?

Are you looking for an apprenticeship or need help with the transition to work?

Then come to us for training coaching!

#### Open registration without appointment:

Mondays 15:00 - 17:00

## Studies

### General information

In Germany, there are many different courses of study. There are also different types of universities:

Universitäten = universities (more academically focused)

(Fach-)Hochschulen = universities of applied sciences; polytechnics (more practically focused)

Duale Hochschulen = "dual universities" (very practically focused)

Kunst- Film und Musikhochschulen = universities for art, film and music (for the arts and performing arts)

There are public and private universities. Private universities are not necessarily better than public ones – however, students usually have to pay high tuition fees at private universities.

#### You can find many helpful sites online:

Hochschulkompass (Higher Education Compass) (list of all courses of study and universities in Germany)

Study in Germany (information for refugees)

Study programme orientation from the Employment Agency

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)

Prerequisites



If you want to study in Germany, you will need a university entrance qualification. If you do not have an Abitur degree from a German school, you need to check whether the secondary school degree you obtained in your home country is sufficient for you to enter a German university. You will find more detailed information on the Anabin website, on the "Recognition in Germany" information portal and on the website of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

You also need to bring proof of your German language skills (level C1), such as a certificate from the TestDaF, DSH or telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule.

It is also possible to access support from the educational advisory organisation Garantiefonds Hochschule.

Some universities also offer preparatory semesters during which you can learn German.

You should contact the university at which you would like to study directly for further information. Most universities have counselling services available. Also make note of the deadlines by which you need to apply for a course of study!

Tuition fees for international students from non-EU countries:

The University of Ulm's website provides detailed information on tuition fees for foreign students in Baden-Württemberg. EU immigrants and most refugees do not have to pay tuition fees.

People with university entrance qualifications do not have to pay tuition fees either! You can also find information here regarding tuition fees for a second degree.

### **Funding your degree**

Many people work in order to finance their studies. However, during term time (semesters), you must not work more than 20 hours a week. You can also try to access financial support from the government.

#### BAföG = Federal Training Assistance Act

With BAföG, students receive a monthly stipend for a limited period of time. The amount of money you will receive depends on your individual circumstances. Not every student is eligible for the BAföG. If you receive asylum seekers' benefits, you will not be able to claim the BAföG. The BAföG is only given to full-time students.

You will find an online Arabic-language tutorial about the BAföG at [www.youtube.com/BAföG/arabisch](http://www.youtube.com/BAföG/arabisch)

#### Bursary

A grant or scholarship is financial support which can be used for university studies, for example. There are many grants for which you can apply. And not just for the first semester but for your whole course of studies. You can get an overview of this on the following website

[www.stipendienlotse.de](http://www.stipendienlotse.de). Some take account of social engagement, political orientation, degree programme, grades or personal circumstances. Some organisations also cooperate with certain Hochschulen.

The "Germany Stipend" ([www.deutschlandstipendium.de](http://www.deutschlandstipendium.de)), is available in plain language, English and German, involves a wide range of requirements, which also means that it may apply to many students.

### **Without a university entrance qualification**

If you are eligible to study at university in your home country, but not in Germany, you may be able to get access to higher education through a preparatory college (Studienkolleg). There, foreign university applicants are given targeted preparation for future studies at a German research university or university of applied sciences.

## University system in Germany

There are three types of university in Germany

- Universities
- “Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften” or “HAW” (Universities of Applied Sciences), also known as “Fachhochschulen”, as well as
- Universities for Art, Film and Music

All types of university offer Bachelor's and Master's programmes.

There are both state and private universities. Most universities in Germany are funded by the state. Private universities sometimes impose high tuition fees.



### Universities

- are very academically oriented
- if you want to study for a doctorate, a university is the right place

### “Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften” or “HAW” (Universities of Applied Sciences)

- Studies are very practice-oriented
- Vocational training is tailored to concrete requirements in professional life, while a study programme includes internships and practical semesters
- It is possible to study for a doctorate at a “HAW” under certain conditions

### Universities for Art, Film and Music

The focus is on artistic subjects such as visual arts, acting, dance, industrial and fashion design, graphics, instrumental music or singing as well as modern media (directors, cameramen, scriptwriters, etc.)

In addition to face-to-face study, there is also the option of taking up distance learning.

