



Many roads to success

The Saxon school system



Everyone counts!

Good opportunities for everyone at Saxony's schools

Dear students, parents and readers,

There are many ways to achieve a successful education. Which qualification to obtain, and how to obtain it, is a decision each individual needs to make for themselves, taking into account their personal interests, skills and performances. In order to make the right choice, it's important to be familiar with the various options offered by our education system, as well as the associated requirements and potential qualifications and further pathways.

Although there are many roads to success, the Saxony's schooling structure is essentially very simple. It encompasses primary schools («Grundschulen»), secondary schools («Oberschules» with «Oberschule+»), grammar schools («Gymnasien»), community schools («Gemeinschaftsschulen») and vocational training schools («berufsbildende Schulen»). Special-needs schools («Förderschulen») are also an important part of our education system. Children and parents are particularly entitled to access these institutions, which are able to dedicate maximum attention and focus to the students most in need of support and assistance.

The Saxon education landscape is rounded off by alternative-pathway schools, where adults of any age can catch up on general school qualifications.

«Everyone counts!» is one of the guiding principles of Saxony's education policy. It is manifested in our structured school system, which appropriately allows for and supports students' varying aptitudes, talents and educational goals. The freedom to choose school types and compatibility with higher-qualifying courses are defining features here. This means all pathways are always open. Every school qualification enables further education phases leading to successful vocational training or studies at a university or university of applied science. Our schools enable even bilingually and multilingually raised pupils to achieve their own personal educational successes.

The Saxon school system gives everyone an opportunity. The different types of schools mean everyone is able to enjoy a good education following a pathway suited to their needs. At the same time, we also make sure our Saxon qualifications meet high quality standards.

Regardless of the pathway chosen, this brochure will give you an overview, and help you make the right decision for your own or your children's education. Teachers are also on hand to assist you with their specialist educational skills. Take advantage of their wealth of experience and the opportunity to seek advice.

I wish you all the best for the rest of the schooling period and, most importantly, happy learning.



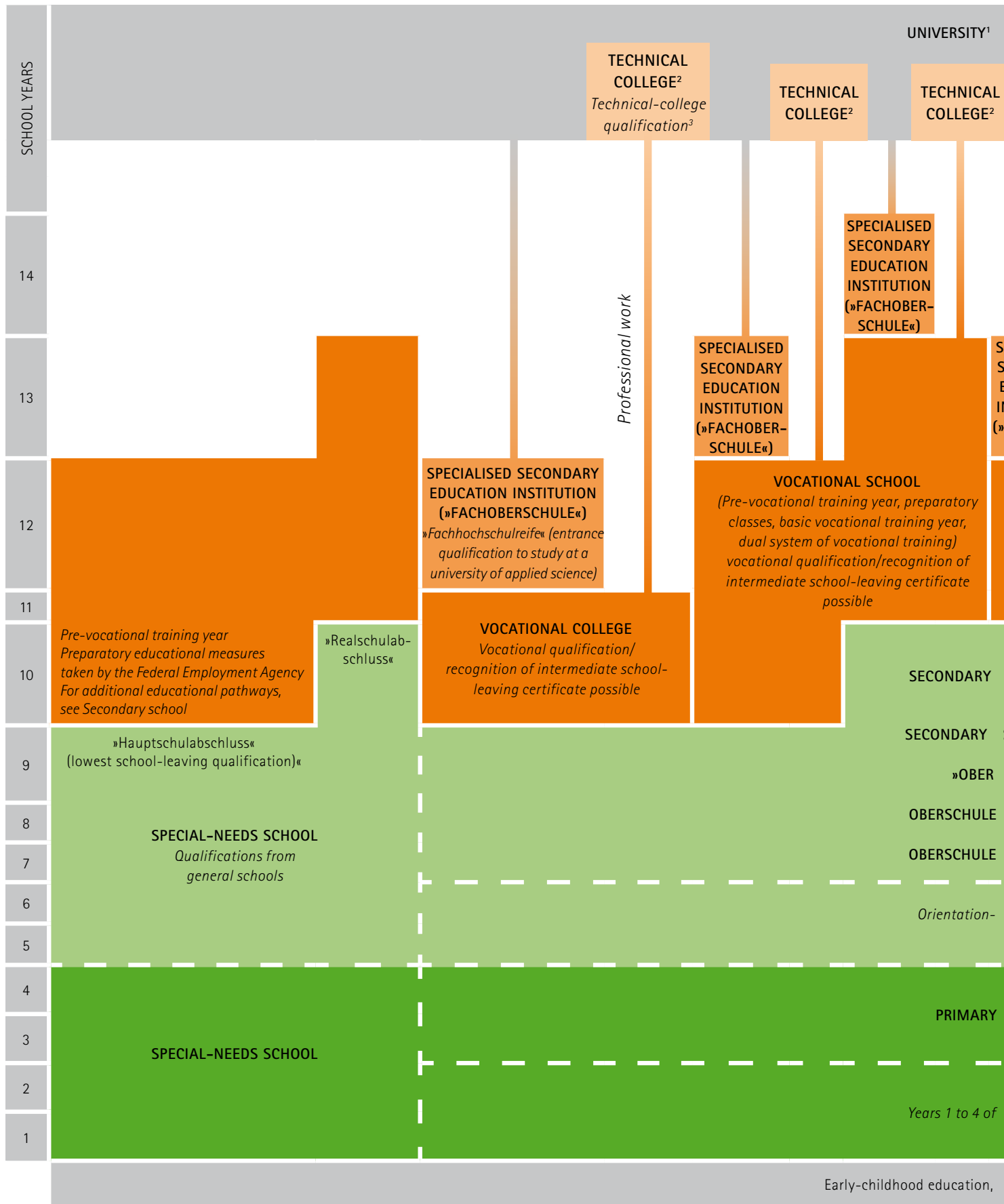
Christian Piwarz
Saxon State Minister for Education and Culture



