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Vocational training and university studies

Professional orientation

BOFplus: Vocational orientation for people with refugee and migration experience

Participants learn about training, studying, retraining and further education in Germany. They also find out what help is available after the course.

Participants can **familiarise themselves with** various **professions**. They can **try out** these professions in practice rooms and **internships**.

In the BOFplus course, participants learn **German for the job**. Specialised vocabulary is particularly important.

Participants are taught how to apply for a job. They learn what they need to be able to do.

We help participants with problems and answer their questions throughout the course.

We support the participants in their **search for training, retraining and further training in companies**.

The BOFplus project consists of

1. two-week orientation phase:

- Initial career orientation
- Language and specialised instruction
- Aptitude assessment

2nd BOFplus course

- Full-time: 26 weeks
- Part-time: 34 weeks

You can choose from these professions:

- Colour & Interior Design
- Housekeeping
- Warehouse/logistics
- Metal/plastic processing
- sales
- Woodworking
- Cosmetics & body care

 [flyer](#)

 [More info](#)

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Vocational training

Vocational training

In Germany, there are more than **340 apprenticeship occupations**.

There is a distinction between **school-based training** and **company-based training** (school and company).

In order to earn more than in a temporary job, you need training in Germany. **With vocational training, the chances of getting a good job increase.**

Information on apprenticeships

On the website of the **Federal Employment Agency**, you will find an **overview of all apprenticeship occupations** and helpful information on the contents of the **vocational training, requirements, application** etc.

[Go to the website](#)

School-based vocational training

School-based vocational training takes place in a **vocational college** or a **private school**. In addition to **school attendance**, **internships** take place in companies and institutions.

School-based training occupations include physiotherapist, occupational therapist, social worker, chemical-technical assistant.

During the vocational training, **no training salary** is paid. Some of these apprenticeships are also subject to a fee.

Financial support - BAföG (=Ausbildungsförderung)

The BAföG is a form of **monthly financial support**, during the **school years (from year 10)**, during **school-based vocational training** or during **studies**. Pupil **BAföG** (⇒ during school time and school-based vocational training) is **dependent on the parents' earnings**

and **does not have to be paid back**. Each application is reviewed individually.

Who can apply?

- Recognised refugees
- Refugees recognised under the Geneva Convention
- Subsidiary beneficiaries of protection
- Persons with a tolerated status who have been living in Germany for 15 months

Asylum seekers in an ongoing asylum procedure cannot receive BAföG.

Find more information here ⇒ [bafög.de](https://www.bafög.de)

Contact for pupil/student loan enquires (BAföG)

For the surnames: A - M

Mr Holger Besting



[02761/81553](tel:0276181553)



h.besting@kreis-olpe.de

For the surnames: N - Z

Ms Silvia Dohle



[02761/81224](tel:0276181224)



s.dohle@kreis-olpe.de

Further information on the BAföG office of the district of Olpe is available [here](#)

Company-based vocational training

Company-based vocational training = dual vocational training

In the case of **company-based vocational training**, the training **takes place both in the company and at a vocational school**. The training courses last between **two and three and a half years**.

In order to complete a **dual vocational training programme**, you need a **training company**, which concludes a **training contract** with you. You will then also receive a **training salary**.

Important: If you are involved in a current asylum procedure or have a “Duldung” (tolerated status), you must send the training contract to the “Ausländerbehörde” (Immigration Office).

Tip: Free app to learn German [Lunes App](#).

Financial support

The **Berufsausbildungsbeihilfe (BAB)** is a form of **monthly financial support** during company-based vocational training and can be obtained from **Agentur für Arbeit** (Federal Employment Agency) under certain conditions.

You can find further information [here](#).

Vocational training place with a tolerated status

A vocational training place with a tolerated status is granted to a **trainee** whose asylum procedure has been completed and whose **asylum application has been rejected**. The “Ausländerbehörde” (Immigration Office) checks whether a tolerated status for a vocational training place can be issued. The tolerated status is granted **for the duration of the vocational training** plus six months.

If the trainee **is taken on in his or her company after the vocational training** or finds another employer, the tolerated status **is extended for two years**.

Searching for an apprenticeship

Searching for an apprenticeship

Career guidance from the “Agentur für Arbeit” (Federal Employment Agency)

If you do not yet know which **training occupation** you would like to pursue, then seek advice from **the “Agentur für Arbeit” (Federal Employment Agency)**.

You can make an **appointment with a careers adviser** at your school, at the Federal Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit, Rochusstraße 3, 57462 Olpe) or **by telephone at [0271/2301100](tel:02712301100)**.

Your vocational counsellor will also support you in your **search for an apprenticeship**.

You can find information (in German) on various professions [here](#)

Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) and Chamber of Crafts (HWK)

On the **websites** of the companies of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the Chamber of Crafts you can **search for an apprenticeship or an internship**.

■ [IHK Lehrstellenbörse](#)

■ [HWK Lehrstellenbörse](#)

The Chamber of Crafts also offers direct help for refugees.

Contact:

Mr. Udo Linnenbrink (Welcome Guide of the HWK)

Brückenplatz 1, 59821 Arnsberg

■ [02931/877372](tel:02931877372)

■ udo.linnenbrink@hwk-swf.de

Ms Ute Joachimczak (Welcome Guide of the Vocational Training Centre [BBZ] of the IHK-Siegen)

Birlenbacher Hütte 10, 57078 Siegen

■ [0271/8905735](tel:02718905735)

■ joachimczak@bbz-siegen.de

Internship

You can get to know an apprenticeship better during a work placement. You can arrange the internship with an **employer** and it lasts about one to two weeks, maximum 3 months.

