

# Studying in Switzerland

Are you from a foreign country intending to study in Switzerland for a bachelor's or master's degree? Then read this information sheet.

## The Swiss university system and the subjects offered

In Switzerland the range from academic to applied studies is covered by three types of institutions with different training tasks: Doctoral/Research Universities (Universitäre Hochschulen UH), Universities of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschulen FH), Universities of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschulen PH).

The subjects offered at these universities are: Theology (UH), Economics and Law (UH, FH), Medical Sciences (UH, FH), Sports (UH, FH), Social Sciences (UH, FH), Arts and Humanities (UH), Languages, Literature and Communication (UH, FH), Applied Arts, Music, Design (FH, UH), Mathematics and Information Sciences (UH, FH), Life Sciences (UH, FH), Engineering and Architecture (UH, FH), Education (PH, FH, UH). The language of tuition is German, French or Italian, depending on the part of Switzerland you intend to study. Some subjects are offered in English, especially those on a master's degree level.

The following link leads to all study programmes offered at Swiss universities: [www.studyprogrammes.ch](http://www.studyprogrammes.ch).



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## Conditions for admission

Conditions for admission depend on the individual university and study programme. There are general conditions like relevant basic education prerequisites or knowledge of the language of study on the one hand and specific conditions for the subject chosen on the other.

### General conditions for admission

For access to Swiss universities a valid Swiss Baccalaureate or an equivalent foreign upper secondary school-leaving certificate qualifying for university entrance is required. Each university makes its own decisions as to which certificates and qualifications it recognizes. Specific courses and entry exams for foreign national students are offered (see the [information sheet «Prüfungen für Studienbewerber/-innen mit ausländischer Vorbildung»](#), [www.be.ch/biz-dokumente](http://www.be.ch/biz-dokumente)). Most universities demand a good command of the language of instruction (generally level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFR/GeRS). Universities of Applied Sciences usually require at least one year work experience (internship) in the chosen field.

### Specific conditions for admission

Some study programmes demand specific additional conditions like personal suitability or professional prerequisites. As a rule all applicants for medical studies (UH/FH), social sciences (FH), applied arts, music and design (FH) have to pass an entry exam. There are special regulations for the application to study programmes in medicine and chiropractic: [www.swissuniversities.ch](http://www.swissuniversities.ch) > Services > Applying to Medical School > International Student Admissions.

Links to all universities and their exact conditions of admission can be found here:  
[www.swissuniversities.ch](http://www.swissuniversities.ch) > Services > Admission to ... > Foreign certificates.

## Costs and scholarships

Tuition fees per year at most universities are between CHF 1 000.– and CHF 2 540.– for foreign national students. Exceptions: University of St. Gallen (CHF 4 300.–), Università della Svizzera italiana (CHF 8 000.–), the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland and private Universities of Applied Sciences (up to CHF 10 000.– and more). The cost of living in Switzerland varies from 18 000.– to 28 000.– per year (see information sheet «Studienkosten», [www.be.ch/biz-dokumente](http://www.be.ch/biz-dokumente)).

Candidates must find out from their own country's authorities whether they are entitled to a scholarship. No further scholarships are offered by Switzerland or the Swiss universities for Bachelor or Master studies. (Exception: Grants for particularly gifted arts students).

## Application for admission

Foreign students are well advised to contact the university of their choice prior to the admission deadline. Applications for fall semester must be submitted in spring, in most cases before April 30th. At some universities earlier deadlines might apply for foreign students and study programmes with specific entry conditions ([www.swissuniversities.ch](http://www.swissuniversities.ch) > Higher education area > Studying in Switzerland > Registration deadlines). Many universities accept online applications.

## Entry requirements

Students entering Switzerland for study reasons must register with the local authority (Einwohnerkontrolle, Residents' Registration Office) at their place of residence within a fortnight and apply for a residence permit. The permit can be granted when students have a valid passport (plus visa if necessary), a proof of registration at the university, evidence of sufficient funds and a certificate of their health insurance coverage. The State Secretariat for Migration SEM provides detailed information about entry and residence requirements for Switzerland at: [www.sem.admin.ch](http://www.sem.admin.ch)

## Accommodation and work

Students have to look for their accommodation by themselves. Most universities, however, have housing agencies: [www.swissuniversities.ch](http://www.swissuniversities.ch) > Higher education area > Studying in Switzerland > Apartments.

Foreign national students are allowed to work a maximum of 15 hours per week during term, up to 100% during semester breaks. The required work permit can be granted no earlier than 6 months after the official start of the course of study. Students who are citizens of an EU-/EFTA country may obtain a permit at any time and for any given weekly working hours (see information sheet «Arbeitsmöglichkeiten für Ausländerinnen und Ausländer in der Schweiz», [www.be.ch/biz-dokumente](http://www.be.ch/biz-dokumente)).

## Further information

<a href="http://www.studyinginswitzerland.ch">www.studyinginswitzerland.ch</a>	General information concerning living and studying in Switzerland (in English).
<a href="http://www.berufsberatung.ch/studium">www.berufsberatung.ch/studium</a>	Detailed information on the university system and all study programmes in Switzerland (in German).