



STUDENTEN
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Glossary

Concepts and terminology

Glossary

Everyday life at a university goes hand in hand with various student and university-specific concepts and terms. To help you understand the various terms when you start at university, you will find a glossary here with the most important terms for a better start to your studies:

- **AAA:** In addition to taking care of foreign students, the International Office also looks after students who would like to study abroad during their studies. It is therefore the first point of contact for information about studying abroad. At some universities it is also called the "International Office" or similar.
- **Akademisches Viertel / Academic quarter:** "Cum tempore" (c.t.) means that the event starts a quarter of an hour later. Sine tempore" (s.t.) means that it starts on time.
- **AStA (Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss/General Student Committee):** This is the executive organ of the student union, that is the student "government". It is elected by the student parliament. The AStA consists of an executive board and officers for specific areas of responsibility.
- **Audimax:** Short for Auditorium Maximum, the largest lecture hall at the university.
- **BAföG:** "BAföG" stands for the Federal Education and Training Assistance Programme (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz). Parents are obliged to support students; however, if they cannot meet this obligation, the state provides funding (half as a grant and half as an interest-free loan). BAföG can be applied for by anyone who has not yet reached the age of 30 at the start of their education and who is a German citizen or a relative of a German citizen and is completing a first course of education that is eligible for support under BAföG (exceptions are possible, for example, for the second and third courses of education). The RCDS advocates for a reduction of bureaucracy in the procedure and supports the possibility of an online application.



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- **Bachelor:** Der erste akademische Bildungsweg nach der Sekundarstufe II. Bachelor's degree academic education and therefore the standard degree. Bachelor's degree programmes usually last six semesters, but occasionally seven or eight. This can be followed by a Master's programme, and in exceptional instances by a doctorate.
- **Campus:** The site of the university (lat. campus: the field). "University Campus " combines all teaching and research facilities and the complete university infrastructure in a small area.
- **Credit Points:** The term "credit points" refers to achievement scores that can be used to represent and document courses and modules that have been successfully completed. A degree requires a certain number of credit points, which students must collect in the process of studying. The basis for calculating the points is the average amount of work to be done, which is measured in hours (1 CP or ECTS should correspond to 30 hours of work). Often the CP are also the "ECTS". With this "European Credit Transfer System", it should be possible to compare the achievements of students at universities in the European Higher Education Area, in order to also enable cross-border transfers. The RCDS advocates that the number of ECTS actually corresponds to the amount of work. If courses produce too few ECTS for too much work, there is a need for action.
- **c.t.:** Latin cum tempore ("with time"), --> Academic quarter
- **European Credit Transfer System (ECTS):** Credit Points
- **ERASMUS:** The European Union's programme designed to support students and intended for those who want to go abroad for one or more semesters.
- **Evaluation/Evaluation:** Evaluation: Generally, an evaluation is carried out for each course (lecture, tutorial, etc.). This gives you the opportunity to express constructive criticism or praise and therefore to evaluate the lecturer.



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- **Fachschaft/Student council:** A representative body at universities; composed of all students of a department, faculty or institute.
- **Fachbereich/Subject Department:** Part of the higher education institution that deals specifically with a subject area.
- **Fakultät/Faculty:** Faculties are subject-related administrative units at universities, for example faculties of humanities, medicine or economics. Each faculty has a respective dean (Dekan) who heads the faculty.
- **Hausarbeit/Term paper:** Several pages of work for which there is usually a certificate of achievement. The aim of the term papers is for students to learn to work scientifically.
- **Hiwi:** (Hilfswissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter) Auxiliary research assistant. As such, you have the opportunity to earn a little money at the university. Various jobs are available at the departments, e.g. as a tutor.
- **Hochschulwahlen/University elections:** University elections take place once a year at the university. Depending on the respective federal state, various bodies are elected (StuPa, Senate, Convention, etc.).
- **Institut/Institut:** The institute is a teaching and research institution, the smallest university administrative unit assigned to a subject area. It sometimes also refers to the building in which a subject's library, teaching rooms and secretary's office are located.
- **Juniorprofessor:** Usually a younger professor who, in contrast to normal professors, is only employed for a limited period of time (only for three years with an option to extend for a further three years if the mid-term evaluation is positive). A junior professor usually has fewer staff positions and a smaller budget than a regular professor, but does not have to offer as many courses.



