



Guidelines

for recognition of foreign school leaving certificates and vocational qualifications in Schleswig-Holstein

3rd edition, November 2009

- recognition of foreign school leaving certificates
- recognition of vocational qualifications
- admission to university studies
- working in a graduate profession
- recognition of academic titles and degrees

Imprint

the editors



Flüchtlingsrat Schleswig-Holstein e.V.

(Schleswig-Holstein refugee council registered association)

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access – agency for educational and career advancement of refugees and migrants in Schleswig-Holstein

access is a project of the Schleswig-Holstein refugee council registered association, a transfer project of NOBI competence center, i.e. northern german network for vocational integration of migrants, and member of nationwide IQ network: *integration by qualification*.

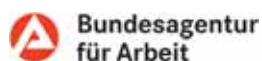
access provides substantial internet information on opportunities for qualification in the German Federal Land Schleswig-Holstein and on legal regulations relevant for the job market under www.access-frsh.de.

access promotes networking between committed migration counsellors, labour administrators and educational institution professionals.

Aided by the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the European Social Fund



Bundesministerium
für Arbeit und Soziales



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für Arbeit

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Preface to the 3rd edition

The present publication represents a revised and completed version of the Guidelines edited in 2006 by the *access* project being run under the auspices of the Schleswig-Holstein refugee council. *The access – agency for career advancement, supporting refugees and migrants in Schleswig-Holstein* who need their foreign school leaving and vocational certificates recognized, is a transfer project of NOBI (*northern german network for vocational integration of migrants*) centre of expertise.

Addresses of contact persons in the competent authorities for recognition of foreign school leaving certificates and vocational qualifications in Schleswig-Holstein were updated in the present edition, and passed amendments and new regulations were incorporated. The appendix e.g. shows changes resulting from new means of facilitating tolerated refugees due to Labour and Migration Governance Act effective as of January 1, 2009.

It is still very difficult for migrants to have school leaving certificates and vocational qualifications brought from their countries of origin recognized, but nevertheless this is an important requirement for their professional integration in Germany. For individuals in particular, who do not own the status of ethnic german repatriates, or who do not originate from another EU country, the recognition procedures are complicated, as in most cases there is no legal claim to recognizing equal footing, or there are no agreements in place for comparing vocational training systems in Germany and the country of origin. First of all, this applies to refugees, as there are no such agreements with most of their countries of origin, or the vocational training system in their countries is unknown to us. However, even in those cases, where guidelines are explicit, the immigrants concerned or even the consultants themselves have no clear idea about who the competent authorities and what the procedures are, and will have to gather incomplete information from different sources. All the more one is obliged to appreciate the Federal German government to have noticed the urgent need for action and to have recently demanded a uniform law on recognition of foreign qualifications and skills verification for workless and employed individuals as well.

www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Homepage/home.htmlFirefoxHTML\Shell\Open\Command

It is understood that these guidelines focus on information about recognition procedures for educational and vocational qualification for a variety of professions, allocating them to the prevailing and competent authorities in Schleswig-Holstein. Updated information on recognition aims at supporting consultants in their work and to help migrants find their way to recognition procedures applicable to them.

The *access*-team at Schleswig-Holstein refugee council

November 2009

1 Many yet confusing paths to vocational qualification

With all its variety the German system of education and vocational training opens a multitude of yet confusing paths leading to the recognition of a school leaving certificate, a diploma or vocational qualification acquired abroad. For many migrants the way to having their qualifications officially accepted resembles a long adventurous and costly journey through agencies, chambers and organisations in search for competence and reliable information.

Migrants in particular who did not enter Germany as citizens of one of the EU states and who are not eligible for the Federal Expellee Law for ethnic repatriates gather the experience that their educational certificates and vocational qualification will not or only partially be accepted here. In order to be given a chance on the German job market it is often necessary to acquire certain qualifications and certificates in addition.

1.1 A guide through the maze of procedures and competences: a novelty in Schleswig-Holstein

For the first time in Schleswig-Holstein, this booklet represents guidelines for recognition of foreign school leaving certificates and vocational qualifications together with information on procedures for recognition of different educational certificates and professional qualifications.

These guidelines are based on the second edition of the *guidelines for recognition of foreign school leaving certificates and vocational qualifications in Hamburg*, that were compiled by the *Integration Pilot Hamburg* project. The Hamburg guidelines were incorporated for the most part. Where procedures and regulations were consistent with those in Schleswig-Holstein, only the relevant addresses and contact persons were exchanged accordingly. In case of differing procedures and regulations, while copying chapter headlines, we investigated and inserted frame conditions, information and the appropriate contacts applicable for Schleswig-Holstein. We would at this point like to thank our colleagues at *Integration Pilot Hamburg* for their fine cooperation, who by supplying us with the results of their work enabled us to adapt them to Schleswig-Holstein specific conditions.

As important as the Hamburg project pioneer work was the support we received from Schleswig-Holstein authorities and institutions, who willingly provided information and contributed to matters under their jurisdiction.

These guidelines can be used as a tool by those, who deal with certificates, vocational qualifications and grades acquired abroad and their recognition in Schleswig-Holstein. They are meant to be of help for professional consultants, for educational institution workers, for job administrators and, of course, for their customers themselves.

Everybody concerned will be supplied with a clear, understandable survey on legal foundations, procedures and competent authorities governing the recognition of qualifications and the access of migrants to the educational system.

The following issues will be dealt with in the guidelines in a separate chapter each:

- recognition of foreign school leaving certificates
- recognition of vocational qualifications
- access to university studies
- working in graduate professions
- recognition of academic titles and degrees.

Each chapter offers an introduction into the matter, information to the general legal basis, and a description of each relevant procedure for obtaining recognition of a particular qualification, access to an educational institution in particular, or anything else in this respect. Furthermore, each chapter provides you with addresses of contact persons and competent authorities in Schleswig-Holstein, and with links to further information sources.

1.2 Work in progress – your opinion will be appreciated

Qualifications and their recognition are an issue under constant change. We were striving to represent all important regulations in an up to date, clear and comprehensive manner. Some questions, however, could not finally be solved at the editorial deadline. With an abundance of sometimes confusing information we cannot rule out that mistakes or discrepancies crept in, or that after investigations were completed, contacts, competences or procedures changed, so we could not incorporate them any more.

For that reason we are looking forward to your responses and any feedback that contributes to this publication and makes it become more useful, complete and precise. We will publish updated versions of these guidelines on a regular basis for you to download under www.access-frsh.de

With information from all over the Federal Land Schleswig-Holstein, the website www.access-frsh.de focusses on learning opportunities, aid options, qualification offers, university studies, recognition or catching up on school leaving certificates, and on business start-up. This site is meant to be used by migrants and professionals in migration counselling, education and job administration alike. Besides, www.access-frsh.de includes a substantial data base with addresses of relevant help desks in Schleswig-Holstein.

2 Recognition of foreign school leaving certificates

This chapter explains conditions and procedures for school leaving certificates, which were achieved abroad, to be accepted in Schleswig-Holstein. In addition, you will learn about which opportunities there are in Schleswig-Holstein for you to catch up on your educational qualification.

2.1 Conditions for school leaving certificates to be accepted

In order to accept foreign school leaving certificates, we may want to compare the conditions, under which in the country of origin and in Germany particular qualifications are achieved: For how long will one have to go to school? How many and which subjects had to be studied? Whenever under such scrutiny sufficient matches are found, the school certificate from abroad will be accepted as equivalent to the corresponding German certificate.

CSE Certificate of Secondary Education

In order for a foreign certificate to be accepted as equivalent to the German Hauptschulabschluss (CSE) you are expected to have successfully accomplished by passing into the next higher grade or finishing at least nine, in some countries of origin ten ascending grades in a general-education school. You will have studied at least your mother tongue, mathematics, one natural scientific subject like biology, chemistry or physics, and one social-science subject, like history or social studies.

GCSE General Certificate of Secondary Education

In order for a foreign certificate to be accepted as equivalent to the German Realschulabschluss (GCSE) you are expected to have successfully accomplished at least ten ascending grades in a general-education school or eleven to twelve school years in a polytechnical secondary school. The traditional core subjects under „Hauptschulabschluss (CSE)“ will be extended by one more language, and moreover, the aspiration level is higher.

Advanced Technical College Certificate

The Fachhochschulreife, advanced technical college certificate, entitles you to take up studies at an advanced technical college (University of Applied Sciences), but not at universities. A foreign certificate may only in a particular case be equated with a German advanced technical college certificate. In that case it would be required that in

the country where the certificate was made, there would also be a differentiation between universities and advanced technical colleges.

Higher education entrance qualification

In case of foreign secondary school leaving certificates we verify if in the country of origin a certificate qualifies for university studies. These certificates in principal, though in a different manner, enable the student to take up university studies in Germany:

As a rule, certificates of twelve-year general education school types qualify for immediate recognition for university studies in Germany. Polytechnic school certificates (sixth form with integrated vocational training) in most cases qualify for recognition for studies of a degree subject matching your school profile. If in the country of origin the admission to university studies requires a higher education entrance examination, then in Germany admission will not be granted without entrance examination either.