The Saxon school system.

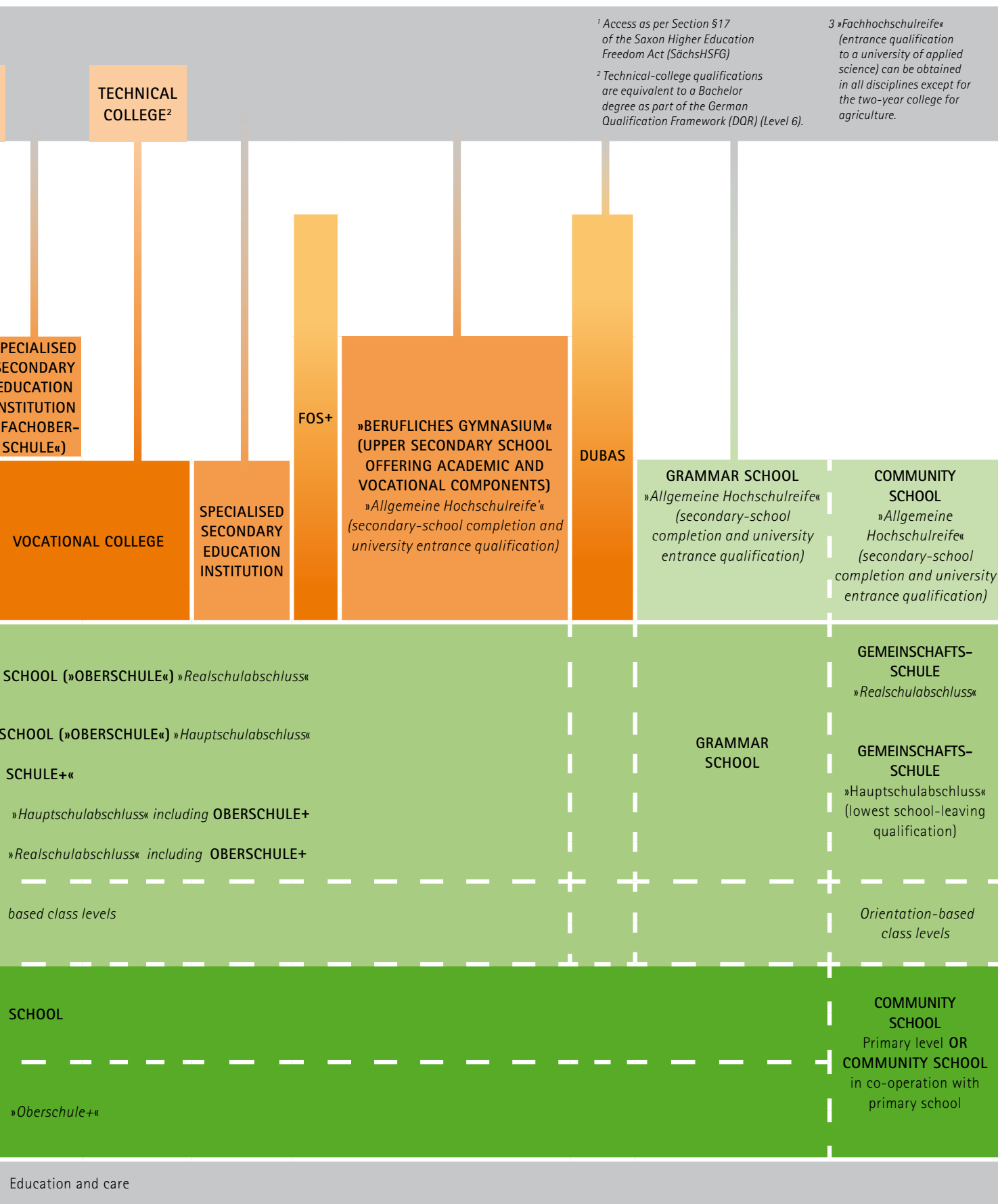
Types of schools (graphic)