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- **Kommilitone/Fellowstudent:** A common term at German universities (originally Latin *commilito* = comrade), synonymous with fellow student. The term is usually used when students belong to one department. Lecturers usually use the term for all students at a university.
- **Master:** Degree that builds on the Bachelor's degree and is either directly related to it (consecutive Master's), aims at a different field of study or thematic broadening, or is offered part-time (continuing education Master's). A Master's degree builds on knowledge, specialises what has been learned or expands it. Those who wish to pursue a doctorate do so after completing a Master's degree, as this is a prerequisite for such a degree, apart from a few exceptions.
- **Matrikelnummer/Matrikulation number:** When enrolling, each student receives an identification number with which he or she is listed in the matriculation register, the university's register of persons.
- **Mensa:** Mensa (Latin *mensa* = table) is the name for the canteen of a university.
- **Modul/Module:** In modularised degree programmes such as the Bachelor's or Master's degree, thematically similar parts of the subject are grouped together in modules. In order to obtain a degree, the courses of the various modules must be successfully completed.
- **N. N.:** *Nomen nominandum*, appears in the course catalogue after courses for which it is not yet known who will hold them. The name is therefore still to be given.
- **Präsident/President:** Represents the entire university, in some federal states also called rector.
- **Präsidium/Praesidium:** Governing body of the higher education institution headed by the president, in some federal states it is called the rectorate.



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- **Promotion/Doctorate:** is possible after graduation and then successful if the written research paper (dissertation) and the oral examination (Rigorosum) have been passed.
- **Regelstudienzeit/Regular period of study:** This is how long it officially takes to complete all credits and certificates, although the number of semesters varies depending on the subject. The standard period of study is a suggestion and not a binding plan.
- **Repetitorium:** In the repetytorium, lawyers repeat material relevant to the exam and practise case solutions. Such revision courses are subject to a fee. Other subject areas also use this term, but they mean different courses.
- **Rückmeldung/Regular semester paying of the University fees:** Make sure you don't forget! If you do not re-register every semester, you will automatically be exmatriculated! At the end of each semester, every student must re-register and pay a re-registration fee to confirm to the university that they will continue studying in the following semester.
- **Semesterbeitrag/Semester contribution:** This is demanded at the end of each semester for the coming semester. Usually serves to finance the student union, university sports, student self-administration and the semester ticket.
- **Semesterwochenstunden (SWS)/Semester hours per week:** Depending on the subject, defined number of hours that are estimated for the time of presence per week, which is often a requirement for obtaining certain certificates or credit points.
- **Semesterticket/Semester ticket:** A lower-priced local transport ticket for students, which all students at a university usually receive automatically when they pay their semester fee. You can use all types of local transport such as trains, buses and trams in the area of validity, but usually not long-distance trains (InterCity, ICE).
- **Seminar:** Here, scientific questions are explored and deepened; the students work actively. Proseminars are the "little brothers" of the main seminars and require considerably less knowledge and skills in working with scientific methods from the participants.



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- **Senat/Senate:** This is the supreme body of a higher education institution, which is organised as a democratically elected collegial board and performs strategic, controlling as well as consulting tasks.
- **s.t.:** Latin sine tempore ("without time"), --> Academic Quarter
- **Studentenparlament (StuPa)/Student Parliament:** It is elected by all students at a university, usually by list voting. It is the most important organ of student self-administration, the legislative power of the student society. The tasks of the StuPa include elections, monitoring, discharging and dismissing members of the AStA and its advisors, electing the Council of Elders, the Audit Committee (RPA) and the Election Committee. In addition, the parliament is responsible for enacting, amending and repealing regulations of the student body and approves the household budget. In some federal states, the StuPa is also called "Konvent" or "Studentenrat".
- **Tutorium/Tutoring:** In the tutoring sessions, which usually supplement the seminars, everyone has the opportunity to learn what they do not already have understood and to better comprehend the content in general. This type of event focuses on deepening and consolidating the subject matter.
- **Übung/Exercise:** Course in which theoretical knowledge is to be applied practically.
- **Veranstaltung/Event:** In the context of the study programme, event is used as a collective term for lectures, seminars, exercises, tutorials and other courses.
- **Verschulter Studiengang/Regimented study programme:** A regimented study programme leaves the student little freedom. Similar to school, you study exactly according to predefined plans and therefore have little opportunity to set your own priorities or study flexibly in terms of time.



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- **Vorlesung/Lecture:** The classic form of university teaching, which usually serves to transfer content. The lecturer presents the basics in the lecture, which are then further deepened and/or applied in tutorials, seminars or exercises. Contrary to the name, it is not a read-aloud event, but rather a sort of speech.
- **Vorlesungsfreie Zeit/Lecture-free period:** During this period of the semester, there are no lectures held and the time can be used to complete internships, write term papers or to take exams.



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Students for Students is a Projekt of RCDS (Ring Christlich-Demokratischer Studenten)
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