Not all foreign educational systems are compatible with the educational system in Germany in so far as to provide direct admission to universities in Germany. Quite often certificates from non-European countries require the attendance at a German foundation course preparing you for university. That is where by passing a final *entrance examination* you will acquire a subject-specific higher education entrance qualification. Studies already started in your country of origin as a rule relieve you of any entrance examination, and you are entitled for immediate subject-specific university admission. Individuals having already finished university studies abroad qualify for all schemes of study at German universities.

Regulations for validation relevant for authorities and universities who decide about recognition of certificates for admission to universities in Germany provided the attendee has achieved his/her initial education in the country of origin can be found in the internet under www.anabin.de.

In chapter 4 of these guidelines you will find detailed information on procedures and competences concerning admission to university studies.

2.2 Who is in charge?

CSE's (Certificates of Secondary Education) and GCSE's (General Certificates of Secondary Education) will be accepted by the Schleswig-Holstein Ministry of Education and Culture with effect for this German Federal Land only. However, each university is in itself competent to decide about admission to studies in terms of accepting school leaving certificates for an individual who is entitled for admission at a university and in terms of accepting university studies abroad in order to assess the applicant for an adequate semester at a university in Schleswig-Holstein or anywhere else in Germany.

Ministry of Education and Culture Land Schleswig-Holstein

Brunswiker Str. 16-22, 24105 Kiel

Telephone: (0431) 988-2433, -2434, Telefax: (0431) 988-5888

Mrs Gutzeit, Mrs Michaelsen

corinna.michaelsen@mbk.landsh.de / www.schleswig-holstein.de/MBF

office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00–12:00

2.3 Application procedure for school leaving certificates to be accepted

The Ministry of Education and Culture basically validates foreign *school leaving certificates* to be effective for Land Schleswig-Holstein only. Since German Federal Lands enjoy sovereignty in matters of education, an automatic 1:1 adoption of a decision made by authorities for the recognition of certificates in another federal land is not possible and has to be requested, if necessary. The recognition is valid only in conjunction with documents and translations it was based on, in other words, an attestation of recognition cannot replace a certificate.

Required documents

The following documents shall be completely submitted for validation of a certificate:

- passport and registration card or identification (ID) card
- ethnic german expatriate attestation if needed (due to Federal Expellee Law art.15)
- record of name or name change
- examination certificate or diploma of latest school or college/university
 - as original or legalised photocopy (original language) and
 - as plain photocopy for the records of the authorities for recognition of certificates
- transcript of grades at school/college/university
 - as original or legalised photocopy (original language) and
 - as plain photocopy for the records of the authorities for recognition of certificates
- if available, certificate of a passed higher education entrance examination or admission to academic studies at a university
 - as original or legalised photocopy (original language) and
 - as plain photocopy for the records of the authorities for recognition of certificates

- translations of all educational evidence from foreign languages into the German language by a sworn translator
 - as original or legalised photocopy and
 - as plain photocopy for the records of the authorities for recognition of certificates

If so agreed, documentation in French or English may be submitted without translation.

Fees

As a rule, recognition of certificates is subject to fee. However, if you provide evidence of low income, fees can be waived.

2.4 What if certificates are not accepted?

If your school certificates are not accepted, you may at the worst be regarded as having no school leaving certificate at all. This could apply if, for instance, in your country of origin the official elementary school education takes less than nine years. In a case like that there still are quite some possibilities:

- You start vocational training in Germany without an accepted school leaving certificate. When finishing a vocational training of at least two years in an officially recognised apprenticed trade, you will acquire your CSE (certificate of secondary education) together with the graduation certificate of the vocational school you attended. The vocational schools provide information about possibilities for each individual case.
- You catch up on your missing school leaving certificate at a Berufsfachschule, a full-time vocational school, at an evening school or by distance study (with external final examination): for a Hauptschulabschluss CSE (certificate of secondary education) you will have to estimate a nine to twelve months course with two to three evenings per week. A Realschulabschluss GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) or the Abitur (general qualification for university entrance) take two, respectively three years with four to five training course evenings per week
- With your professional education completed or after three years of occupation in the trained profession, you will be able to acquire general qualification for university entrance (Abitur) or Fachhochschulreife, an advanced technical college certificate at special public or private schools. The course attendees are free to apply for partial financial support due to BAföG (Federal Training Assistance Act), provided they meet requirements pursuant to BAföG article 8 (see appendix).

Information about possibilities to catch up on school leaving certificates available in Schleswig-Holstein will be given by the Ministry of Education and Culture:

Ministry of Education and Culture Land Schleswig-Holstein Brunswiker Str. 16-22, 24105 Kiel Tel.: (0431) 988-2433, -2434 Fax: (0431) 988-5888 Mrs Gutzeit, Mrs Frau Michaelsen corinna.michaelson@mbk.landsh.de / www.schleswig-holstein.de/MBF office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00–12:00

2.5 Special arrangement for ethnic german repatriates

According to the Federal expellee law and pursuant to the conference of german cultural ministers decision, facilitated requirements are in place for ethnic german repatriates and their job-related integration: The graduation certificate they acquired in their country of origin is sufficient for equal footing with the german Hauptschulabschluss (CSE Certificate of Secondary Education), even if their school education took only eight years.

3 Recognition of vocational qualifications

This chapter outlines the conditions and procedures for vocational qualifications acquired abroad to be accepted in Schleswig-Holstein.

3.1 Basic principles for recognition

In Germany there are about 350 officially recognised apprenticed trades. For each trade in particular there is an exact regulation in place, governing vocational training contents, examinations, the rights and duties of apprentices and instructors.

Basically, there are two options for completing professional education in Germany:

- the so-called *dual or in-firm training*, providing the apprentice with practical knowledge in a firm and with theoretical knowledge in a vocational school
- the *off-the-job training* exclusively in a full-time vocational school.

Dual vocational training applies to nearly all practical and commercial professions. Whereas, for example, public health professions are learned in off-the-job training.

The German system for professions and vocational training determines the recognition of foreign professional qualifications. Consequently, foreign professional qualifications without an adequate school leaving certificate in Germany, as a rule, are not accepted due to the system.

In the context of recognition procedures, the qualification acquired abroad will be compared to the contents of the according German vocational training. In addition, practical experience and advanced training usually will also be considered. In order to be accepted the foreign qualification needs to coincide with large parts of the German training course as far as contents are concerned. However, even at a high degree of coincidence, a complete approval is not always possible, as the according statutory regulations are missing, except for EU citizens and ethnic German repatriates.

Because of the intricate system of vocational training the competences in relation to recognition of foreign qualifications are accordingly sophisticated. The application needs to be filed with the institution representing the profession intended. Processing may take from a couple of weeks to several months. In case approval is denied, there are, as a rule, different possibilities to catch up on certain examinations or qualifications.

3.2 Regulated trades require certificate recognition

You do not always need your certificates to be accepted in order to practice your learned profession in Germany. The crucial issue is, if we are dealing with a regulated trade. A trade is regarded to be regulated, if the access to and practising of a certain trade are governed by legal and administrative provisions to prove qualification. In order to be practised in Germany, approval by an authority or trade organisation is mandatory for regulated trades. This applies, amongst others, to following apprenticed trades:

- educator/governess
- orderly, hospital nurse, male-nurse
- licensed medical professions
- technician
- technical assistant
- crafts liable to registration due to appendix A Handicrafts Code
- master craftsman/master craftswoman

A list of regulated trades in Germany can be retrieved under website below:

www.europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm

There are many non-regulated trades that can be performed without any examination certificate or official approval. Hence there is no legal competence and no general legal claim to recognition (see chapter 3.3). Each (potential) employer will therefore have to estimate himself if someone is qualified for the job or not.

In this case it might make sense to file an application for labour grading in order to increase your chance to find employment that fits your qualification, to obtain better payment, to open doors into further supporting qualification and advanced training and, should the situation arise, to catch up on a graduation in a so-called Externenprüfung – external examination.

3.3 No general legal claim to certificate recognition

There are no general legal basis for and no legal claim to recognition of professional qualification obtained abroad. Only for a certain group of individuals the recognition of professional qualification is governed in reliable legal terms, as there are:

- Federal Expellee Law for ethnic german repatriates
- mutual agreement between Germany and Switzerland
- bilateral agreements with France, Austria
- various sectoral and general guidelines for EU citizens

Therefore you may want to investigate with the competent authorities whether or not a formal recognition of qualification in your individual case is at all possible, before an application is filed. If a formal recognition of your qualification is not possible, a *voluntary comment* may be issued on the fact that your vocational qualification is equivalent to a graduation in an officially recognised apprenticed trade.

3.4 Special arrangements for EU citizens

At European Union level the recognition of vocational qualification is governed by so-called sectoral directives for certain trades in particular, and by general directives requiring specific education at universities or other training schools. This applies to trades only, that are regarded as regulated in the respective host country.

The European Union directives are effective as of 1 June 2002 by reason of bilateral contracts between the EU Member States and Switzerland.

New EU Member States

For the states having joined the European Union in 2004 and 2007, with this date, amongst other directives, the EU directives for recognition of vocational qualification became effective.

Forecast: regulations to come

Directive 2005/36/EG passed on 20 October 2007 consolidates and updates existing rules for accepting vocational qualification. This directive will replace the 15 directives presently designed for that matter. The new precept will provide a more liberal approach to rendering services and a more pragmatic approach to accepting qualification.