### University-level study

### Prerequisites

If you want to study in Germany, you need a university entrance qualification. If you have not taken the German “Abitur” at a German school (equivalent to a university entrance qualification), you need to check whether the school-leaving certificate you obtained in your home country is sufficient for you to attend a German university. You can research this yourself with the help of the information portals “Anerkennung in Deutschland” ([anabin](#)) or [uni assist](#).



## Without a university entrance qualification

If you are eligible to study at university in your home country, but not in Germany, you may be able to get access to higher education by attending a Studienkolleg (preparatory college) . There, foreign university applicants receive help with preparing for future studies at a German university or university of applied sciences.

At the [German Academic Exchange Service \(DAAD\)](#) you will find detailed information on [planning your studies](#).

You should contact the university at which you would like to study directly for further information. Most universities have counselling services available. Make note of the deadlines by which you need to apply for a course of study!

You will also need to provide proof of your German language skills, such as a certificate from the TestDaF, DSH or telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule.

Language exams may be recognised differently within the same federal state!

Some universities have a language centre or offer preparatory semesters in which you also learn German.

You can find an overview of the topic “[Learning German](#)” in the chapter “[Language](#)”.

## Studying in Dortmund

Dortmund is one of the leading research and technology metropolises in the Ruhr region. Around 54,000 students are enrolled at seven universities. Dortmund's higher education landscape offers a diverse range of Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes.

You can find more information in the “[Hochschulüberblick](#)” ([Higher Education Overview](#)) and under “[Studium International](#)” ([Study International](#)).

If you are coming to Dortmund from outside the EU to study or would like to start working in Dortmund after successfully completing your studies, there are a few important things to consider:



- Information for international students: Studying in Dortmund  
-> [Information in German](#)  
-> [Information in English](#)
- Information for international graduates: Job search and work  
-> [Information in German](#)  
-> [Information in English](#)

The contact person for cooperation between the City of Dortmund and the higher education and science institutions is the city's "Wissenschaftsbüro" (Science Office) - [Contact](#).

## Universities in Dortmund

### Public universities:

#### Fachhochschule Dortmund (FH)

With around 14,500 students, the "Fachhochschule Dortmund" (Dortmund University of Applied Sciences) is one of the largest universities of applied sciences in North Rhine-Westphalia. Developments in practice are taken up by way of the continuous enhancement of degree programmes, thereby ensuring practical relevance in addition to sound scholarship. FH Dortmund offers more than 80 degree programmes - including the arts - across eight departments.

Further information about the [range of study offers](#) and the [International Office](#).

#### Hochschule für Polizei und öffentliche Verwaltung Nordrhein-Westfalen (HSPV NRW)

Dual courses of study are offered at the "HSPV NRW" (North Rhine-Westphalia University of Police and Public Administration), where students are trained for senior civil service roles in local and state administration, pension insurance and the police. It is not possible to directly enrol in a study programme at the HSPV NRW. Students are selected via the recruiting authorities.

Information about the [requirements and the recruiting authorities](#) and contact with the [International Office](#).

#### Orchesterzentrum NRW

The "Orchesterzentrum NRW" (Orchestra Centre NRW) in Dortmund is a joint institution of the four state music colleges of North Rhine-Westphalia (Detmold, Düsseldorf, Essen and Cologne) and Europe's first inter-university training centre for future orchestral musicians. In the Master's programme "Orchestral Performance", students are prepared over four semesters in a practical and targeted manner for a career in renowned orchestras.

Further information about the [range of study offers](#) and [contacts](#) at local level.

#### Technische Universität Dortmund (TU)

The university has roughly 33,400 students and 6,500 employees, including about 300 professors. At 17 faculties in the fields of Natural and Engineering Sciences, as well as Social and Cultural Sciences, the TU Dortmund offers around 80 degree programmes.

Here is a brief overview of the programmes offered by the International Office:

- Application, admission and enrolment in the degree programme
- Clearing places for refugees (advice, language support, stipends)
- Social guidance for international students (e.g. on the following topics: Visa and residence, student financing and scholarships, social commitment, housing)
- A semester abroad and an overseas placement
- Information, networking and cultural events
- Welcome services for new international students
- Offer for career planning and career entry

Further information about the [range of study offers](#) and the [International Office](#).



