zweifellos
Finde deinen Weg.

FIND YOUR PATH

Are you having doubts about your studies? Discover your options.

BERATUNGSNETZWERK QUERAUFSTIEG

Doubts about your studies ?

We'll guide you – and pave a new path to your future. Are you having doubts about your studies or have you already dropped out? This guide gives you an overview of the various counseling services available in Berlin. You can get answers to your questions about next steps, alternatives to studying, funding options, and much more in free consultation sessions.

Particularly helpful: This guide includes a reflection sheet that helps you sort your thoughts and get ready for further counseling. It guides you through key questions so you can reflect on your situation and identify your next steps.

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SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

There are several paths to a career in Germany-University is only one of them. You can find out more information at the advice centers marked on this guide. These centers support international students, and there are services specifically for them as well. They can help with questions about continuing to live in Germany, improving language skills, and finding out what financial assistance is available.

Who can help you?

- Landesamt für Einwanderung / *Berlin Immigration Office*
- International Office
- Willkommenszentrum / *Welcome Center*
- Regionales Integrationsnetzwerk Berlin / *Regional Integration Network Berlin*

○ **Important for me**

○ **I've done it**

NOTES

Landesamt für Einwanderung / *Berlin Immigration Office*

The Berlin Immigration Office can assist you with all questions regarding your residence permit. This is particularly helpful if you wish to remain in Germany after dropping out of your studies, for example, to begin an apprenticeship.

International Office

If you have concerns about your studies or decide to drop out, the International Office can advise you on your residence status in Germany, the recognition of foreign academic achievements, and possible alternatives such as vocational training or learning German. They can also provide support and advice on topics such as visas, financial matters and planning your next steps.

Willkommenszentrum / *Welcome Center*

The Welcome Center provides individual counseling to support you with important questions about living and studying, such as residence permits, visas, financial aid and housing.

Regionales Integrationsnetzwerk Berlin / *Regional Integration Network Berlin*

The Regional Integration Network Berlin (RIN Berlin) aims to improve the integration of foreign-born adults into the labor market. It offers advice on the recognition of professional qualifications obtained abroad, training opportunities, and skilled worker immigration.

Did you know?

make-it-in-germany.com

The Federal Government's portal for skilled workers from abroad.

SUPPORT SERVICES AT YOUR UNIVERSITY

At your university, there are numerous counseling and support services if you are doubting your studies or are considering a different path.
The studierendenWERK BERLIN also offers many counseling services and usually has offices on campus.

Who can help you?

- Studienberatung / *Academic counseling at your university*
- Prüfungsamt / *Examinations Office*
- Career Service
- Perspektivenberatung / *Advising on Study Doubts & Alternatives (Humboldt Uni)*
- studierendenWERK BERLIN / *Student Services Berlin*
- Psychotherapeutische Beratung / *Psychological Counseling Service*

○ **Important for me**

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NOTES

Studienberatung / *Academic counseling at your university*

The academic counseling at your university is there for you if you're unsure whether your studies are still a good fit or if you are considering changing courses or dropping out. Together, you review your situation, discuss alternatives such as changing majors or university, and find new perspectives for your future. Counseling is free, confidential, and takes place in the way that suits you best— in person, by phone, or online.

Prüfungsamt / *Examinations Office*

The examinations office assists you with all questions about exam performance, grades, recognition of prior coursework (credit transfer) and graduation documents. It also issues important certificates, for example for the BAföG office or applications. You also receive advice on exam-related matters such as deadlines, medical certificates in case of illness, exam accomodations (Nachteilsausgleich), and support for clarifying your current study status.

StudierendenWERK BERLIN / *Student Services Berlin*

studierendenWERK BERLIN is the student service for most of the students in Berlin. There you can receive confidential advice on topics such as student financing, social matters and study organization. They also offer support with financial difficulties as well as study doubts, exam anxiety, and writer's block – in person, by phone, or online, free of charge and regardless of your study situation. Together with experienced advisors, you can find new perspectives and concrete next steps for your path.

Career Service

Berlin's university career services support you when you're unsure about your studies or after leaving your program. You'll receive one-to-one guidance on career orientation, alternatives to university, and your next steps toward a job or apprenticeship. They also help with application materials, interview preparation, and developing new career options.

Perspektivenberatung / *Advising on Study Doubts & Alternatives (Humboldt University)*

Humboldt University offers dedicated advising for students who are unsure about their studies or considering leaving. Together, you'll explore new paths—changing programs, starting an apprenticeship (vocational training), making a lateral career move, or other future options. You can also talk through personal topics such as dips in motivation, procrastination, and family difficulties.

Psychotherapeutische Beratung / *Psychological Counseling Service*

The Psychological Counseling Service at studierendenWERK BERLIN supports you free of charge and confidentially with all mental health problems - whether exam anxiety, stress, study doubts or personal crises. The goal is to find solutions together, support you during difficult life phases, and, if needed, show you the way to further help services.

Offers from the studierendenWERK BERLIN

- Social counseling on BAföG, housing, jobs, financial emergencies, and childcare
- Assistance with applying for financial aid such as emergency funds or child benefits
- Counselling and support in personal crises

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Do you need help finding a job or an apprenticeship, or do you need financial assistance after dropping out of university? These free counseling centers will guide you on your path and help you apply for benefits.

Who can help you?