Further links

General guide for recognition of certificates of professional competence in the European Union:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/docs/guide/guide_de.pdf

„Your Europe“ is an internet portal offering practical information about rights and possibilities within the EU and on the single European market next to advice on how to practically make use of these rights:

<http://europa.eu.int/youreurope/nav/de/citizens/home.html>

3.5 Special arrangements for ethnic german repatriates

Legal claim to certificate recognition

Pursuant to article 10 Federal expellee law, ethnic german repatriates have a legal claim to recognition of their vocational qualification provided it is on a par with the respective german certificate of proficiency. This legal claim extends to non-regulated trades as well.

Advice offer

Ethnic german repatriates are offered advice by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Land Schleswig-Holstein on the subject of how their foreign vocational qualification is being accepted. The ministry of education verifies, to what extent vocational training

certificates, ethnic german repatriates obtained in their (middle- or eastern European) countries of origin can be accepted. If the respective requirements for recognition are met, the documents will be sent to competent authorities who will in turn confirm the level of vocational training achieved.

Ministry of Education and Culture of Land Schleswig-Holstein

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office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00–12:00

3.6 Who are the competent authorities?

Authorities in charge of vocational training issues for particular trades as a rule also deal with the recognition of the respective certificates obtained abroad. Applicants will therefore have to be aware of how vocational training for their profession in particular works in Germany.

For that reason „Beruf aktuell“, a book the german job agencies provide free of charge, can be useful. It offers a survey of training contents and background for all officially recognised apprenticed trades in Germany. The website <http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/index.jsp> has basically the same information as the book.

3.7 Recognition of in-firm vocational training

The respective chambers are in charge of approval for most trades in the dual training system, depending on which trade the applicant has recently learned or practised:

Handicraft trades

recognition of training completed abroad for handicraft trades, such as carpenter and joiner, roofer, bricklayer, hairdresser:

Usually vocational qualifications for handicraft trades are not accepted in Germany, with the exception of ethnic german repatriates, whose vocational qualification can be accepted, provided that their trade is officially existent in Germany. Helpful for recognition are some years of work experience, and a successfully completed final examination. Authorities in charge of verification are

Chambers of Crafts in Schleswig-Holstein

Handwerkskammer Flensburg Johanniskirchhof 1-7 24937 Flensburg Tel.: (0461) 866-0 Fax: (0461) 866-110 E-mail: info@hwk-flensburg.de Internet: www.hwk-flensburg.de	Handwerkskammer Lübeck Breite Str. 10-12 23552 Lübeck Tel.: (0451) 1506 – 0 Fax: (0451) 1506 - 180 E-mail: info@hwk-luebeck.de Internet: www.hwk-luebeck.de
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Industrial, commercial and service related trades

recognition of vocational training completed abroad in sectors shown below:

- in the commercial sector, e.g. purchasing, sales or accounting in a business company,
- in the industrial sector, i.e. production or maintenance of goods, as craftsman or craftswoman in an industrial enterprise,
- in the trade sector, i.e. retail, as salesperson, or in catering as waiter or waitress,
- in the technical sector, e.g. engineering, electrical engineering or communication technology in an industrial plant.

Chamber of Commerce and Industry Schleswig-Holstein

Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Industrie- und Handelskammern zu Flensburg, zu Kiel, zu Lübeck Bergstr. 2, 24103 Kiel Tel. : (0431) 5194 – 0 Fax. (0431) 5194 - 234 E-mail: ihk@kiel.ihk.de www.ihk-schleswig-holstein.de
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Professions with agricultural and silvicultural background

Responsible for recognition of agricultural and forestry training completed abroad:

Ministry of agriculture, environment and rural areas Land Schleswig-Holstein

Mercatorstr. 3 24106 Kiel Tel.: (0431) 988 - 4988 Mr. Sandbrink
--

Recognition procedures

As a rule, a so-called compatibility check of training completed abroad is performed by the Chambers. Therefore the German apprenticed trade prevailing at the time training was completed abroad will be compared to the according trade in the country of origin. Both examinations or certificates of proficiency will have to be of the same value, i.e. the contents of training and learned trade should be comparable to the contents of the German qualification.

Chambers will grant *recognition* authorising you to use the German professional title on a particular legal basis only. Presently this applies for ethnic German repatriates, who due to Federal Expellee Law Article 10 have a legal claim to recognition of their equivalent professional qualification.

In most cases Chambers will just issue *labour gradings* corresponding to the structure of the training and employment system in Germany. This grading of professional qualification acquired abroad *is not an official recognition* of the according trade, so you will not have the right to use the German professional title. However, it will make it easier for a potential employer to classify the qualification you offer.

How to file an application

You will file your application for recognition of your professional qualification in free format, as there are no forms to be filled in. You address your letter to the competent authority, asking for verification of equivalence of your professional qualification. This letter will have to be signed by you, the applicant, personally.

Required documents

certified copies of:

- ID card or passport (with stay permit if needed)
- Federal expellee ID card (for expatriates)
- Name and name change record

Officially legalised copies being translated by sworn translators of

- all diplomas, certificates and attestations
- school (leaving) certificates
- employment record
- documentation and certificate of professional qualification, e.g. craft certificate, or master craftsman's diploma

As well as:

- Your statement that you did not apply for verification of these documents to any Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chamber of Crafts or other competent authority in any other German federal state.
- Your CV reflecting in detail all qualifications and each practical employment in particular. This would be considered when timing your vocational retraining or new vocational training and for (graduation) examinations as well.

Application procedure and possible results

recognition

In case Chambers approve your professional qualification to be equivalent, the answer will come with an instrument authorizing you to use the respective German professional title.

Labour grading

In case Chambers issue a labour grading they will try to explain to you, on which level in the German job system you are positioned. For handicrafts any labour grading can be carried out by each respective guild only. Should the grading certificate not be detailed enough, you may want to ask Chambers to compile skills and qualifications

you obtained abroad in an expertise and classify them for new or advanced training respectively.

This will clarify on which qualifications you will still have to work in order to be accepted for external examination. External examination offers you the chance to take part in a final examination qualifying you for a certain profession from outside, i.e. without completing the whole official training course. In that way, individuals having accumulated necessary practical experience over years but not having completed vocational training accepted in Germany, will be in a position to obtain formal qualification for their craft.

3.8 Recognition of off-the-job vocational training

Recognition of off-the-job or full-time school vocational training is governed by the authorities responsible for the respective training. This applies e.g. for educators/governesses as well as nurses for the elderly and also for a number of technical and commercial trades.

Educator/governess, social pedagogues, technical or commercial assistant

Responsible for recognition of full-time school vocational training of educators/governesses, social pedagogues, technical or commercial assistants is:

Ministry of Education and Culture Land Schleswig-Holstein

Brunswiker Str. 16-22, 24105 Kiel

Tel.: (0431) 988-2433, -2434

Fax: (0431) 988-5888

Mrs Gutzeit, Mrs Michaelsen

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office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00–12:00

How to file an application

Together with your (personally signed) application for recognition of your professional qualification, equal footing with a general education school leaving certificate or both, you will have to submit the following documentation:

Required documents

certified copies of:

- ID card or passport (with stay permit if needed)
- Federal expellee ID card (for expatriates)
- Name and name change record

Officially legalised copies being translated by sworn translators of

- Certificates or attestations including record of subjects and grades
- Employment record or job references (for EU citizens having completed professional training in one of the EU countries.

as well as

- Statement that this application has not been filed in any other german federal state (for ethnic german expatriates only)
- CV with exact description of educational respectively professional progress.

Application procedure and possible results

recognition without any additional requirements

Recognition free of requirements puts the profession obtained abroad on a par with full-time school vocational training in Germany, so you will have the right to use a job title accepted in Germany.

Recognition with advanced training requirements

Will be granted in cases where vocational training contents in both countries are basically consistent, but where additional qualification is needed in order to reach recognition without requirements. The written reply usually will provide you with advanced training possibilities including addresses and contacts in each school meeting your job profile.

Non-recognition

In this case too, the written notice contains a reference to additional vocational training possibilities. Especially in a case like that career counselling with an advisor at a job centre would make sense, as you may have to pass a completely new training procedure.

3.9 Recognition of public health professions

Recognition of registered public health professions is governed by the Schleswig-Holstein State Office for Social Services. Registered public health professions are e.g. hospital nurse/orderly, whose new job title as of 2004 is general health and hospital nurse, as well as midwife and physiotherapist.

State Office for Social Services Land Schleswig-Holstein
Adolf-Westphal-Str. 4, 24143 Kiel
Tel.: (0431) 988 – 5652, - 5592
National recognition Mrs Gibson, International recognition Mrs Schmieden

Public Health professions in Germany are principally registered professions. As a rule, recognition of qualification requires knowledge of the German language corresponding to B2 level within the common European language reference framework. Recognition formalities depend on each individual case. Therefore, please address to the competent authorities directly for information on procedures and the requested documentation. For your qualification to be accepted, you will, as a rule, have to submit your CV, your hospital care diploma in legalised German translation, your certificate of health, certificate of good conduct for submission at authorities with cross-reference, German citizenship proof, nationality record or stay permit, birth certificate or certificate of marriage (legalised copies) and registration card.

In case your documentation was found satisfactory, it is usually possible to complete a short training version in your profession or to opt for a final examination without training being previously completed.

