

FAQS CONCERNING HIGHER STUDIES FOR REFUGEES

1. Where can I find more information concerning higher studies in Germany?	2
2. Where can I study?	2
3. What courses are offered?	2
4. What are the requirements for pursuing higher education in Germany?	2
⇒ Legal status	2
⇒ Proficiency of the German Language	3
⇒ University Entrance Qualifications	3
⇒ Applying for a university program	3
5. How can I achieve the required language level in German?	4
6. I have completed a degree, but can only provide some proof or non at all. Can I still study in Germany?	5
7. My qualifications are only partially recognized. What can I do?	5
8. How can I finance my studies?	5
9. How can I find a place to live?	8
10. Do the universities offer trial courses?	8
11. Where can I seek guidance?	9

1. Where can I find more information concerning higher studies in Germany?

You may find general information concerning higher studies in Germany on the [Make it in Germany](#) website, as well as the [Federal Ministry of Education and Research's](#) website. Information particularly aimed at refugees who are interested in studying in Germany may be found at [study-in.de](#). The [Ministry for Science and Research](#) and the [Study Guide Baden-Wuerttemberg](#) offer specific information concerning studies in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

2. Where can I study?

There are various types of institutions of higher education in Germany:

- Universities
- Colleges of Technology
- Music and Art Colleges
- Colleges of Education
- Universities of Applied Sciences
- Colleges of Administration

You may find additional information on the different institutions of higher education in Baden-Wuerttemberg on the Study Guide for Baden-Wuerttemberg's [website](#) or [brochure](#).

3. What courses are offered?

You can find an overview of all degrees and courses offered in Baden-Wuerttemberg in the following databases: [Studieninfo Baden-Wuerttemberg](#) and [Study Search](#).

4. What are the requirements for pursuing higher education in Germany?

⇒ *Legal status*

Generally speaking a **valid residence status is not required to commence higher studies** in Germany. Therefore, in theory it is possible to begin one's studies whilst going through the asylum procedure. However, depending on one's legal status, certain benefits, such as language courses, may be limited.

Furthermore, starting with the winter semester 2017/2018, international students will be charged tuition fees in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg. Refugees with a humanitarian residence permit (approval of the refugee status, subsidiary protection) as well as asylum seekers currently going through the asylum procedure and who are of an origin with an increased protection quota (Syria, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Eritrea), will be exempted from paying these fees. Asylum seekers from other countries, as well as international students who have come to Germany with a student visa (according to § 16 Aufenthaltsgesetz), will be required to pay 1500€ in tuition fees per semester, if they commence their studies in the winter semester 2017/2018 and onwards. If

their studies have started prior to the winter semester 2017/2018, no fees will be charged. You may find further information [here](#).

⇒ *Proficiency of the German Language*

Proficiency of the German language is one of the fundamental requirements to take up studies in Germany.

The majority of undergraduate programs offered in Germany will be taught in German and the required level of proficiency is usually set at C1 (under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). Proof of proficiency will usually be provided through either the [DSH](#) or the [Test DaF](#) exam.

Many graduate programs will also be offered in English, however, a proof of proficiency of the taught language will still be required. Certain undergraduate programs are also taught in English. You can find more information on those programs on the relevant institutions' websites.

The website [Hochschulkompass](#) provides an overview of international courses.

⇒ *University Entrance Qualifications*

Admission to a German institution of higher education will only be granted once the student provides a **proof of university entrance qualifications**, which also have to be recognized in Germany (HZB). Whether or not the qualifications are recognized will be determined through the application process.

The [Studienkolleg Konstanz](#) will verify foreign university entrance qualifications for applications for the colleges of applied sciences in Baden-Württemberg. The verification for the Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg will be administered through their [Zentrale Anerkennungsstelle](#) in Stuttgart.

One can find out who's responsible for verifying foreign university entrance qualifications in the Freiburg area by consulting the [list](#) of appointees to refugees at each institution.

A first online review may be conducted through the information portal [Anabin](#) (a database providing information on the valuation of foreign degrees) or at [Anerkennung Deutschland](#).