For more information, see ⇒ ■ [internship](#)

Entry-level qualification (=EQ)

You can complete a one-year internship, a so-called entry-level qualification, with the **approval of the Employment Agency and the “Ausländerbehörde” (Immigration Office)**.

University study

Studying at university

Studies

In Germany there are **various professions** (for example, teacher, doctor and many others) for which you need a degree.

In Germany, you can study at a **university of applied sciences (“Fachhochschule”) or a university (“Universität”)**.

Universities of Applied Science (Fachhochschulen - FH): Studies at a university of applied sciences are **practice-oriented** and fewer courses are offered.

Universities (Uni): Studies at a university tend to be **academic and theoretical** and more research-oriented.

Prerequisites

If you want to study, you need a **school-leaving qualification** that qualifies you to study (a so-called “university entrance qualification”).

There are three types of university entrance qualifications:

- The **general higher education entrance qualification** (“Abitur”),
- The **subject-specific higher education entrance qualification** (“Fachgebundenes Abitur”) or
- The **advanced technical college entrance qualification** (“Fachabitur”).

Recognition of foreign graduation certificates

The first thing you should, therefore, check is whether the **university entrance qualification** from your home country is **recognised** in Germany.

There are websites where you can check this yourself:

 **Database of the Central Office for Foreign Education** (= ZAB). There you can enter the country in which you graduated and find out whether your school-leaving certificate is sufficient for the desired degree programme.

■ www.study-in.de

■ www.kmk.org

Semester fee

At **state universities** every student pays a semester fee (one semester is 6 months). The amount depends on the respective university.

Private universities have significantly **higher fees** than state universities.

I would like to study

Help in finding the right study programme

◆ If you are interested in studying and do not yet know what you would like to study, then get advice from the **Vocational Guidance Service provided by the Employment Agency (BfA)**.

You can make an **appointment with a career guidance counsellor** either at your school, at the Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit, Rochusstraße 3 in Olpe) or by telephone at [0271/8905735](tel:02718905735).

◆ Many universities and colleges offer an “**Open Day**”. **Everyone can come by** and find out about study-related professions and the individual universities.

Information on study-related professions can be found here ⇒ ■ Studienwahl.de

Job applications

In order to be able to study, you must apply for the selected study programme.

One important detail here are the **application deadlines**, which each university publishes on its website. The best thing to do is to find this out **directly from the university**.

Proof of German language skills

If you want to study at a German university, you need German language skills, at least **level B2, while level C1 is considered better**. This varies from university to university. Find out more information from the university itself.

You can find information about language courses and language exams here:

■ Goethe-Institut

■ [“German Academic Exchange Service” DAAD](http://German Academic Exchange Service)

■ www.sprachnachweis.de

You cannot study in Germany without proof of proficiency in German or proof of participation in a German language course!

What documents do I need to register?

The “**Immatrikulation**” is a form of **enrolment at the university**. If your application has been accepted, you will receive mail from the university asking you to enrol.

The following documents are needed:

- **Passport**, identity card or equivalent proof of identity
- **University entrance qualification** (for example, “Abitur” [equivalent to an international university entrance qualification])
- **Certificate of health insurance**
- Proof of **German language skills**

Degrees

Possible degrees

Bachelor’s degree

The duration of study is at least **6 to a maximum of 8 semesters** (3 to 4 years). You collect so-called ECTS points through various courses and examinations. To get a Bachelor’s degree, you need to have enough points and write a **Bachelor’s thesis**.

Master’s degree

A Master’s degree is a **postgraduate degree** taken after the Bachelor’s degree. Content and focus in the master’s degree course intensifies the bachelor’s degree. The programme lasts **4 to 8 semesters** (2 to 3 years).

“Staatsexamen” (State examinations)

Courses of study – for example, medicine, law, pharmacology and aspects of study in food chemistry and teaching – are completed with a state examination, the so-called “Staatsexamen”.

PhD

A PhD (**doctorate**) is the requirement for an academic career, with very few exceptions. Before that, you have to write a **doctoral thesis**.

Universities in the surrounding area

Universities in South Westphalia:

- [!\[\]\(b9463851ebdd8a3525de1cceb8d92d53_img.jpg\) Fachhochschule Südwestfalen \(South Westphalia University of Applied Sciences\)](#)
- [!\[\]\(9f995c877a90c057f78c081f2ddb8c28_img.jpg\) Universität Siegen \(University of Siegen\)](#)
- [!\[\]\(238ca543ea70a1e89724b53dae075774_img.jpg\) Fernuniversität Hagen \(University of Hagen\)](#)

Here you can find further [**information on student advice and counselling in NRW.**](#)

I am currently studying

Help during studies

Many universities have **mentoring programmes**. In these programmes, you can have someone from a higher semester assigned to you. Your mentor is a person from a higher semester and will help you with all questions about your studies.

Many universities have an **“International Office”**. It is responsible for managing students’ semesters abroad, as well as international students. You can get help and support there.

Financing your studies

Financial help

BAföG = Federal Training Assistance Act

This **government funding** is intended to help students if they do not have enough money through part-time jobs or parental support.

During the study period, you will receive a **monthly amount of money**. Half of the total **sum** must be repaid **later**. The responsible **BAföG office is linked to the student union at your university** and checks each person individually to see whether they are entitled to Bafög.

Bursary

There are many grants for which you can **apply**. Not just for the first semester, but for the whole course of study.

- **You can get an overview here** ⇒ [!\[\]\(15d7f424c17cf81327a96418d662c1c1_img.jpg\) Stipendienlotse.de](#)