3.10 Further Links

European Training Village (ETV)

The *European Training Village* (ETV) website is an interactive platform for multipliers in the vocational training and qualifying section. The site presents updated information on

vocational training and qualification in Europe, discussion forums, a virtual library and various data bases:

www.trainingvillage.gr

The ETV virtual library displays reports on vocational training and qualification systems by country:

www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Information_resources/Bookshop/publications.asp?section=22

ANABIN

The *anabin* database (anabin stands for Anerkennung und Bewertung ausländischer Bildungsnachweise which is recognition and evaluation of foreign educational evidence) is run by the central agency for foreign educational systems and offers large documentation on educational system, different professional and academic degrees and their rating value for a multitude of foreign countries: www.anabin.de

4 Admission to university studies

This chapter covers conditions and procedures for school leaving certificates achieved abroad to be accepted for admission to university studies in Germany.

4.1 Admission to university with foreign certificates

Individuals with a foreign school leaving certificate are principally entitled to take up studies at a German university or advanced technical college, provided the certificate authorises its holder to start academical studies in the country the certificate was obtained. In the www.anabin.de database the conference of German cultural ministers has published requirements for qualification acquired abroad which is needed for admission to German universities.

In Germany different gradings are set up that have an impact on admission to university here:

Unrestricted admission is possible, if the foreign certificate is approved as being *materially equivalent* to a German certificate representing higher education entrance qualification. This applies to all EU citizens as well as to citizens of EFTA members Liechtenstein, Island, Norway and Switzerland.

School leaving certificates from other than the named countries will often *not* be accepted as equal to the German Abitur, i.e. general qualification for university

entrance. In this case, completed years of study will either be taken into account, or the applicant will have to pass an *entrance examination/Feststellungsprüfung* first in order to be accepted for a subject-specific admission to university.

German universities will as a rule accept foreign academic titles as sufficiently qualifying the candidate for any existing scheme of study.

4.2 Competent authorities

In Germany applications for a place at a university are being taken care of by different authorities. On one hand the authority in charge depends on the candidate's country of origin. In this respect the relevant categories are:

- he/she is a citizen of either the EU or the EFTA
- the foreign candidate has obtained his/her qualification for university entrance in Germany or at a German school abroad and is regarded as an educational native
- he/she is a citizen of a non-European country, or stateless

On the other hand it is important, if the scheme of study applied for is subject to access limitation, which implies allocation of university places being centrally organised.

Universities

The university of choice is the first point of contact for a candidate who applies for a place to study. Information on the exact procedures for application will be given by the University International Office, *Akademisches Auslandsamt*, either discussing the issue with you personally, or on their respective homepage. At the international office or on the university homepage, you will receive the „Antrag auf Zulassung zum Studium für ausländische Studienbewerber/innen“, which is an application form for foreign students applying for university access.

You will have to submit the application together with other documentation, e.g. certificates, CV etc. to the university or to the service point for international university applications *uni-assist*, which will be described below. Educational natives are at a par with German applicants and generally address their application to the respective university.

In case the chosen field of study is subject to access limitation, citizens of EU or EFTA countries and educational natives will have to file their application with ZVS, Zentralstelle zur Vergabe von Studienplätzen, the German central office for the

allocation of university places. All other foreign applicants will apply for these subjects too directly to the university of choice or via *uni-assist*.

Service point for international university applications (*uni-assist*)

Many higher educational institutions do not process applications submitted by foreign candidates themselves any more. For their relief and in order to make procedures easier for the applicants, the association *uni-assist e.V.*, an application hub, was founded.

In Schleswig-Holstein the following higher educational institutions are connected to *uni-assist*:

Fachhochschule Flensburg

Fachhochschule Kiel

Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel

Universität Kiel

Fachhochschule Lübeck

Universität Lübeck

You will be offered a list of all higher educational institutions in Germany cooperating with *uni-assist* together with advice for procedures on the homepage www.uni-assist.de.

Who's in charge

It is not your citizenship that determines if you will have to file your application with *uni-assist*, but the critical questions are, whether an applicant

- has a foreign school leaving certificate
- has studied abroad only
- has chosen a university connected to *uni-assist*.

uni-assist is not in charge if the applicant

- gained his/her general qualification for university entrance in Germany
- gained his/her german qualification for university entrance at a german school abroad
- already holds a german university degree as the only entitlement for a second degree he/she aims at
- takes part in an exchange program of his/her home university with a partner university in Germany
- applies for special schemes of study, generally excluded by certain universities from *uni-assist* pre-examinations, e.g. postgraduate/PhD studies or specific Masters programs
- is a citizen of a EU country (or Island, Norway or Liechtenstein) *and* applies for a field of study where admission is limited.

The central office for the allocation of university places/ Zentralstelle für die Vergabe von Studienplätzen (ZVS)

In Germany the following fields of study are subject to limited admission: biology (diploma), medicine, pharmacy, psychology (diploma) and dentistry. As there is only a limited amount of university places available, applicants will be selected for vacancies by the central office. Selection criteria are the grades in your qualification certificate for university entrance. Eight percent of these university places are allocated for foreign applicants.

Citizens of EU or EFTA countries and educational natives shall apply for any one of these fields of study to *the central office for the allocation of university places / Zentralstelle zur Vergabe von Studienplätzen (ZVS)*. All *other foreigners*, even for studies where admission is limited, apply directly to their university of choice or *uni-assist* respectively.

Further information and the necessary application form are available on the ZVS homepage www.zvs.de, or in the „zvs-info“ booklet available at the Student Advisory Service of each university.

4.3 Applying for university place

While for EU or EFTA citizens admission to university studies is a mere formality, it is most likely that in the case of citizens from countries other than EU, or stateless individuals, school leaving certificates are classified as „comparable to only a limited extent“. Nevertheless the applicant may take up studies if he/she

- has already successfully completed one or two years of studies at a recognized foreign university
- or if he/she passes the *entrance examination* (see below). In individual cases you will have to prove periods of academic study abroad in order to be accepted for entrance examination.

The recognition for studies will then be limited to the subject, i.e. you will be allowed to study only a discipline (mathematics, chemistry, electrical engineering etc.) for which you either passed the entrance examination or which you prove to have already studied in the country of your origin. A change between disciplines, from natural science to social science for example, will be possible after having passed another examination only.

The entrance examination

Whenever a school leaving certificate is *not* accepted as being equal to the Abitur/general qualification for university entrance, an entrance examination will have to be passed at first, which in official German sounds like: an „examination to verify the aptitude of foreign applicants for admission to university studies in the Federal Republic of Germany“. The examination as well as the preparation classes in foundation course to be described below are limited to the subject. That means, applicants will commit themselves to the discipline they intend to study *before* they visit preparation class, or *before* the entrance examination respectively. The competent authority in this context is the Ministry of Education and Culture of Land Schleswig-Holstein.

Conditions set up by the conference of German cultural ministers governing if admission to university studies in Germany is granted immediately or after having passed an entrance examination or by taking into account periods of time already spent with studies abroad, can be more closely inspected in the internet under www.anabin.de

Preparation class in Studienkolleg foundation course

University foundation courses offer classes, where you can prepare for entrance examination. Focus courses are aligned with subjects you will want to study afterwards. There are T-courses for mathematics and science-based subjects, M-courses for medicine or biology-based subjects, W-courses for future economists and social scientists, G-courses for german language, literature, arts and humanities-based subjects, and S-courses for language related subjects. Advanced technical colleges/ Fachhochschulen offer similar courses. In all courses german language is taught in addition to the respective subjects.

Studienkolleg foundation courses start twice a year, after Christmas holiday in January, and after summer holidays in July or August, and they last for two semesters. Foundation courses are free of charge. Semesters studied here will not be deducted from university studies in your discipline afterwards. However, during foundation courses you are already enrolled in your university.

Step by step towards university admission

1. First of all you will receive the „Antrag auf Zulassung zum Studium für ausländische Studienbewerber/innen“, the application form for university admission for foreign applicants, either at the registrar's office, or at the University International Office or on the home page of your university of choice.
2. In case you need to take part in an entrance examination, you will have to decide, if your previous knowledge is sufficient in order to pass the examination, or if you should complete preparation classes at a Studienkolleg foundation course first. For information about examination requirements you may ask the Studienkolleg foundation course for documentation on the entrance examination referring to the subjects you wish to study.
3. Now you will file your application directly with the university, with *uni-assist* or with the ZVS central office for allocation of university places. In your application form you will have marked with a cross, whether you would first like to attend foundation courses or be listed for the entrance examination immediately.
4. In case you decide to attend Studienkolleg, the university will tell you that you are accepted for a foundation course. Prior to starting with the course you will have to prove in an entrance test that you are able to follow lectures in german language. This test may be repeated once.
5. You can take the entrance examination either immediately or after completing foundation courses. If you do not pass, you will be given the opportunity to repeat the

test once. After having passed the entrance examination, you will once more file an application with the university for admission to professional studies.

6. You are granted recognition for your academic studies of choice.

Proof of german language knowledge

Applicants whose mother tongue is not german, will have to prove, that their knowledge of the german language is sufficient for completing studies. Only then they may take up studies. Proof can be provided as follows:

In case your qualification for university entrance is on a par with qualification for university entrance in Germany and you have sufficient german language knowledge, the „German language examination for university entrance of foreign applicants“, „Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang ausländischer Studienbewerber“ DSH can be taken. The examination date will be given to you together with the approval notification. As soon as you have passed this examination you are free to start studies.