⇒ *Applying for a university program*

It is demanded to attach the original or an authenticated copy of one's university entrance qualifications to the application. Furthermore, the qualifications need to be translated by a sworn translator.

The different programs may also require **additional paperwork**. All requirements can be found on the relevant institution's website.

Applications for graduate studies always require a proof of completed undergraduate studies. Admission will then be granted through the relevant faculty.

One can find additional information on the different application processes and the deadlines on the institutions' websites.

The deadlines for admission-limited bachelor studies are usually until January 15th for the summer semester and July 15th for the winter semester. The deadlines for Staatsexamen or Master studies differ, one can find them on the websites of the institutions.



The application processes and deadlines can vary significantly between the different institutions!

5. How can I achieve the required language level in German?

Recognized refugees are entitled to participate in an [integration course](#), which is funded by the federal government and concludes in the language proficiency level B1. Individuals with a 'high' probability of being granted asylum (from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea and Somalia) may also apply for these courses whilst going through the asylum procedure.

Additionally, Freiburg has a [Sprachkolleg for foreign students](#), which also offers German classes for foreign university applicants.

As these classes are very costly, the funding may pose a problem. However, there may be opportunities to seek funding through the job qualification process from the Jobcenter. An entitlement is not guaranteed though.

Those with a legal status according to § 23 Par. 1 and Par. 2 AufenthG may also apply for funding of a language course through the [Bildungsberatung Garantiefonds Hochschule](#). English courses, certain special seminars, Studienkollegs or academic internships may be funded through this too (see financing).

Institutions of higher education may also offer free language classes for refugees. More information on this can be found on each institution's website and on our website "[Refugees Welocme](#)" for Freiburg region.

Furthermore, there are various options to be found online. Among others free online language courses can be found on the [Deutsche Welle](#), the [ich will deutsch lernen](#) or the [Alumniportal](#) websites. The [Goethe-Institute](#) is also offering an online program. [Germanforrefugees](#) is even offering two applications teaching both German and English. If you want to learn the German alphabet you can find explanation videos in Arabic [here](#).

One can find a list of online language courses [here](#). A free aptitude test can be found at [onSET](#). A detailed overview of the various German courses in Freiburg and its surroundings can be found in our [brochure](#).

In addition we offer free licenses for the language platform OLS of the EU! There you can attend an one-year online language course from language level A1 up to C1 including an assessment

test and online tutorials (e.g. German, English, French, Italian). If you are interested feel free to contact us at refugees@swfr.de

6. I have completed a degree, but can only provide some proof or non at all. Can I still study in Germany?

If the proof of entrance qualifications or undergraduate studies is missing, there are still opportunities to take up studies in Germany. You can for example take the [Delta Prüfung](#), which will be accepted as an equivalent to the normal entrance qualification (Abitur). With passing this exam you will be allowed to start your studies in a Bachelor degree. For Master studies the different university departments have the possibility to set up specific assessment test in order to accept the application.

More information on these opportunities can be found at the relevant course guidance centers (consult the [list](#) of contact persons in the infobox).

7. My qualifications are only partially recognized. What can I do?

If one's qualifications are only partially recognized in Germany, one will have to take preparation courses at the Studienkolleg. Language classes as well as subject teaching are offered at the Studienkolleg and they are adjusted to the desired program. Completion of these courses will usually take one year and upon completion the student will receive a subject linked university entrance qualification in one of the following areas: social studies, humanities, economics, medicine or technology. Information on the entrance requirements as well as the required paperwork can be found on the Studienkolleg's websites.

The Studienkolleg [Konstanz](#) is responsible for all colleges of applied sciences, whilst the Studienkolleg [Heidelberg](#) is responsible for all universities Baden-Wurtemberg. The Studienkolleg [Karlsruhe](#) is responsible for degrees taught at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology and the University of Stuttgart as well as all qualified professionals who are seeking degrees in the natural sciences or technical fields. The applications for the Studienkolleg have to go through the institution of higher education at which one would like to study later on.

