

Studium

- The word “Studium” in German refers to studying at a **higher education college**. There are different types of higher education colleges. For example: Fachhochschule (technical college/college of applied science), university, art college, music college, etc.
- You are allowed to study at a Fachhochschule when you have passed the examination for the **Fachhochschulreife** (advanced technical college certificate). You are allowed to study at any kind of higher education institution (including a university and/or a Fachhochschule) when you have passed the examination for the **Allgemeine Hochschulreife** (general university entrance qualification) which is known as the Abitur.
- You are also allowed to study at any kind of higher education institution (including a university and/or a Fachhochschule) when you have passed the examination for the **fachgebundene Hochschulreife** (subject-specific university entrance qualification). However at a university, you are only allowed to study certain subjects if you only have the **fachgebundene Hochschulreife** and not the **Allgemeine Hochschulreife**. But at a Fachhochschule, you can study every subject or course offered with the **fachgebundene Hochschulreife**.
- Higher education studies involve a lot of **independent learning**. The students have to actively shape the route to their career. It is important to know at an early stage the job that you want to do later. Then you can prepare for it in a targeted way during your studies.
- During higher education studies, the students must explore intensively the topics of their chosen subject(s) at an academic level.
- For some subjects you need particularly good grades in your Abitur in order to get a place at university. Sometimes you have to take an entrance examination. For some subjects, you need to apply. Then you will be assigned a place at a university in Germany.
- For most subjects you need excellent knowledge of German. If you have the Allgemeine Hochschule Hochschulreife (general university entrance qualification), you automatically prove that you have good German skills. For some subject, excellent knowledge of English or other languages is sufficient. You may need knowledge of other languages such as English or Latin for some subjects.
- At universities and Fachhochschulen there is a choice of many different subjects to study.
- For example: Medicine, law, IT, architecture, teacher training, mathematics, archaeology, linguistics, geography, engineering, cultural sciences, mechatronics, etc. It is a good idea to study your options intensively and at an early stage.
- Some higher education institutions focus on specific subjects.
- For example: technical universities, teacher training college, art college, music college or administrative college. There are state-funded, private and ecclesiastic higher education institutions.
- There are also higher education institutions that offer **distance learning**. This refers to tuition that does not take

place at the higher education institution. You learn at home, which is why it is known as **distance learning**. Distance learning requires a high degree of independent learning. This means: You are learning without supervision and need to make sure yourself that you pass examinations at the right time, for example.

- In Baden-Württemberg there are also **Duale Hochschulen**. The dual degree course combines an academic degree course and practical experience in a company or a social institution. For this kind of course you need a **study contract** with a company or a social institution.
- In Baden-Württemberg there is a huge variety of subjects you can study and higher education institutions. It's therefore very important to get advice. There are course guidance centres (known as Studienberatung), consultation institutions and initiatives.
- The study course is divided into **semesters**. One semester is half a study year.
- The winter semester lasts from October until March. The summer semester lasts from April until September.
- Within the semester there are so-called **vorlesungsfreie Zeiten** when there are no lectures or tutorials. During these times the students can take examinations or write seminar essays. They can also do an internship, work or take a trip abroad to learn a language.
- Students can usually take their **bachelor degree** after 6 semesters (3 years of study). They can achieve a **master's degree** after 4 further semesters (2 years). The students have to pass examinations to be awarded the bachelor and master's degrees.
- As well as the bachelor and master's degrees, there are also other qualifications that can be achieved: diploma, magister, state exam, etc.
- Those who are very successful in their studies at a university or a Fachhochschule has the possibility of studying for a doctorate. This is known as **Promotion** in German. You can study for a doctorate (in German: "promovieren") in any subject.
- With a German higher education entrance qualification, students can usually study anywhere in Europe and in further countries. A qualification from a German higher education institution is usually recognised internationally.
- You may have to pay for the course. It depends which higher education institution you attend. Attending higher education institutions is not free-of-charge. There are also higher education institutions which are very expensive to attend. It is important to know these things before you start your studies.
- It is also possible to receive financial support from the German state for your studies. This is known as **BAföG**. You have to apply for this. When your course is finished, you have to pay some of it back.
- There are also various foundations ("Stiftungen") who give students money for their studies. This is known as a **Stipendium** (grant). Students need to apply for a Stipendium. Those who successfully pass their course normally do not have to pay back any of the Stipendium.
- Many students also work part-time alongside their studies, in order to pay their living costs. It's a good idea to

consider beforehand whether this is going to be an option.