Exempt from DSH are those applicants, who have already obtained C1 level of the common European reference framework for languages and who have proven their language skills in one of the following examinations:

- the advanced or intermediate german language diploma of Goethe-Institute
- the advanced level examination (ZOP) of Goethe-Institute
- the german language diploma (DSD) of the conference of german cultural ministers, step II
- the TestDaF-exam, step 4 or 5

In case you have already attended german language classes and not taken any of the abovementioned examinations so far, you will add the respective certificates and attestations of these classes to your application for university admission. The university will then decide, if you can directly sign up for „German language examination for university entrance of foreign applicants“ DSH without having to attend a german language course.

Should applicants not have sufficient german language knowledge, or should they have failed DSH, they may want to attend a german language preparation course for the language test. Some universities offer preparation courses themselves. In order to attend one of these, you will have to submit an application to the particular university.

As a precondition, you should already be granted admission to academic studies. If the university itself does not offer German language courses or if admission is still pending, you may want to attend courses with free educational institutions like adult education centres or specialized language schools. However, you will then have to be aware of more or less expensive tuition fees.

Recognition of foreign course achievements and examination performances

Foreign course achievements and examination performances are principally accepted in Germany, e.g. in order to continue studies in Germany or to take examinations here. The university will decide about accepting you.

The prerequisite for recognition will be that you provided the performances required by the university in your country of origin. Hence you will need to submit proof of examinations, semester performance, marks, credit points respectively. In most cases the university registrar's office is responsible for accepting these. If schemes of study with state examination are concerned, e.g. medicine, teaching post, pharmacy, law, the state examination authorities at the university will take the decision. In case of doubt they will rule if you will have to prove your knowledge in a theoretical exam before you are accepted.

4.4 Residence law aspects

Individuals who intend to study in Germany, depending on their country of origin, may need a visa for academic study. DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst/ German Academic Exchange Service website provides information on applicable legal regulations:

www.daad.de/deutschland/zulassung/visum/04694.de.html

4.5 Addresses and further information

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Land Schleswig-Holstein will advise you what is needed in order to meet requirements for admission to university in Schleswig-Holstein or elsewhere in Germany.

Ministry of Education and Culture of Land Schleswig-Holstein

Brunswiker Str. 16-22, 24105 Kiel

Tel.: (0431) 988-2433, -2434

Fax: (0431) 988-5888

Mrs Gutzeit, Mrs Michaelsen

corinna.michaelsen@mbk.landsh.de / www.schleswig-holstein.de/MBF

office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00–12:00

University International Offices

The first and most important point of contact for foreign applicants is the University International Office, which can be found in every university. They will advise you on all questions of university admission, recognition of certificates, exams etc.

Please find the addresses of all University International Offices on the DAAD website, as shown below.

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD) e. V.

German Academic Exchange Service

The German Academic Exchange Service is a joint institution of universities in Germany to encourage relations between universities in Germany and worldwide by exchanging students and scholars and by organizing international projects and programs:

www.daad.de

In addition to large information, DAAD provides a data base on comparability of qualification for university entrance obtained abroad:

www.daad.de/deutschland/zulassung/voraussetzungen/04646.de.html

Moreover, you may want to check addresses of all University International Offices here:

www.daad.de/deutschland/studium/studienplanung/00535.de.html

Residence law aspects for the entry of foreign applicants are found under:

www.daad.de/deutschland/zulassung/visum/04694.de.html

uni-assist e. V.

uni-assist is a service point, where international applications for a university place are processed. More than 90 german universities joined in this certification office to make international applications for studies in Germany easier and at the same time to support german universities in their selection of foreign students.

www.uni-assist.de

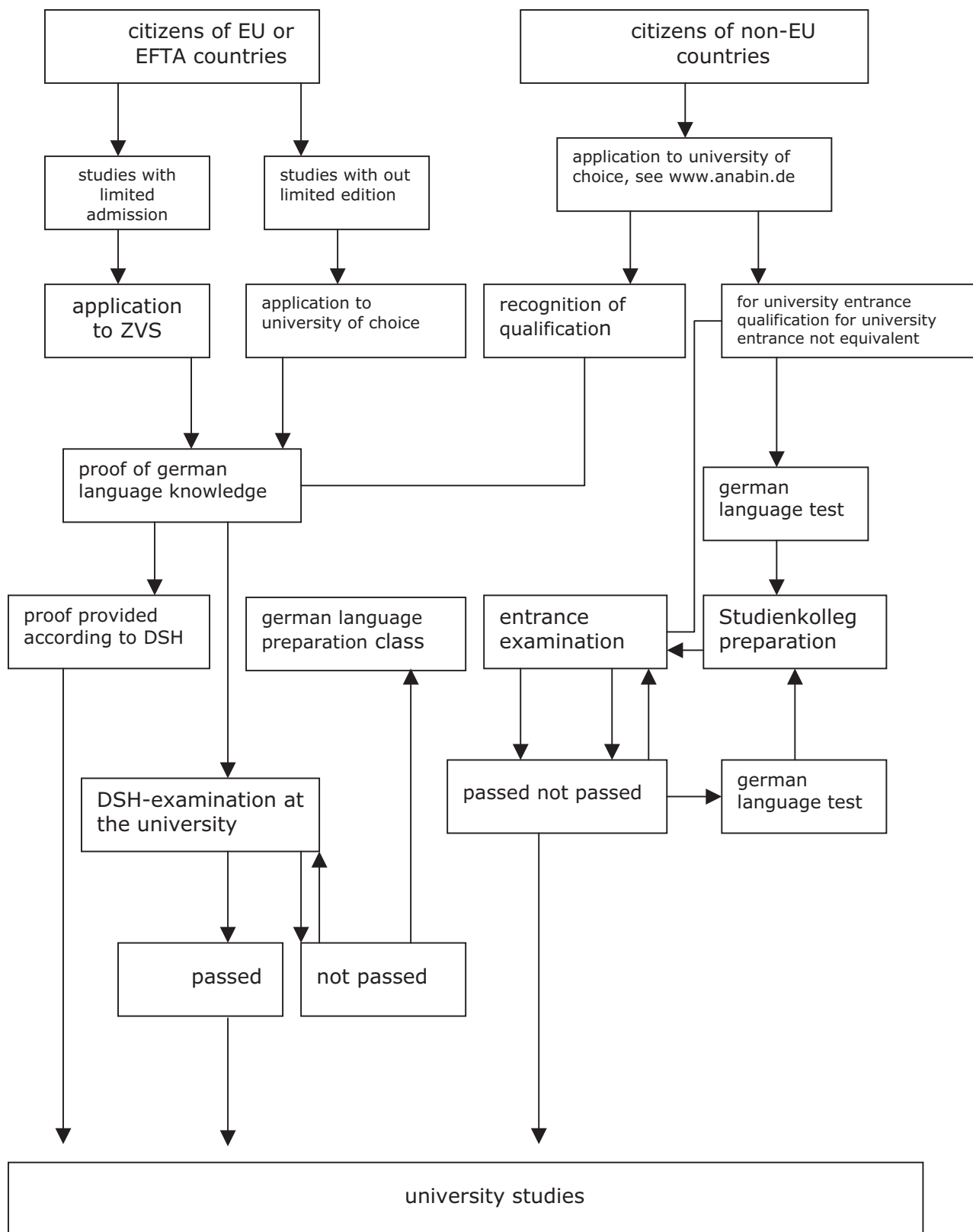
Booklet on choice of studies and occupation

The booklet „Studien- und Berufswahl“, edited and yearly updated by the german Federal Employment Office, is available free of charge at the local employment offices. It contains wide information on the german higher education structure, scheme of study descriptions, addresses of advisory institutions and much more.

The *anabin* data base

The *anabin* database (*anabin* stands for Anerkennung und Bewertung ausländischer Bildungsnachweise/ recognition and evaluation of foreign educational evidence) is maintained by the Central office for foreign educational issues and offers substantial information on the educational system, the various graduations and degrees as well as their rating value in a multitude of foreign countries:

www.anabin.de



5 Working in graduate professions

This chapter covers conditions and procedures applying to individuals, who wish to practice their graduate profession acquired abroad in Germany. By EU definition these are professions requiring at least three years of academic studies at a university finished with a university diploma. Not related to this issue is the *academic recognition* of professions: Information on degrees and professional titles obtained abroad that may be used in Germany will be found in chapter

5.1 Principles of recognition

As a matter of principle the competent authorities for recognition of foreign vocational qualification decide each case individually. On EU level they adhere to various European rules and regulations. There are certain *regulated* professions, requiring clearly defined prerequisites that need to be complied with before the respective profession can be practised.

Some regulated professions are accepted *automatically*: EU and EEA states mutually accept the respective graduation achieved in one of their member states so the profession can be practised in each member state. All other academic professions are not regulated and can be practised without any recognition procedures.

Citizens of states outside the EU or EEA cannot invoke the regulations mentioned. Their professional qualification will by certain criteria be compared to the respective German qualification and be checked for equal footing.