8. How can I finance my studies?

The website study-in.de provides a good overview on this topic.



The financing opportunities depend on the legal status!

For recognized refugees

⇒ **BAföG**

Recognized refugees (those entitled to political asylum, refugees granted refugee status or subsidiary protection according to § 23 Par. 1 or Par. 2 AufenthG) can apply for the educational grant according to BAföG as soon as the legal status has been granted.

Starting June 1st 2016 those tolerated or holding certain humanitarian legal statuses (§ 25 Par. 3, § 25 Par. 4 Sentence 2, § 25 Par. 5) and those with a residence permit due to family circumstances (§§ 30 through 34) may apply for BAföG after a stay in Germany of at least 15 months.

If there is a general eligibility to receive educational grants according to BAföG, the individual case will be reviewed (for example age limit) as well as all details concerning the course of study and the previous academic history. It is therefore advisable to already start organizing the BaföG during the study preparation period, because previous completed semesters (also abroad) can be deducted and might reduce the period of financial granting. Those affected may seek guidance at the [Studierendenwerk](#).



To drop out the studies or change subject is unproblematic for the educational grant according to BaföG till the beginning of the 3th semester. If you change your study subject after that normally no BaföG will be granted anymore. Further information is available [here](#).

⇒ **Bildungsberatung Garantiefonds Hochschule**

The federal government supports those with a legal status according to § 23 Par. 1 and Par. 2 AufenthG and who also want continue their studies or gain a university entrance qualification through the [Bildungsberatung Garantiefonds Hochschule](#).

Among others, supported activities include language courses in preparation for university, training courses, Studienkollegs and academic internships. The application and its review will be conducted by the guidance centers of the Bildungsberatung Garantiefonds Hochschule. However, one may also use the [online registration](#).



The application must be filed no later than 2 years after entering Germany or one year after being recognized. Furthermore, approval of support must be given prior to reaching 30 years of age.

⇒ **Scholarships**

There are various foundations and programs through which one may receive a scholarship. Most scholarships will ask for particularly talented students or those with exceptional grades. However, there are various scholarships which are aimed at supporting students in need or those who show an exceptional social engagement.

The [Bildungsserver's](#) website provides an overview of scholarships open to foreign students. The [DAAD's](#) scholarship database is also helpful in gaining a good overview.

In addition to that, there are various other helpful websites. These include: [The scholarship database](#) of the federal ministry of Education and Research, the [federal association of charities' portal](#) and the [Begabtenförderungswerke](#).

Most scholarship programs are currently aimed at students who come to Germany to pursue their studies and want to return to their home countries upon completion of their studies. However, there are numerous charities specifically aimed at supporting refugees with their studies. The relevant information can be found on the mentioned websites. One may also find additional information on a personal stipend guidance opportunity on the [Studierendenwerk's](#) website, as well as at the [scholarship counselling](#) at the University of Freiburg.

⇒ **Loan**

Under certain circumstances the Studierendenwerk may approve a student loan if the student is about to graduate. The relevant Studierendenwerk will offer [financial guidance](#) for anybody interested in a loan.

⇒ **Employment / Student Jobs**

It is always helpful to take a look at the faculties' bill-boards. Usually one can find many postings regarding jobs, internships and the like. Furthermore, the Studierendenwerk offers an employment service through the [Studijob](#) portal.

There are also nationwide portals which are specifically targeted at refugees in Germany. Two of them are [Welcome2Work](#) and [Worker](#). The initiative [Science4Refugees](#) helps refugee scientists and researchers to find a suitable job in the European Union.

⇒ **Health Insurance**

A student does not only have to cover the cost of subsistence, but also the cost of health insurance and a nursing care insurance. For all students younger than 30 years of age and who have not reached their 14th semester yet, the cost of insurance will be about 80 Euros.

For Applicants going through the asylum procedure

For refugees who are still in the process of seeking asylum it is possible to take up studies in Germany, but due to a lack of financing options it is rather difficult to commence studies at this stage.