(Simplified diagram, without the alternative pathway)



- General schools**
- Primary level
 - Middle school
 - Upper secondary level

- Vocational schools**
- Vocational training
 - Study qualification
 - Double qualification (see p. 27)
 - Advanced vocational training



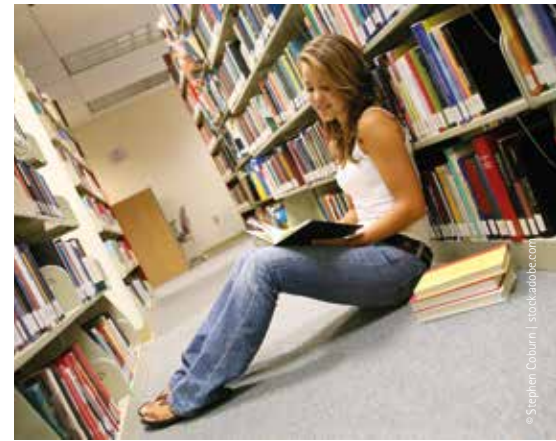


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WIR BEWEGEN
BILDUNG
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Opportunities for everyone.

Schooling in Saxony



The Saxon school system gives everyone a chance. In some cases, even a second. Because the pupils all have very different skills and interests. Which is why Saxon schools offer different roads to success. The wide range of educational options takes into account the individual students' personal development, and creates the basis for lifelong learning. And this doesn't just require expert knowledge. It's also about getting one's bearings in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world.

The general schools work with non-school partners to independently and actively develop full-day school programmes. Full-day learning is a way of making school modern and child-friendly, and combining it with various aspects such as integration, inclusion, and personalised support for the individual. Some 87 percent of schools are already facing up to this challenge.

This brochure outlines the various types of schools and educational pathways in Saxony. After a brief overview, you'll find detailed chapters on each type of school. The first part of the brochure provides information on the approaches, objectives and content of general schools (primary schools, secondary schools (with »Oberschule+«), community schools, grammar schools, and special-needs schools), while the vocational training schools presented in the second part unlock subsequent pathways, particularly for secondary-school graduates.

Not only will you learn the theoretical bases of your recognised trade or profession, you'll also have the opportunity to obtain »Fachhochschulreife« (entrance qualification to a university of applied science) or the »Abitur« (school-leaving examination). A separate chapter is dedicated to special-needs schools, where particular assistance is given to children and adolescents requiring special educational support over an extended period of time or who have a disability.

*The publication will refer to »students« and »teachers« throughout. This encompasses both male and female students and teachers.

The quality and effectiveness of schools have today become a worldwide race – a race Saxony's schools are also a part of with their variety of courses, school-specific full-day programmes and projects, participation in competitions, and unique profiles. As such, each school has its own distinct identity.

www.bildung.sachsen.de

Further information is available in the following brochures:



A good start

Primary schools in Saxony



Diversity as opportunity

Special educational support in Saxony



Career pathways

Vocational schools in Saxony

Further information on the integration of immigrant students into Saxon schools can be found here:

www.migration.bildung.sachsen.de

Saxony has 1798 general schools, alternative-pathway schools and vocational schools, with some 491,000 students and 37,700 teachers.

Many roads to success.

The Saxon school system – an overview

Primary school

p. 10

Years 1 to 4

In the first four years of school, children learn much more than just reading, writing and arithmetic. Primary-school teachers assist with the children's individual learning development, and encourage them to enjoy learning and acquiring knowledge. In year four, all children receive an education recommendation for a pathway leading either to secondary school or grammar school.



A good start
Primary schools in Saxony



Secondary school

p. 12

Years 5 to 9/10

Secondary school (»Oberschule«) provides general and vocational education, offering lots of opportunities for encouraging students' individual performance and developing their specific interests. This lays a solid basis for further vocational education. Students can obtain the »Hauptschulabschluss« (lowest school-leaving qualification) or the »qualifizierender Hauptabschluss« (a »Hauptschulabschluss« with entrance qualification to a vocational school) at the end of year 9, and the »Realschulabschluss« (intermediate school-leaving certificate) at the end of year 10.