5.2 Regulated professions

For some professions the Federal Republic of Germany enacted precise regulations that govern the admission to and the exertion of the profession concerned. These professions legally require a diploma or a certain professional qualification. If you decide to practice one of these professions without the according qualification, you will be prosecuted. In official language they are called „regulated professions“, and there is a formal recognition procedure in place for qualifications acquired abroad.

Regulated professions are:

- in the pedagogic sector: teacher, social pedagogue and social worker
- in public health: doctor, pharmacist, psychologist, psychotherapist, psychotherapist for infants and adolescents
- in crafts and engineering: engineer, architect, interior designer
- in agriculture and forestry: landscape gardener, landscape architect, forest officer
- in administration of justice: lawyer, judge, notary
- food chemist
- civil service professions
- certified public accountant and tax consultant

Individuals who wish to practise one of these professions and have gained the relevant qualification abroad need to be accepted by a German authority. In the Federal Republic of Germany there is no such authority at federal level. You will have to submit your application to the competent authorities in the federal state or town, where you have your residence registered. Whatever they decide will be valid for the other federal states as well. There is no possibility for applicants who do not reside in Germany and who did not decide yet where in Germany to take residence to have their vocational qualification accepted for admission to a regulated profession.

5.3 Recognition of regulated professions

In order to qualify for the general regulation for recognition of the professions mentioned above, you already will in your country of origin have to have passed *the complete* vocational training that entitles you to work in this profession. In some countries e.g. law students take the theoretical lawyers' training at a university and a practical part. You must have completed both parts there in order to receive your lawyer's license here.

Citizens of EU and EEA countries and of Switzerland, who obtained their whole training in a non-EU country qualify for the general regulations for recognition only if their profession, e.g. due to bilateral treaties, is accepted in another EU member state, and if they have been practising their profession in that country for at least three years.

Regulations on European Union level

Until now there are no regulations effective in all EU countries for diplomas obtained in one country of the European Union to be *generally* accepted in other EU countries. Each case has to be resolved individually, and, while evaluating a qualification, the authorities will have to apply different European regulations. The rules and regulations described below apply for

- citizens of EU/EEA countries and Switzerland
- individuals with dual nationality, one of which is related to the abovementioned countries

Professional qualification achieved by third country citizens in one of the countries mentioned is also not covered by regulations for recognition. Accordingly, a Turkish citizen with an engineer qualification made in France cannot invoke EU regulations in order to work as an engineer in Germany. Also citizens of the countries mentioned, who achieved their qualification in countries other than EU/EEA and Switzerland, will not qualify for these regulations for recognition.

Automatic recognition

In relation to some regulated professions the EU/EEA states agreed on *automatic* recognition: Within the countries mentioned the respective qualifications will be mutually accepted. This rule applies for:

- general practitioners and medical specialists
- dentists
- veterinary surgeons
- pharmacists
- architects

Individuals who after having completed one of the named professional trainings are accepted for practising their profession in their country of origin without any limitations, may practise the respective profession in all EU/EEA countries and Switzerland. These people have the same rights and duties as the citizens of their host country, who have completed their professional training in this country. These rules are tied to certain minimum requirements for each profession which the applicant must be able to meet. These requirements refer to duration and contents of the theoretical and practical training.

Special rules for citizens of the new EU countries

There is a special rule in place for countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 and their citizens who achieved their professional qualification before the joining date: In the course of recognition procedures, they will have to provide an additional attestation from their country of origin. In this statement the competent authority shall confirm that the respective training already complied with EU minimum standard. If this is not the

case the applicants will have to prove that within the past five years they have worked in their profession for at least three years.

Special rules for ethnic german expatriates

German ethnic expatriates, when applying for recognition of their professional qualification, should always refer to Federal Expellee Law article 10. Due to this article „examinations passed or certificates of proficiency obtained by german ethnic expatriates in their countries of origin are to be accepted, if they are equivalent to the respective examinations or certificates of proficiency ...“. This clause results in a facilitated recognition of some professions. The training of jurists for instance is accepted as equivalent to the german 1st legal state exam, if the expatriate in the former Soviet Union completed five years of academic full time studies with a diploma thesis.

Regulations for third country citizens

Citizens from countries other than EU/EEA will also file their applications with the authorities classified by professions and mentioned below. However, they cannot plead EU regulations, but will have their qualification verified „by criteria of functional, formal and material equivalence“. Hence their qualification will be scrutinized for the issues of:

- Functional equivalence: What are applicants with a diploma like yours allowed to do in the country, where they obtained it?
- Formal equivalence: Where is your training classified in the educational system of your country of origin, what are the prerequisites for admission, how long does the training take?
- Material equivalence: What are the contents of this particular training?

This is the basis for comparing your qualification to the respective qualification in Germany. If significant differences are to be found your qualification will be only partially accepted or completely denied. In that case you will have to either repeat parts of your training and/or pass an exam in Germany.

Physicians and pharmacists are allowed a temporary license for practising their profession. This license may be limited to clearly defined activities and locations and is valid for a certain period of time which can be used for completing either a medical specialist training or to catch up on the required parts of the medical or pharmaceutical training. The respective application shall be submitted to the same authorities responsible for granting the licence to practise medicine.

Application procedures

The following documentation shall be submitted to the competent authority:

Required documentation

- (personally signed) application
- legalised copies of your university diploma, certificate or other proof of qualification (with an overview on subjects and grades) issued by the competent authority of the country where training was completed
- legalised german translation (if certificates were not written in Latin or English)
- curriculum vitae
- A certificate of good conduct if applicable, registration card, evidence of status (legalised copies), and a statement, that you did not file this application in another federal state.

In some cases additional documentation is required, e.g. a german language competence proof, if you want your profession as a teacher to be accepted. Therefore it makes sense to inquire about documents needed before you submit your application. The competent authority will compare your professional qualification acquired abroad to the requirements of the respective profession in Germany. Professional training and/or experience will have to be taken into account by the authority in order to compensate differences that might be existing. It may take months until a decision on recognition is reached.

Possible results of application procedures

Recognition:

Applicants are entitled to practice their profession according to the same conditions as a german citizen and have the same rights and duties as the holder of a national diploma.

Partial recognition:

The verifying authority has found significant differences in relation to duration and contents of the respective training and requires *compensation measures*:

In order to recover discrepancies in the job-related contents of training or field of activity, you will either have to attend a *compensating training course* or pass a *qualification test* in Germany. Usually you can choose between these two possibilities. However, for professions requiring sound knowledge of German law (lawyer, tax consultant, certified public accountant) a qualification test is mandatory.

Both, compensating training course and qualification test must relate to contents only that were actually not covered by training in the country of origin. The examination date will have to be agreed with the examination board. The examination shall refer to significant discrepancies only and must not be identical with examinations that have to be passed in Germany – Schleswig-Holstein for graduation.

The German state shall ensure that participation in compensating training course and qualification test is actually possible. Detailed information on training curriculum, course contractors and costs if applicable will be available from the competent authorities.

Refusal:

In case an authority declines an application, it will have to substantiate its decision in detail. You have the right to appeal the decision, if you are of the opinion, that it is not justified.

5.4 Competent authorities for recognition of academic qualifications

Architects

(also interior designers and landscape architects)

Ministry of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport of Land Schleswig-Holstein
Higher Education Dept. VII 536
Düsternbrooker Weg 104, 24105 Kiel
Frau Jagst
Tel.: (0431) 988 - 5858 Fax: (0431) 988 – 6175858
Inga.jagst@wimi.landsh.de
www.wirtschaftsministerium.schleswig-holstein.de

Engineers

Engineers with higher education qualification

Ministry of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport of Land Schleswig-Holstein

Hochschulabteilung VII 536

Düsternbrooker Weg 104, 24105 Kiel

Frau Jagst

Tel.: (0431) 988 - 5858 Fax: (0431) 988 – 6175858

Inga.jagst@wimi.landsh.de

www.wirtschaftsministerium.schleswig-holstein.de

The Schleswig-Holstein Ministry of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport governs recognition for the purpose of employment in all scientific professions. Excepted are medical and teaching post degrees.

Jurists

As a rule foreign jurists have to face the fact that their qualification will not be completely accepted in Germany. As of recently, graduations achieved abroad may be accepted as first state examination in Law. However, any recognition will be quite limited. Hence in most cases you will be granted just a formal recognition as jurist. This professional title may be used together with the abbreviation of the country where you were trained, e.g. „Jurist (SU)“ for quota refugees from the former Soviet Union.

Advice for foreign lawyers who want to work in a law position in Germany

Bar association Schleswig-Holstein

Gottorfstr. 13, 24837 Schleswig

Mrs Eggers

Tel.: (04621) 93910

teachers

A complete substantial approval for immigrated teachers is rarely granted. This is because in most cases in their countries of origin they studied only one subject, whereas in Germany two or more are required. During recognition procedures there will be a decision on measures for compensating advanced training applicants will have to complete. These measures consist in either additional university studies of another subject, or a compensating training course. In that course, while working as teacher at a public school immigrants will be coached by training personnel of the teachers' training college, similarly to German teachers in their provisional teaching period.