## Private universities:

### FOM Hochschule

FOM is one of the largest private universities in Germany. It offers people in employment the opportunity to gain academic qualifications parallel to their job and to obtain state and internationally recognised Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Teaching focuses on practice-oriented degree programmes in the fields of Economics, Business and Law, Health and Social Affairs, IT Management and Engineering. Lectures are held outside regular working hours in the evenings and at weekends at 29 university centres nationwide.

You can find further information on [degree programmes](#) and [contacts](#) on site.

### International School of Management (ISM)

ISM has several locations in Germany and trains young executives for work in the global economy. At the Dortmund Campus, MBA, part-time and dual study programmes are offered in addition to full-time courses.

Further information about the [range of study offers](#) and the [International Office](#).

### IU Internationale Hochschule

IU International University is a state-recognised private university with twelve study locations nationwide. At the Dortmund Campus, the degree programmes Marketing Management, Social Work and Tourism Management are offered. Over a period of seven semesters, students earn a Bachelor of Arts degree while gaining valuable and relevant professional



experience in their field.

Further information about the [range of study offers](#) and [contacts](#) can be found on campus.

## **Advisory services for international students in Dortmund**

### **Contact points in Dortmund**

#### **City of Dortmund**

[General information](#) for international students.

Overview of [advisory services](#) in Dortmund.

### **Advisory services for international students at the universities:**

The International Offices at the universities offer a wide range of counselling and advisory services for international students and prospective students. They also arrange contacts to other advisory service centres (e.g. on the topic of “Studying with a child”) and network partners.

#### **Fachhochschule Dortmund (FH)**

##### **International Office**

- Application, admission and enrolment
- Social advice service
- Advising international students on scholarship and support programmes
- Graduation funding
- Intercultural and information events
- Integration of international students in higher education and society
- “FHDO hilft” – Counselling services and German courses for refugees
- Information about semesters and internships abroad

Student representation ([AStA FH Dortmund](#))

Counselling and orientation services:

- Study & exam questions
- Family & social affairs
- Higher education policy
- International matters
- Diversity
- Finances
- IT

#### **Technische Universität Dortmund (TU)**

##### **International Office**



- Admission and enrolment
- Social advice service
- Housing advice
- Advising on scholarship and support programmes
- Graduation funding
- Clearing house for refugees – counselling, language support and scholarships for refugees
- Events

Student representation ([AStA TU Dortmund](#))

Advisory and information services for international students:

- Residence and visa
- Social benefits
- Working in Germany
- Admission requirements for university
- Language courses
- Contractual matters

**Other offices with advice and counselling offers:**

**Arbeitsagentur Dortmund (Employment Agency)**

- Student advisory service
- Apprenticeship placement service
- Job placement service

**“Evangelische Studierendengemeinde Dortmund” (Protestant Student Community Dortmund)**

- Advice and support for international students
- Financial support for students
- Pastoral care

**“Katholische Hochschulgemeinde” (Catholic University Community)**

- Consulting and coaching
- Financial support for students
- Pastoral care

**Studierendenwerk Dortmund (Student Union Dortmund)**

The “Studierendenwerk Dortmund” (Student Union Dortmund) is the social service provider on campus. It does not belong to any university, but is an independent partner for students. Areas of responsibility include:

- Student financing/BAföG (counselling and application)
- Student housing (arrangement and management of affordable housing near campus)





- Gastronomy (great, affordable food in refectories and cafeterias)
- Social matters (childcare, emergency assistance, debt counselling)

The central point of contact for all services offered by the Student Union is the [“InfoPoint” in the “Mensa” building \(refectory building\)](#) on Campus Nord.

## Financial aid

Many students have a job alongside their studies. It is important to make sure that this does not mean that you neglect your studies. Please note that the pursuit of gainful employment for international students is only possible to a limited extent and is regulated by law ([AufenthG \(Residence Act\) Section 16 Studies](#)).

During your studies, you may work 120 full days or 240 half days per calendar year. A half working day is defined as a day on which up to half of the collectively agreed, customary (for the local area) or company working time is worked. Any employment beyond these limits must be applied for at the competent “Ausländerbehörde” (Immigration Office) and usually requires the approval of the “Zentrale Arbeitsvermittlung” or “ZAV” (Central Placement Office) of the “Bundesagentur für Arbeit” (Federal Employment Agency).

