



Residence permit for the purpose of studying

Information on requirements, entitlements and the application process

The residence permit for the purpose of studying enables non-EU citizens to come to Germany to undertake their studies. The permit includes preparatory measures such as language courses, “Studienkolleg” programmes or compulsory internships. After successful completion of the study programme, graduates are permitted to stay in Germany for another 18 months to look for a job.

Requirements

If you want to come to Germany to study, the following requirements apply in order to receive a visa:

- evidence of sufficient **German language skills** (at least language level B1). Proof of language skills is not required if the training institution at which you want to study has already assessed your language skills or if a language course is planned in Germany prior to your study programme
- **proof of enrolment in a study programme** or conditional approval for studying
- **proof of sufficient financial means** to cover your living expenses, e.g. through a blocked bank account or a Declaration of Commitment (in 2020/2021: 10.332 € per year)

Entitlements

If you meet the above-mentioned requirements, you are entitled to:

- obtain a **residence permit** for the purpose of studying for a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months
- **engage in employment** for a maximum of 120 full days or 240 half days per year
- obtain, after successful completion of your study programme, a **residence permit for the purpose of seeking employment** for 18 months or apply for a **residence permit for the purpose of taking up qualified or highly qualified employment** in case you find a job
- apply for a **permanent residence permit**, if you fulfil the following criteria:
 - possession of a residence permit for the purpose of qualified employment for 24 months
 - work contract and contributions to the German pension fund for 24 months
 - good knowledge of German language (at least language level B1)

Good to know: As a non-EU citizen who wants to study in Germany, but has not yet successfully enrolled in a study programme, you may also request a **residence permit for the purpose of seeking a place in higher education** – if you fulfil the following criteria:

- school-leaving qualification which entitles you to enter higher education in Germany
- evidence of good German language skills (at least language level B2)
- proof of sufficient financial means to cover your living expenses (in 2020/2021: 11.365,20 € per year)

If you find an university programme within nine months, you can request a residence permit for the purpose of studying.

Application process in three steps



1. German language skills

Proof of German language skills is a mandatory requirement for non-EU citizens who want to come to Germany for the purpose of studying. In many countries, various language schools offer – mostly fee-based – **courses of German as a foreign language**. In order to prove your German language skills, you need a **language certificate** from a certified exam provider. In many countries, the Goethe-Institute offers language courses and conducts certified exams. There are a number of other certificates that are also often accepted (see selection below). It is best to check with the German embassy or consulate in your country as to which certificates will be accepted by them.

Goethe-Institute

www.goethe.de/en/

Austrian German Language Diploma (ÖSD)

www.osd.at/en/

The European Language Certificate (TELC)

www.telc.net/en

Test German as Foreign Language (TestDAF) >> website in German language only

www.testdaf.de

German Language University Entrance (DSH)

<https://en.dsh-germany.com>

German Language Diploma (DSD) >> website in German language only

<https://www.kmk.org/themen/deutsches-sprachdiplom-dsd/>

2. University admission

The website “Study in Germany – Land of Ideas” provides comprehensive information and links to people who want to study in Germany. It helps to find suitable university programmes, informs about admission requirements for studying in Germany and gives useful tips for the application procedure. If you decide to apply for a study programme in Germany, it is advisable to visit the database of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in order to check whether your school qualification is eligible for enrolment in a German university programme. If your foreign qualification does not meet the admission requirements of a German university, you do not have to give up immediately – the institution “Studienkolleg” offers academic bridging courses to prepare applicants from other countries for entering a study programme in Germany successfully.

“Study in Germany – Land of Ideas”

www.study-in-germany.de/en/

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

www.daad.de/en/

“Studienkollegs” in Germany >> website in German language only

www.studienkollegs.de/home.html

3. Visa application

Before taking up studies in Germany, you need a **visa**. On the website of the German Foreign Office, a “visa navigator” helps potential applicants to check which visa they need.

First of all, you have to make an appointment at the **German Mission Abroad** (embassy or consulate). You have to bring to the appointment translated and certified copies of the required documents for the residence permit for the purpose of studying (see listed requirements above), and the following documents:

- completed and signed application form
- biometric passport photos
- valid passport
- approval of travel health insurance
- visa fee

The German Mission Abroad will then examine your application. The waiting time for a confirmation or rejection of a visa application differs from place to place.

“Visa navigator” of the German Foreign Office

<https://visa.diplo.de/en/#/vib>

Visa regulations of the German Foreign Office

www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/einreiseundaufenthalt/-/215870

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