

Guidelines for German Language Requirements

Students from non-German-speaking countries applying to the FTH must provide proof of sufficient ability in German.

A. German language tests

Applicants with a German-language family background are exempt from submitting a language certificate. All others must provide proof of adequate German ability by submitting one of the following certificates.

(see also <https://www.study-in.de/en/study/german-language/learn-german/--13785>):

1. „Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache‘ (TestDaF) in your home country

If you want to pass the language test in your home country, the „Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache“ (TestDaF) of the TestDaF-Institute is recommended. This allows you to provide evidence of your language skills even before coming to Germany. There are also test centers in Germany that offer this test.

The TestDaF is a language test for foreign learners of German who plan to study in Germany or who require official certification of their language skills. The TestDaF examination is prepared and rated by the TestDaF Institute based in Hagen, Germany. The test can be taken at licensed test centers in about 80 different countries. All examination candidates receive the same tasks and the examinations are graded by trained raters.

The examination results are assigned to one of three levels:

- TestDaF-Niveaustufe 5 (TDN 5 – TestDaF level 5)
- TestDaF-Niveaustufe 4 (TDN 4 – TestDaF level 4)
- TestDaF-Niveaustufe 3 (TDN 3 – TestDaF level 3)

These are equivalent to levels B2.1 to C1.2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In order to qualify for admission to the FTH, you must obtain at least level TDN 4 in each subtest. A score of TDN 5 shows that you have a very good knowledge of German, above that required at the beginning of your studies.

More information on the TestDaF can be found at www.testdaf.de.

2. DSH – Language Test taken in Germany

If you are already living in Germany, you can take the „Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang ausländischer Studienbewerber“ (DSH). This test is offered at most Universities in Germany (but not at the FTH), e.g. in courses „Deutsch als Fremdsprache“ or Studienkolleg. In many universities you can take the test only if you have already been accepted as a student. In order to pass the DSH-test, you will generally have to have completed ca. 1.200 hours of German instruction. Level DSH-2 or DSH-3 is required to be admitted as a student of FTH.

More information on DSH can be found at www.dsh-germany.com.

3. DSD (Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz) – Language certificate of the standing committee of the German ministers of culture

The DSD certificate can be acquired by students of public or private schools outside Germany. Level A certifies knowledge of a basic knowledge of the German language, level B certifies a self-reliant use of the language, and level C certifies competence in the use of the German language. The tests for levels A2/B1 and B2/C1 have special requirements and qualifies non-native speakers for admission to a Studienkolleg (B1) or a university (B2/C1) in Germany. Level B2 requires at least 7 years, or 1.600 class room hours, of German instruction.

4. Goethe-Zertifikat C2: Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom (GDS)

The Goethe-Zertifikat C2: GDS presupposes an advanced knowledge of the German language. This certificate (as well as its predecessors ZOP, KDS and GDS) qualifies foreign

students for admission to German universities. More information on the certificate, as well as test centers and schedules can be found at www.goethe.de.

5. Telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule

Telc offers language tests in 10 different languages that can be taken in more than 20 (mostly European) countries. It is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule tests the German ability needed for success at an advanced academic level. The examination is suitable for adults who are interested in studying at German institutes of higher education, for adults who have already begun their studies at an institute of this kind or for adults who are working in an academic field and wish or need to demonstrate their German competency. More information you will find at www.telc.net.

B. Learning German

There are a number of ways to learn German and prepare for one of the language tests required for admission to the FTH. Which option makes the most sense for you depends on, among other factors, how much German you already know and how much time you have until you want to begin your studies at the FTH.

1. In your home country

- There are Goethe-Institut centers in many cities and countries worldwide that offer a variety of extensive or intensive courses, as well as TestDaF preparation courses, and even mock exam preparation. Prices vary, depending on your country and the course you take. A list of centers can be found at www.goethe.de/lrn/wwt/en3052837.htm.

2. In Germany

Before you come to Germany, you should have at least some knowledge of the language. Visa requirements usually give you one year of language training before entering a Studienkolleg (see below). Language courses take this into account, giving only limited options for beginners.