The competent authority for evaluation and recognition of foreign teaching post diplomas:

Ministry of Education and Culture of Land Schleswig-Holstein

Mr Lohmann

Brunswiker Str. 16-22, 24105 Kiel

Tel.: (0431) 988-2439

Fax: (0431) 988-5888

office hours: Tuesday to Thursday 10:00–12:00

Civil Service

As a rule, for recruitment of personnel for Civil Service on federal, federal state or community level (administration, police, authorities, ministries etc.) the respective personnel office will contact the Ministry of Science. Alternatively, the degree holder may in any case approach the abovementioned Ministry directly for evaluation of his qualification. For recruitment, he/she needs to meet residence law requirements.

Social pedagogues, social workers

The competent authority for approval of social pedagogues and social workers:

Ministry of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport of Land Schleswig-Holstein

Higher education dept. VII 536
Düsternbrooker Weg 104, 24105 Kiel
Frau Jagst
Tel.: (0431) 988 - 5858 Fax: (0431) 988 – 6175858
Inga.jagst@wimi.landsh.de
please contact us by calling first

Tax consultants

Competent authority for examination:

Ministry of Finance of Land Schleswig-Holstein

Düsternbrooker Weg 64
24105 Kiel
Referatsleiter/ department head Christian Drügem Müller
Tel.: (0431) 988-8932 Fax: (0431) 988-1663932
Christian.druegemmueller@fimi.landsh.de

Competent for taking examinations:

After having passed the examination you need to be appointed for, i.e. accepted for the position of tax consultant before you can start. The respective application forms „for appointment of tax consultants“, „Antrag auf Bestellung als Steuerberater/in“, are available at the Chamber of tax consultants:

Chamber of tax consultants Schleswig-Holstein (KdöR)

Hopfenstraße 2d, 24114 Kiel
Telefon: (0431) 5 70 49-0 Telefax: (0431) 5 70 49-10
E-Mail: info@stbk-sh.de Internet: <http://www.stbk-sh.de/>

Certified public accountants

The Chamber of certified public accountants in Berlin holds examinations for certified public accountants at federal level. Thus it is the competent authority for recognition of foreign qualification.

Wirtschaftsprüferkammer/Chamber of certified public accountants Berlin

Prüfungsstelle für das Wirtschaftsexamen bei der Wirtschaftsprüferkammer

Rauchstrasse 26, 10787 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 72 61 61-0

contact person: Mr Tüffers, Tel.: (030) 72 61 61-188

E-Mail: pruefungsstelle@wpk.de Internet: www.wpk.de

***Psychological psychotherapists,
Psychotherapist for infants and adolescents***

The competent authority for granting licence to practise and approbation is the State office for health and occupational safety of Land Schleswig-Holstein:

State Office for Social Services of Land Schleswig-Holstein

Adolf-Westphal-Str. 4, 24143 Kiel

dept. III health protection

Mr Myska

Tel.: (0431) 988 – 5565 Telefax: (0431) 988 – 5416

pharmacists**State Office for Social Services of Land Schleswig-Holstein**

Adolf-Westphal-Str. 4, 24143 Kiel

dept. III health protection

Mr Myska

Tel.: (0431) 988 – 5565 Telefax: (0431) 988 – 5416

physicians, medical specialists and dentists

Pursuant to Federal medical practitioners' act article 10, or to Dentistry Practice Act article 13 respectively, foreign physicians and dentists will need a physician's or dentist's licence to practise in Germany.

This license may be granted upon application to individuals, who prove to have accomplished training for a physician's or dentist's profession, if they meet one of the following requirements according to Federal medical practitioners' act article 10 or Dentistry Practice Act article 13 respectively:

an unappealable recognition as asylum seeker,
a residence permit pursuant to residence act article 23 section 2,
marriage to a german national with ordinary residence in Germany,
holding of an assurance of naturalization, although there may be obstacles to naturalisation the applicant himself/herself cannot overcome.

Considering the situation, the license to practise will be limited to a certain job location, but at least to the Federal state of Schleswig-Holstein. The license will be temporarily limited, as a rule to a period of 2 years. It may be extended if conditions listed above still apply.

Documentation to be added to application for approbation or permission:

1. dated and signed complete and concise CV,
2. a) certificate of birth or extract from parents' family register,
b) certificate of marriage or an extract from family register for marriages,
3. a) identification card,
b) expellee or refugee ID or similar written confirmation
c) passport with stay permit,
d) nationality record (nationality ID, naturalization record, or similar),

- e) nationality record or passport of german spouse,
 - f) registration card,
 - g) registration card of spouse
4. certificate of good conduct issued not earlier than one month prior to submission
 5. personal statement by applicant of any criminal proceedings or preliminary investigation by public prosecution pending
 6. medical attestation issued not earlier than one month prior to submission, confirming the applicant's physical aptitude for practising the profession of a physician or dentist
 7. proof of academic studies and professional practice as physician or dentist
 - a) higher education qualification/diploma
 - b) proof of each subject taken in particular with transcript of grades
 - c) proof of practical training
 - d) license
 - e) up-to-date attestation of the foreign competent authorities, if license to practise medicine or dentistry has been limited or revoked
 - f) proof of previous professional practice (employment record)
 8. job confirmation
 9. proof of german language course

Documentation shall be submitted in original (keep copies!). Certificates may be presented in certified or notarised form. Foreign documents shall principally be filed together with their german translation. Translations shall be based on originals or certified copies, and they shall be made by an officially appointed and sworn translator. If certification and translation of documents were made abroad, you will need legalization by a german embassy or consulate.

Medical attestation (item 6) not bearing a stamp by physician or doctor's office have to be returned. For granting approbation and license an administrative fee will be charged.

In order to practise as a physician in Germany for an unlimited period of time, the applicant will have to pass the theoretical exam at the medical association. Prerequisite is the existence of a licence to practise medicine.

The procedures are: You will file your application with the State Office for Social Services/ Landesamt für Soziale Dienste des Landes Schleswig-Holstein, Adolf-Westphal-Str. 4, 24143 Kiel. The competent employee will look at each case individually. If the decision is in your favour, you will receive an invitation for examination at a fixed date. The examination is held at the medical association/Ärztchammer Schleswig-Holstein, Bismarckallee 8-12, 23795 Bad Segeberg.

State Office for Social Services Land Schleswig-Holstein

Adolf-Westphal-Str. 4, 24143 Kiel

dept. III health protection

Mrs Heim, letters A - L, Tel.: (0431) 988 – 5572

Mr Myska, letters M - Z, Tel.: (0431) 988 – 5565

Otto Benecke Stiftung e.V. / Otto Benecke foundation postgraduate program

Recognition and examination of dentists is governed by the Dentists' Chamber.

Further programmes:

AQUA / registered Otto Benecke foundation for post graduates

Since 2006, Otto Benecke Stiftung e.V. (OBS) conducts qualification training courses for unemployed postgraduates in the AQUA project (postgraduates qualify for the job market) by order and for account of the Federal Ministry of education and research and the European Social Fund. Since its pilot phase in 2006/2007, when only four courses were tested for unemployed postgraduates, the project was continually extended and in the meantime offers a wide range of training courses for specific professions, so-called additional studies, for (re-) entry into the working life. Learning opportunities are for postgraduates with or without migrational background. Participation does not depend on either age, university or advanced technical college degree, nationality or length of unemployment.

In the beginning of 2009, training course opportunities as part of the longtime Otto Benecke foundation postgraduate programm for migrants with academical background in need for specific integration support in Germany, were transferred to the AQUA project and named under the title of AQUA-migration. This change makes it possible for all migrants who achieved a university degree in their country of origin, to make use of this opportunity.

However, a precondition is that you receive unemployment pay (ALG 1) or ALG 2 for the whole training period. Attendance without receiving unemployment pay is possible in exceptional cases.

Who gets support?

This offer is meant for all – immigrated or local – postgraduates without employment.

What will be supported?

AQUA offers the following support measures to immigrated or local unemployed postgraduates in order to facilitate their professional (re-) entry:

1. Career Consulting,
2. Language courses (e.g. terminology for economists, teachers, humanities
 - scholars, engineers and natural scientists),
3. additional studies (e.g. civil engineering, company security management, laser technique, medicine, microsystems technology, public relations, tourism management)

Detailed information about all AQUA learning opportunities, dates and deadlines, and written applications will be given by OBS in Bonn, hotline: 0228/8163-600, e-mail Aqua@obs-ev.de, internet www.obs-ev.de/AQUA. Application forms can be delivered directly through the internet.

5.5 Non-regulated professions

All other academic professions, such as physicist, mathematician, specialist in German studies, economist, social scientist etc. are not regulated, i.e. there is no legal requirement and therefore no recognition procedure for these professions to be practised. Such a profession can be practised without approval by an authority under the same conditions as applicable for German citizens. It is the employer, who decides if he accepts your qualification, if he hires you and how much you are being paid.

However, for some professions it may make sense to have an official evaluation of your respective qualification. Thus a potential employer has a chance to appreciate skills and competence of an applicant. The competent authorities will write an evaluation of your higher education qualification, if desired.

Further practical hints

For proof of equivalence of academic studies an administration fee will be charged, unless the student proves that he/she is either a EU citizen or belongs to a group of

individuals to whom the federal refugee recognition act applies. For this purpose, an ID card due to Federal Expellee Law article 15 or any similar proof of refugee status should also be submitted as copy. Registration evidence or allocation notice should not be submitted. The status proof must be issued in the name of the applicant. Neither marriage to a EU citizen or a beneficiary as mentioned above, nor drawing of unemployment benefits will be a reason for waiving fees. In case of naturalisation being involved, proceedings have to be finalised.