Special case: Part-time student jobs (such as working as a tutor or student assistant), on the other hand, are permitted without restriction.

In principle, this is regulated by the state and stipulates that students may not work more than 20 hours per week during the lecture period (semester). If you exceed this maximum number of hours, you could be expelled from the university. You must also note that there is a maximum number of semesters until the conclusion of a Bachelor's or Master's degree programme, which you may not exceed.

## Working student

You can become a working student in the first semester or later on. In many degree programmes, there is also the opportunity to work as a working student at a company. This gives you the chance to gain professional experience and earn money at the same time. Most companies offer contracts based on 10-20 hours per week. Another advantage is that working students who perform well are often taken on after graduation, which means you could potentially secure a job early on. Find out about companies in your area. The concept of the working student is well-established.

## Work-study programme

For this type of course, **vocational training is combined** with studying. As a general rule, you work in the company during the breaks between semesters. The company will finance you during your studies, even if you do not work during this time.

## Student assistant

These are advertised positions at universities. Many of these can be found on the notice boards at central locations across the university (such as in the library or in the “Mensa” [refectory]), or you can enquire at the university in person. As a student assistant, you work fixed hours during the week (max. 20 hours). The tasks to be performed concern helping a



lecturer, a chair or an organisation of the university. This is usually remunerated with minimum wage.

### **Minijob/520 € basic pay.**

Many students also work in the catering trade (as bartenders, waitresses and the like), give private lessons or offering help with childcare.

There are always many job advertisements on the notice boards of universities, which can be found in central places such as the library or the “Mensa” (refectory).

Most students work in a mini-job (€520 basic pay). The advantage is that a student is then considered to be in “minor employment” – and, therefore, no tax or social security contributions are owed (unemployment, health and nursing care insurance). This is easy to combine with your studies. More information is available at [www.minijob-zentrale.de](http://www.minijob-zentrale.de) (available in German and in easy-to-understand language).

### **You can also search for jobs online, e.g. at the following links:**

[Link](#) to the online job board of the FH Dortmund

[Link](#) to the job portal “Stellenwerk” offered by the TU Dortmund

[The “Jobbörse” \(job board\) offered by the Agentur für Arbeit \(Federal Employment Agency\)](#)

You can find all the information you need on the topic of work [here](#).

### **Other support options:**

#### **BAföG = Federal Training Assistance Act**

Students who are not sufficiently supported by their parents can apply for “BAföG” (Federal Training Assistance - a form of student loan). Here you will receive a monthly sum of money over a fixed period of time. As a rule, only half of the money has to be paid back after graduation.

[Under certain circumstances](#), international students can also receive BAföG. The responsible BAföG office will examine your case on an individual basis.

The amount of BAföG funding you receive will depend on the respective personal requirements. Relevant things include:

- **Nationality:**  
In principle, anyone who has German citizenship can receive BAföG. However, citizens of the European Union, as well as migrants and refugees living in Germany, are also eligible for funding. The basic rule is: If foreign nationals have the prospect of staying in Germany and are socially integrated, they are considered eligible for support. For more information for refugees and migrants, please visit the website [“BAföG für Geflüchtete und Migranten”](#).
- **Age:**  
For BAföG funding, you must not be older than 30 years at the beginning of the Bachelor's degree programme, and not older than 35 years before beginning the Master's



programme.

- **Suitability:**

If you want to receive BAföG funding, you should essentially be in a position to actually achieve the educational goal you are striving for.

- **Private income and assets:**

BAföG is available to young people whose families cannot pay for their education alone. The extent to which income and assets are taken into account will be examined as part of the application process.

To receive BAföG, you must submit an application. For students at the TU Dortmund or the FH Dortmund, the [“Studierendenwerk Dortmund”](#) (Student Union) is responsible. During the consultation hours, you will receive personal advice.

If you are studying at another higher education institution, you will find a list available at [www.bafög.de](http://www.bafög.de) Your competent office for educational grants.

Further information can also be found at: [www.bafög.de/leichte-sprache](http://www.bafög.de/leichte-sprache) (written in easy-to-understand German).

An alternative to state funding is a “Stipendium” (bursary).