- The Goethe-Institut offers intensive courses, premium courses as well as TestDaF and DSH preparation courses in different cities in Germany. TestDaF preparation courses are approx. 4 weeks long and cost ca. 1050 Euro without room and board, including a leisure program (www.goethe.de).
- Universities offer language courses that prepare you in up to 1 year for either the Studienkolleg, DSH, or TestDaF. Normally, you have to be accepted at the university to be eligible to take the courses. The FTH does not offer language courses, so in order to take them, you would have to apply at another university that offers courses (and change to the FTH after taking the language courses). The universities closest to the FTH that offer language courses for foreign students are in Giessen and Marburg. If you enroll at a university in order to take the language courses and later enter the Studienkolleg, you should apply for a course of studies in the humanities. If you graduate from the Studienkolleg in another than the G-Kurs, you might not be eligible to study at the FTH. The Justus-Liebig-Universität in Giessen offers 6-7-8-week consecutive courses for 360 – 400 € each. You can join at any level, depending on your proficiency in German (www.uni-giessen.de/cms/internationales/sprachkurse/in/intensiv). The Sprachenzentrum at the Philipps-Universität Marburg offers language courses on different levels also for participants who are not enrolled at the university. The costs for external participants are ca. 85 Euro for most of the courses. In order to participate in any language course at the Sprachenzentrum you have to take a placement test. For an overview of courses at the Sprachenzentrum and more information www.uni-marburg.de/sprachenzentrum/lehrangebot/daf.
- Studienkolleg: The language courses at a Studienkolleg lead to the DSH certificate. Acceptance at a Studienkolleg is contingent upon acceptance by a university in Germany, and passing a placement test of the Studienkolleg. If you have to lack certain academic

requirements you might be required to attend a Studienkolleg to be eligible to study at a university in Germany (see information on Hochschulzugangsberechtigung). The DSH-course and test is part of the program at the Studienkolleg that leads to the Hochschulzugangsberechtigung. To take the placement test, so some knowledge of the German language is required.

If you enroll at a university in order to take the language courses and later enter the Studienkolleg, you should apply for a course of studies in the humanities. If you graduate from the Studienkolleg in another than the G-Kurs, you might not be eligible to study at the FTH. The Studienkolleg closest to Giessen is in Marburg (www.uni-marburg.de/studienkolleg).

The Studienkolleg Mittelhessen at the Philipps-Universität Marburg offers language courses on different levels, also for students who are not (yet) enrolled at the Studienkolleg for the Hochschulzugangsberechtigung. A placement test decides on which level you can enter the courses. The 6-week-courses for the elementary levels cost 410 Euro each, the course fee for DSH-level is 620 Euro. For an overview of courses and more information www.uni-marburg.de/studienkolleg/sprachkurse/index_html.

- The Humboldt-Institut offers different courses in four main locations in Germany: cf. www.humboldt-institut.org.
- Pro Language Institute: Apart from preparatory courses for prospective students, the Pro Language Institute offers advice for entering university in Germany and translation of documents you need for your application. A 4-week-preparatory course for TestDaF costs about 300 Euro and is available throughout the year. The Institute is located in Frankfurt/Main.

One final hint: as soon as you come to Germany, you should try to find accommodation in a "WG" (Wohngemeinschaft), sharing a flat with German students, in order to practice your German from the beginning.

3. On your own

- The Goethe-Institut offers distance learning courses with a tutor on different levels, also for beginners. A 6-month course costs approx. 600 Euro, a TestDaF preparation course of about 6 months costs ca. 500 Euros. See www.goethe.de/lrn/prj/fer/enindex.htm.
- Deutsch-Uni Online offers an online TestDaF preparation course (www.deutsch-uni.com/gast/duo/info/kurse_mittlestufe.do?do=TestDaFtraining). This course presupposes knowledge of the language and helps you prepare for the TestDaF in the areas of writing and speaking.
- Helpful resources for learning German online are available free of charge at www.deutsch-lernen.com.