Bachelor Degree: Basic Information for International Students

Important: This synopsis is for convenience only and is not legally binding. For the relevant legal provisions please consult your course exam regulations (Studien- und Prüfungsordnung) and module handbook (Modulhandbuch).

Structure

Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts programs are usually made up of subject-specific coursework (fachspezifische Leistung) plus a component of professional skills training (Schlüsselqualifikationen). They can be completed in six semesters; some may take 7 or 8 semesters. To gain your Bachelor Degree, you must acquire 180 points (210 if the program takes 7 semesters; 240 if the program takes 8 semesters) under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor Degree components (6 semesters)</th>
<th>ECTS points (for details consult your module handbook)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor thesis</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject-specific coursework</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional skills</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
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Some study programs offer an additional flexibility window (Flexibilitätsfenster), giving you an extra two semesters in which to do an internship (Modul Berufspraktikum), pursue individual studies (Modul Individuelle Studien), or a combination of both (consult the exam regulations for details.) This option increases the number of ECTS points which must be earned by 60:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor Degree components (with flexibility window, 8 semesters, 180 ECTS)</th>
<th>ECTS points (for details consult your module handbook)</th>
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<td>Professional skills</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility window (not usually part of the overall grade of the Bachelor program)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>240</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If your study program allows for a flexibility window and you wish to make use of the option, you must discuss it with your academic counselor (Studienberater/Studienberatung) and subsequently notify your Examination Board and the Student Administration in writing by the end of your fourth semester.

**Accreditation of Study Elsewhere**

Credits accumulated at another state-recognized or state institution of higher education will be accredited (subject to the relevant exam regulations) if there are no substantial differences between the qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification pursued at another institution of higher education.

Credits accumulated outside of Germany may also be accredited if they meet the requirements of an agreement on academic cooperation.

**Bachelor Degree Exams**

In the Orientation Exam (Orientierungsprüfung), you must demonstrate that you are capable of meeting the demands of academic study in your chosen field. You must show that you have attained academic and methodical skills which will allow you to continue you studies successfully. The orientation exam is to be taken **by the end of the second semester**. If you do not complete it (including any repeat exam) by the end of the third semester for no good reason, you will lose your right to take exams and you may be expelled from the University.

**Intermediate Exams** (Zwischenprüfung) (if they are provided for in the exam regulations) are for you to show that you have reached the goals of your second year of study and have attained basic knowledge of the subjects you are studying, while also mastering the methodology and systematic orientation needed to successfully complete the degree. Usually, the intermediate exam is to be taken **by the end of the fourth semester**. If you do not complete it (including any repeat exam) by the end of the sixth semester for no good reason, you will lose your right to take exams and you may be expelled from the University.

The Orientation Exam and the Intermediate Exam are made up of the assessed parts of certain modules of the curriculum. The assessed work that is or may be part of the Orientation Exam may be repeated once only; all other assessed work may usually be repeated twice.

The exam regulations may also require completion of your Bachelor Exam within a given number of semesters (usually the regular duration of the program plus an additional 3 semesters); if this is the case, and you have failed to comply for no good reason you will lose your right to take exams and you may be expelled from the University.
To obtain your Bachelor degree, you must successfully complete:

- your Bachelor thesis,
- assessed coursework (studienbegleitende Prüfungsleistungen),
- other coursework which is not assessed (Studienleistungen)
- an oral exam and/or colloquium at the end of your Bachelor studies (if required by the exam regulations or the module handbook).

Consult your module handbook for details.

You must register for exams by the closing date published by the Examination Board; in most cases, registration automatically includes registration to re-sit in case of a fail. In some cases (please consult the exam regulations) you may cancel your registration for an exam up to a certain number of days before the day of the exam without giving a reason (but all other time limits for completing the Orientation Exam, Intermediate Exam and Bachelor Exam must still be met).

Oral assessment (mündliche Prüfungsleistung) may for example include oral exams, oral presentations or participation in colloquiums. An oral exam usually lasts 15-30 minutes, and is usually meant to demonstrate your grasp of the subject matter, your ability to process questions arising from it and your broad knowledge of the basic subject matter.