With the commencement of the winter semester 2017/2018, 1500€ in tuition fees will be charged per semester for international students, who are enrolled at universities in the state of Baden-Württemberg. Asylum seekers who are of an origin with an increased protection quota (Syria, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Eritrea) will be exempted from paying these fees.

Individuals currently going through the asylum procedure are not eligible for a BAFÖG stipend or support through the Garantiefonds Hochschule.

Those with a 'high' probability of being granted asylum (from Syria, Iraq, Iran and Eritrea) can apply for admission to an integration class whilst in the process of seeking asylum. Anybody who is not from one of those countries and still going through the asylum procedure will not be eligible to enroll in a federally financed integration course. Furthermore, opportunities may be limited due to residence constraints.

If one manages to overcome all this and has been accepted to a university, one can still receive benefits through the German social welfare law for asylum seekers for the first 15 months. If the asylum procedure has not been completed within 15 months, there may be a funding gap, as there is no entitlement to BAFÖG stipends or benefits through the SGB II or SGB XII (students in general are not entitled to these benefits).

9. How can I find a place to live?

Most students live together with other people in shared flats. You can find a lot of room and flat offers on online accommodation platforms like [WG-Gesucht](#) or [vierwaen](#), particularly at the start of the semester. The website [Flüchtlinge Willkommen](#) provides a special accommodation service for refugees.

It is also worth looking at advertisements in local newspapers. In Freiburg and the surrounding region there is, for example, the [Schnapp](#), [Zypressen](#) or the [Badische Zeitung](#). Furthermore, there are sometimes accommodation offers displayed on black boards at the university.

As soon as you are registered at a university or an institution of higher education you can benefit from the offers provided by the local student union. For example, you can apply for a room in a [student accommodation](#) or to use the [private room accommodation](#) service at the Studierendenwerk Freiburg-Schwarzwald. An overview of all student halls of residence, as well as other accommodation providers can be found [here](#). The student union also offers the service [Wohnen für Hilfe](#). This project brings students looking for a room and people looking for tenants together. Seniors, families and other interested people offer students living space for a reduced rent. In exchange, students help their landlords occasionally with everyday tasks, household chores, babysitting, gardening or keeping them company. If you still haven't found a room by the start of the semester, you are entitled to use [emergency accommodation](#) on a temporary basis.

10. Do the universities offer trial courses?

Most universities will offer the opportunity of partaking in their courses as a guest auditor. This will enable those interested to participate in the lectures and sometimes even seminars. Partaking in classes as a guest auditor usually won't require any qualifications and one can apply through the registrar's office. Some institutions will offer this opportunity free of charge for refugees.

Another option for taking up studies in Germany is through enrolling for an online program at the [Kiron University](#). Through their program, one will complete the first two years of their

undergraduate studies online and will learn German at the same time. Upon completion of all the relevant requirements one can transfer to one of their partnership campuses and complete their third year of undergraduate studies there.

The University of Applied Sciences of Lübeck has also created a program called [oncampus](#). It is free of charge and enables students to acquire credit points by completing the classes taught online.

11. Where can I seek guidance?

Every institution of higher education has its own guidance center, which will support you with any questions you may have. Furthermore, every institution of higher education also has an international office which is aimed at supporting any international matter and foreign student. Contact details can be found [here](#).

Freiburg's initiative [Uni für alle](#) has a consulting-hour once a week. Here you can seek information and guidance for applying to University in Germany.

Guidance for migrants under age 26 can be found through the [youth migrant services](#). Adults may seek guidance at the [migrant guidance services](#).

The [Wegweiser Bildung](#) initiative provides general guidance on education opportunities in Freiburg and its surroundings. They also offer counselling in Arabic twice a month.

Also the [Fachstelle für Migration](#) of the archdiocese Freiburg provides a varied counselling offer for students from conflict areas.

If you already hold a degree or qualification and want to work in Germany, the [IQ network](#) will offer personal guidance on the recognition of foreign degrees and other qualifications.

If you live in Baden-Württemberg but not in Freiburg region, please contact our colleagues in the other regional coordinations ("Regierungsbezirke"):

[Regierungsbezirk Stuttgart](#)

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