- Jugendberufsagentur Berlin (JBA) / *Youth Employment Agency*
- Beratung zu Bildung & Beruf / *Educational Counseling and Career Guidance*

Important for me

I've done it

NOTIZEN

Jugendberufsagentur Berlin (JBA) / *Youth Employment Agency*

If you've decided to drop out of your studies, JBA Berlin is your first stop for advice and support. Experts from the Berlin Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit), Job Centers, youth employment assistance (Jugendberufsberatung), and vocational schools (Berufsschule) are there to help you transition into working life. JBA Berlin supports you in finding a suitable apprenticeship, study program, or job. You also get free advice on all questions around profession and applications, financial issues, and personal challenges.

- Individual counseling on alternatives after dropping out
- Support in finding apprenticeships or jobs
- Help with switching to an apprenticeship or another study program
- Information on recognition of study achievements in apprenticeships
- Application tips and referrals to companies
- Support with personal problems (e.g. debt, addiction, psychological issues)
- Financial support for living expenses or unemployment benefits

Beratung zu Bildung & Beruf / *Educational Counseling and Career Guidance*

If you need support in setting your own goals and in planning and fulfilling your vocational and/or educational aspirations, Educational Counseling and Career Guidance in Berlin offers you comprehensive and independent information and guidance free of charge with locations everywhere near you.

- Training, Study, School Graduation, and Post-Qualification
- Professional (Re)orientation
- Learning and Learning Conditions
- Funding and Financing Options for Education Activities
- Job Prospects and Entering the Labor Market
- Professional Integration and Qualification in Germany

Are you looking for more information about career guidance?

Take a look here:

beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin

PROFESSIONAL CHAMBERS IN BERLIN

Different professional groups are often organized in chambers (kammern) in Germany. These bodies coordinate apprenticeship (Berufsausbildung) and run examinations. They also advise on career choices, provide information on different training paths, and connect you with companies. They organize events such as training fairs and help you find a suitable apprenticeship.

- ○ **Important for me**
- ○ **I‘ve done it**

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Professional Chambers in Berlin

Berlin’s Professional Chambers provide one-to-one advice if you’re unsure about your studies or considering leaving, and they outline more practical alternatives and career opportunities in their industries, such as “dual” apprenticeship (Duale Berufsausbildung). Your previous experience is recognized, and your training period may be shortened. They support career orientation, help with applications, and connect you directly with companies for a quick new start.

- Intensive counseling on vocational training and career path
- Support with applications and interviews
- Matching with suitable companies for vocational training
- Advice on shortening training periods by recognizing previous academic experience
- Individual support throughout the entire training period

There are different chambers for various professions:

- Handwerkskammer Berlin (HWK) Chamber of Skilled Crafts
- Industrie- und Handelskammer Berlin (IHK) Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- There are many other chambers, e.g., Chamber of Dentists, Chamber of Architects or Chamber of Pharmacists

Dual Vocational Training: Why it’s special in Germany

Germany’s “dual vocational training system” is a hallmark of its education landscape: combining on-the-job experience with classroom-based learning at vocational schools. From day one, apprentices gain hands-on experience and directly apply the theoretical knowledge they learn. After two to three and a half years, apprentices take the journeyman’s exam. Qualifications are standardized and recognized nationwide under a formal training contract – and an apprentice salary is paid throughout.

Every journeyman has the opportunity to further their career through systematic career development plans, such as taking the Meister exam (Bachelor Professional). The Meister qualification is a professional and entrepreneurial certification comparable to an academic bachelor’s degree. It qualifies individuals to run a business and train apprentices.

FINDING NEW PERSPECTIVES

Besides traditional university studies, there are many other ways to learn what you need for your future job. Have you thought about these options?

- Duale Berufsausbildung / *Dual vocational training*
- Duales Studium / *Dual study programs*
- Schulische Ausbildung / *School-based vocational training*
- Freiwilligendienste / *Voluntary services*

Information for your next steps Are you looking for further information, funding opportunities, or specific contact persons? We have the right points of contact for you! You can use our websites to find advisory services in your area or search for companies offering training programs.

Stay up to date with our social media services Follow us on our social media services and discover tips, testimonials, and inspiration from others who have overcome similar challenges. You will also find event information about doubts about studying, alternatives, and new perspectives.

Listen to our podcast on dropping out of university Real stories, valuable insights, and new ways of thinking—our German-language podcast gives you the opportunity to learn from the experiences of others. Find out what paths are open to you after dropping out and how others have found their own personal solutions.

queraufstieg.de / studienzweifel-los.de

Your future, your decision!

Are you having doubts about your studies or have you already dropped out? Are you wondering what to do next? These questions will help you organize your thoughts and find some initial answers.

1. **My professional and academic milestones so far (degrees, volunteer work, internships, jobs)**

2. **My study situation**

Motivation	☺ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ☹
Financial	☺ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ☹
Mental	☺ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ☹
Academic performance	☺ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ☹
Self-organization	☺ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ☹
Social environment	☺ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ☹

3. **What do I want to change?**

4. **What am I good at, what do I enjoy doing?**

5. **What are my wishes and goals?**

6. **What does my dream job entail?**

7. **My next steps...**

CHECKLIST FOR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

The checklist is designed to help you remember all the important documents. It also helps you prepare for your next counseling session. Think in advance about what your concerns are and what you hope to gain from the counseling session or what you definitely want to find out.

What do I want to clarify in the counseling session?

- ○ Language requirements
- ○ Financing questions
- ○ Recognition of prior coursework (credit transfer)
- ○ Career orientation
- ○ _____

Compilation of required documents

- ○ Language certificates
- ○ Certificate of residence
- ○ Transcripts (grade reports) Leistungsnachweise
- ○ Certificate of de-registration Exmatrikulationsbescheinigung
- ○ Other Certificates and important documents
- ○