As a rule, the invoice will be mailed together with the notice of (partial) recognition at the end of proceedings. Fees can be paid by bank transfer.

Please allow an average processing period of 6 to 7 months. While documentation is usually validated by external experts, the Ministry cannot exert influence on the processing time span.

Do not use plastic folders for shipment. Make sure to always indicate the file number. Submit documentation asked for within six months, or the case will be filed away.

A name change after diploma was issued requires your marriage certificate to be submitted in addition. Instead of originals always send certified copies, as documents may get lost in the mail. You can have your copies certified at your local administration office or town hall. Copies made or documents translated in your country of origin require an Apostille.

5.6 Further information

The European Union guidelines on general regulations for recognition of professional qualification proof answers your questions about recognition of regulated trades in an understandable manner and in all languages of the EU:

<http://europa.eu.int/youreurope/nav/de/citizens/home.html>

Although there is no authority in Germany for nationwide recognition of vocational qualification, the central office for foreign educational systems established with the conference of german cultural ministers will be your place to go for information. Here you are welcome to enquire about all aspects of application, recognition, competent authorities etc.

Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen (ZAB)

Sekretariat der Kulturministerkonferenz

Lennestraße 6, 53113 Bonn

Tel.: (0228) 501-352 / -264

E-Mail: zab@kmk.org

Internet: www.kmk.org

You will find an information system for recognition of foreign educational achievements, information about bilateral agreements, translations of degrees and levels of education and an overview of educational institutions in a multitude of countries under:
www.anabin.de

6 Recognition of academic titles and degrees

This chapter covers *academic recognition* of professions you learn at a university completing your studies with a university diploma. This form of recognition applies whenever individuals wish to continue their studies which they took up abroad, or want to use their academic title which they obtained in their country of origin, in Germany. The approval to hold a certain title in Germany does not automatically entitle the holder to practise the profession connected to it. See chapter 5 for information on *vocational recognition*.

6.1 Basic principles of recognition

Due to the complexity of the matter we would like to draw your attention to the statement quoted below. Here the Ministry of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport of Land Schleswig-Holstein also refers to the booklet it recently issued:

Holding of foreign academic grades, titles and use of descriptions for positions held at a university abroad, for Schleswig-Holstein is governed by „general approval“ due to University & College Act, i.e. a written confirmation for holding the title by the Ministry is principally not required. Given the large number of similar requests about this matter you will find legal basics and answers to most frequent questions in an information paper by the Ministry of Science in a regularly updated version as download under www.wissenschaft.schleswig-holstein.de by typing the word „Grade“ in the upper left pop-up(Volltextsuche) or directly under : http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/Wissenschaft/DE/SpezielleThemen/auslandAbschluesseAkademGrade/auslandAbschluesseAkademGrade__node.html__nnn=true. „Die Führung ausländischer akademischer Grade in Schleswig-Holstein“ is the title of the booklet.

Appendix

Legalisation and translation of documents

In most cases a recognition of foreign qualification requires certified copies and translations of certificates and other documents, which have to be prepared by sworn translators. Applicants may contact the following offices for certification and/or translation:

- certified copies of documents *in foreign languages* are available in Schleswig-Holstein in notary's offices or at the Consulate of your country of origin.
- Copies of german documents are certified by the municipal public order office.
- Sworn translators accredited in Schleswig-Holstein can be found in the internet under www.landgericht-kiel.landsh.de or www.dolmetscher-treffen.de

Prerequisites for support due to BaföG / BAB

The Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG) rules assistance modes for university or school training:

article 1 policy

Pursuant to this Act there is a legal claim for individual training assistance for anyone achieving qualification according to his/her disposition, ability and performance, if the student has no other means for his/her own subsistence or education.

Migrants will have to check first of all, if they are principally entitled to support according to this act, as for some residence permits special conditions apply.

Henceforth foreigners holding a settlement permit, a residence permit pursuant to Residence Act articles 22, 23 sections 1 or 2, 23a, 25 sections 1,2,3,4 sentence 2 or 5, to articles 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38 section 1 № 2 or article 104a, or the right for permanent settlement pursuant to Freedom of Movement Act/EU are on the basis of their status due to aliens law alone like Germans entitled for benefits. In some cases four years of allowed, tolerated or permitted previous residence are required.

New as of January 1, 2009:

After a previous residence period of four years, tolerated foreigners, who meet all other conditions for promotion of vocational training (also applicable to german nationals, e.g.

need, age limit, training eligible for support etc.) are entitled for support pursuant to the Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG).

BAföG article 8 section 2a: tolerated foreigners (Residence Act article 60a) with permanent residence in Germany will receive training assistance, if they lived for at least the last **four** years permanently, legally, tolerated or under condonement on Federal territory.

Questions and answers on this subject are found under: www.das-neue-bafoeg.de

Also new is training assistance for tolerated foreigners under the abovementioned conditions according to Vocational Training Assistance Berufsausbildungsbeihilfe (BAB), § 63 IIa SGB III.

Further information under:

http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn_164814/Navigation/zentral/Veroeffentlichungen/Gesetze-Verordnungen/Gesetze-Verordnungen-Nav.html#d1.1

On the basis of their status due to aliens law alone henceforth still not entitled are: Asylum seekers and tolerated foreigners, foreigners residing in Germany for the sole purpose of training or study respectively (Residence Act article 16 following), foreigners with limited working stay (Residence Act article 18 following), foreigners with residence permit pursuant to Residence Act articles 24, 25 IV sentence 1 or article 25 IVa, as well as EU citizens not holding Freedom of Movement rights as family members, permanent residents or based on previous employment substantially connected to training started. However they can as before acquire entitlement by their parents' previous employment.

Individuals not qualifying for support due to BAföG will not receive unemployment pay Arbeitslosengeld II, if they study at a university or subscribe for training basically eligible for BAföG-support. However, in a case of hardship they have the possibility to apply for Arbeitslosengeld II as a bank loan due to Social Security Code II article 7 section 5. As of 1 January 2007 for school education or vocational training (not for students) pursuant to Social Security Code II article 22 section 7, the Jobcenter/ARGE will have to pay an allowance for rent and heating, if BAföG or BAB (vocational training aid) should not provide sufficient support.

Further advice on promotion of vocational training for migrants due to BAföG, on new regulations for vocational training aid according to Social Security Code III and career advancement due to Social Security Code II will be found under http://www.asyl.net/Magazin/12_2007b.htm

General information about Career Advancement Federal Training Assistance Act (AFBG) "Master-BAföG"

The "master BAföG" exists since 1996. Benefits according to this act were significantly upgraded already by the first amendment to AFBG. The new "master BAföG" became effective with July 1, 2009 and applies to training schemes or parts thereof starting after this date.

The Career Advancement Federal Training Assistance Act or "master BAföG" constitutes the individual legal claim for financial support of career advancement training, i.e. master class or courses preparing the attendee for comparable advanced training degrees. Apart from partial loan remission the new "master-BAföG" provides incentives for successful completion of courses and the first step into self-employment.

Changes and enhancements for refugees and migrants:

Foreigners willing to proceed in their career advancement, who either own a long-term residence permit or already live in Germany over a long period of time and are determined to stay here permanently, will be financially supported according to AFBG, even without their request being linked to a previous minimum earning period.

Individual preconditions:

Principally all foreigners who own an indefinite right of residence are granted access to master-BAföG. Foreigners will be financially supported if prior to the training scheme they

- *resided and*
- *were lawfully employed*

*for a period of altogether **three years** in Germany.*

Employment also includes time spent in vocational apprenticeship (pursuant to Handicrafts Code or German Vocational Training Act).

Financial support shall be granted to:

1. *EU citizens who own the right of permanent residence in accordance with the EU Freedom of Movement Act, and all other foreigners who own a settlement permit or a permanent residence permit in accordance with the Residence Act.*

2.

6. *foreigners with their usual residence in Germany who are acknowledged outside of Federal territory as refugees pursuant to the Agreement on the legal status of refugees of July 28, 1951 (Federal Law Gazette 1953 II p. 559) and who on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany are entitled for more than just temporary residence.*

7. *homeless foreigners in accordance with the Act on legal status of homeless foreigners on Federal territory in the adjusted version published in the Federal Law Gazette part III, separation number 243-1, lastly amended by Act article 7 of July 30, 2004 (Federal Law Gazette I S. 1950).*

All other foreigners are entitled to financial help provided they have their permanent residence in Germany and

1. *own a residence permit according to articles 22, 23 section 1 or 2, articles 23a, 25 section 1 or 2, articles 28, 37, 28 section 1 Nr. 2, article 104a, or as spouse or child of a foreigner with settlement permit own a residence permit according to Residence Act article 30 or articles 32 through 34,*

2. *own a residence permit according to Residence Act article 25 section 3,4 phrase 2 or section 5, article 31, or as spouse or child of a foreigner with residence permit own a residence permit according to Residence Act article 30 or articles 32 through 34, and have their lawful, allowed or tolerated uninterrupted residence in Germany for at least four years.*

Detailed information about "master – BAföG" is found under

www.meister-bafoeg.info



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