### **Bursary**

There are numerous bursaries you can apply for – not only for the first semester, but throughout your studies. You can get an overview of these on the following page [www.stipendienlotse.de](http://www.stipendienlotse.de) (available in plain language and German). These services are often very different. In some cases, emphasis is placed on social commitment or on political orientation, course of study, grades or personal circumstances. Some organisations also cooperate with certain Hochschulen.

The so-called [“Deutschland-Stipendium”](#) is a Germany-wide bursary programme for gifted students at state and state-recognised universities. The “Deutschlandstipendium” supports students of all nationalities at higher education institutions whose previous educational path is characterised by outstanding academic achievements. In addition to notable successes at school and/or university, the eligibility criteria also include a student’s social commitment. Consideration is also given to overcoming particular biographical hurdles resulting from a person’s family or cultural background.

You can find more information on bursaries in the Ruhr area at [“Stipendienkultur Ruhr”](#)

### **International Scientists in Dortmund**

Dortmund is not only a university location, but also an important international research location. Excellent scientists from all over the world will find an attractive working environment in Dortmund. Seven universities and around 20 non-university research institutes and scientific institutions are located in the city. You can find an overview [here](#).



### Information and contacts for international researchers:

- Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts
- Max Planck Institute for Molecular Physiology
- TU Dortmund

### Local network:

- [Dual Career Network Ruhr](#)
- [Welcome Agency with Expatriate Service](#)
- [windo e.V.](#) – The science network of university and non-university science and research institutions in Dortmund

You can find all the information you need on the topic of work [here](#).

### Links on this topic

- Studying in Dortmund: [www.dortmund.de/studium](http://www.dortmund.de/studium)
- Studying in the Ruhr area: [www.welcome.ruhr](http://www.welcome.ruhr)
- Studying in Germany: [www.study-in-germany.de](http://www.study-in-germany.de)
- Nationwide search for degree programmes: [www.hochschulkompass.de](http://www.hochschulkompass.de)
- Information for refugees in NRW: <https://www.mkw.nrw/hochschule-und-forschung/stud...>
- Free online university for refugees: Kiron Open Higher Education <https://kiron.ngo/en/>

## Recognition of credentials

### Recognition of foreign educational qualifications

In Germany, **certificates** play an important role as far as schools, studies or careers are concerned. Certificates are used to demonstrate what you have learned and accomplished. Certificates are the main prerequisite for getting a job or for being admitted to a school or university. So, if you have already acquired certificates at an overseas school, in training or in a course of study, you should make every effort to ensure that these certificates are **recognised** in Germany. This means that we will check what your certificates qualify you for in Germany. Your skills are “translated”, so to speak. It may be that you no longer have your certificates with you. In this case, you can try to have your professional experience and professional abilities recognised by passing some tests.



---

## Centre for recognising qualifications

### **Dortmunder Weiterbildungsforum e. V.**

📍 Kleppingstr. 37 (Berswordthalle)  
44135 Dortmund



[023195090007](tel:023195090007)

### **Volkshochschule Dortmund**

📍 Hansastraße 2-4  
44137 Dortmund



[02315024727](tel:02315024727)

### **VMDO e. V.**

📍 Beuthstr. 21  
44147 Dortmund



[023128678744](tel:023128678744)

### **Multikulturelles Forum e. V., Dortmund**

📍 Friedensplatz 7  
44135 Dortmund



[023128860730](tel:023128860730)

## **The “IHK Dortmund” (Dortmund CCI) provides advice with regard to Chamber of Commerce and Industry professions**

### **Jens Nordmann**

📍 Märkische Straße 120  
44141 Dortmund



[02315417285](tel:02315417285)





---

[j.nordmann@dortmund.ihk.de](mailto:j.nordmann@dortmund.ihk.de)

[www.dortmund.ihk24.de](http://www.dortmund.ihk24.de)

💡 If you want to study or work as a researcher, please contact a university to get your qualifications recognised.

### **Official authentication of certificates/credentials**

Official authentication confirms that a document is genuine. This is necessary, for example, for enrolling at a university. All photocopies of your credentials must be officially authenticated.

Any authority may certify copies of documents. The authorities include, for example, the respective [“Bürgeramt/Meldebehörde” \(Citizens’ Office/Registration Office\)](#) for a city.