Written assessment (schriftliche Prüfungsleistung) may for example take the form of written exams or assignments. It is meant to show that you can recognize a problem and find ways of solving it using the methodology of your subject within a given time limit. The allotted time for a written exam is normally set at between 60 and 240 minutes.

The grading scale for assessment is:

1-very good (outstanding performance),
2-good (well above average),
3-satisfactory (average),
4-sufficient (pass),
5-fail.

Examiners can refine grades by adding or deducting 0.3 (grades 1.3 / 2.3 / 3.3, 1.7, 2.7, 3.7)
**Bachelor Thesis**

You must apply in writing to the Examination Board for admission to the Bachelor thesis examination process, which, in addition to assessment of the thesis itself, may include an oral exam and/or final colloquium on its content. The application must include your academic records (your German Studienbuch or other equivalent documentation, e.g. your transcript of records) and a declaration as to whether you have ever, at the last attempt, failed the Bachelor thesis or any final oral assessment or any compulsory assessment in your program or in any similar program, or ever lost your right to take exams in the program or in any similar program.

Your Bachelor thesis is intended to demonstrate your ability to work on a problem independently using academic methods and to present the results thus attained in appropriate written form and within a given time. You may suggest a topic for your Bachelor thesis but it may not be accepted. If you cannot find a topic for your Bachelor thesis you may approach the Chairman of the Examination Board regarding this matter.

The Bachelor thesis may normally be written in English or German; the Examination Board may decide on a case-by-case basis whether another language is permissible. The thesis must be submitted to the Examination Board (or in some cases to the office of the Examination Board or to the supervising tutor/ professor; please consult the exam regulations) by the due date (please consult the exam regulations regarding this matter) in both electronic form (in the file format published by the Examination Board) and bound paper form (for the number of copies please contact the office of the Examination Board). The time of submission will be recorded. You must include a signed declaration in German stating that the thesis is your own work; that you have used no sources other than those listed in the thesis; that all statements from other works, whether paraphrased or quoted, have been marked as such; that the thesis has not, in whole or in part, been submitted as part of any other examination process, nor has it been published in whole or in part; and that the electronic copy of the thesis is identical in content to the bound copy/copies.

A Bachelor thesis examination process resulting in a “fail” may be repeated once only and you will need to apply within a fixed period to repeat it. The exam regulations may also provide for a new choice of topic within a set time from the approval of the topic by the Office of the Examination Board.
Passing/ Failing Exams

A grade of 1 (very good) to 4 (sufficient) is a pass. Any number higher than 4.0 is a fail. If a student fails a piece of assessed work or the Bachelor thesis exam, the Chairman of the Examination Board will usually notify the student, giving information on the right to appeal, and whether and to what extent the work can be re-submitted or the exam re-sat. Alternatively, information of a fail may be provided in some other form.

You must normally re-sit a failed exam in the following semester, or at the latest, in the semester after that; failing to do so for no good reason will result in a fail.

Failing to attend a scheduled exam for no good reason will result in a fail. Exceeding the allotted time will result in a fail. Cheating or using unauthorized aids will result in a fail. Disruptive behavior during an exam may result in your exclusion from the exam room and consequent fail in the exam. If you are sick or otherwise unable to sit an exam, you must inform the office of the Examination Board at the earliest possible opportunity, providing evidence as to why you could not attend. In the case of illness or injury a medical certificate will normally be required, showing that you were incapable of sitting the exam on the respective day.

Examination Board

Each Examination Board is made up of academic staff members and at least one student (whose role is purely advisory). Examination Board meetings are not open to the public. Examiners and other persons allowed to be present are bound by professional secrecy.

Decisions by the Examination Board which negatively affect the candidate must be communicated to the candidate in writing, explaining the decision. Instructions on the right to appeal will be included. Appeals must reach the Examination Board in writing within one month.

Certificates

Once you have passed your Bachelor exams, you will receive a certificate (Zeugnis) detailing your grade and (in most subjects) the title of your Bachelor thesis, and a degree certificate (Urkunde) bestowing the title of Bachelor. The University will also provide you with a Diploma Supplement describing your course, and a Transcript of Records showing your academic performance. These documents are in German; the University will issue certified English translations if you apply for them.