»Oberschule+«

p. 13

Years 1 to 9/10

The »Oberschule+« is where students from years 1 to 9/10 learn together. They obtain the secondary-school qualifications.

Grammar school

p. 14

Years 5 to 12

Grammar school (»Gymnasium«) ends in the »Abitur« school-leaving examination after eight years, enabling pupils to study at universities or vocational academies. They can also undertake vocational training outside of university. To ensure the students are not pigeonholed into one type of school, years 5 and 6 act as orientation years, and students can also move from secondary schools to grammar schools even after years 7 to 9.

In years 8 to 10, grammar schools offer various areas of specialisation, known as school-specific profiles.

Community school

p. 16

Years 1 to 12

The community school is where students continue to learn at the same location even beyond primary school, receiving personalised support based on their skills, talents and intended education pathways. At the end of year 9, they can obtain the »Hauptschulabschluss« or »qualifizierender Hauptabschluss«; at the end of year 10, the »Realschulabschluss« (intermediate school-leaving certificate), and at the end of year 12, the »allgemeine Hochschulreife« (secondary-school completion and university entrance qualification).



Special-needs schools

p. 18

Years 1 to 9/10

Seven different types of special-needs schools (»Förderschulen«) prepare children and adolescents to be as independent as possible in the community and working world.

Their parents can generally choose between inclusive teaching at a regular school and intensive, often temporary special educational support at a special-needs school.



Diversity as opportunity
Special educational support
in Saxony



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Vocational schools

The various vocational training schools – vocational schools, vocational colleges, »Fachoberschulen«, »Berufliche Gymnasien« and technical colleges – all come under the umbrella of Vocational Education Centres (»Berufliche Schulzentren«) in Saxony. Courses and offerings providing double qualifications are also available here.

Adolescents with disabilities, chronic illnesses or special educational needs are, if possible, integrated into standard training programmes with the help of special educational support. In the case of particular

requirements for vocational training, classes geared around targeted areas of support can also be set up.

Adolescents and young adults whose native language is not (or not exclusively) German undertake language classes at the Vocational Education Centres to prepare them for vocational training or a higher educational qualification (e.g. at a »Berufliches Gymnasium« or »Fachoberschule«).

 Career pathways
Vocational schools
in Saxony

Vocational school

p. 20

Dual system

Classes at vocational schools are part of the dual training system. Pupils learning one of the almost 325 recognised trades/professions in-house at a company/establishment will acquire the theoretical bases of their future profession here. Vocational schools also provide special services for adolescents with disabilities, chronic illnesses or special educational needs.

»Fachoberschule«

p. 24

The pathway to accessing a university of applied science

»Fachoberschulen« (specialised secondary education institutions) give adolescents and adults of all ages the chance to qualify for study at a university of applied science. It entitles them to study at a »Fachhochschule« (university of applied science) or a vocational academy. This qualification can be achieved after one or two years of schooling, depending on the student's professional and life experience. The resulting traineeship period can help provide vocational guidance in the chosen discipline, as well as help students find a career pathway as part of a dual training system.



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Vocational college

p. 22

On-campus training

Vocational colleges provide a pathway to a vocational qualification recognised Germany-wide through classroom lessons and work experience or vocational training. The courses last for two to three years.

»Berufliches Gymnasium«

p. 26

School-leaving examination upon completing secondary school

»Berufliche Gymnasien« (upper secondary schools offering academic and vocational components) build on from middle-school certificates or strong performances in vocational training, and provide a pathway to the school-leaving examination (»Abitur«) that qualifies pupils to study at a university. The three-year course encompasses both general academic and vocational content.

Double qualification

p. 27

Vocational certificate and admission to tertiary study

The following courses and educational services, which provide both a vocational certificate and admission to tertiary study, are available in Saxony:

- axon dual system of vocational training with »Abitur« (school-leaving & tertiary entrance examination) DUBAS,
- »Fachoberschule« and shorter dual system of vocational training (FOS+),
- Technical college with additional training and examination to qualify for entrance to a university of applied science (»Fachhochschulreife«).

Technical college

p. 28

Continued vocational training

Specialists who have already completed vocational training, and who generally also have professional experience, can obtain additional qualifications at technical colleges. Graduates will then have access to interesting medium-tier jobs between the

level of skilled workers and university graduates. Technical-college qualifications may also enable admission to a university.

Primary school.

A good start



Primary school teaches children much more than just reading, writing and arithmetic. It also fosters their natural curiosity and thirst for knowledge, as well as pride in their own abilities. The first four years of school lay the foundations for independent working, and motivate pupils for lifelong learning. They are thus geared around both performance and the child. Children want to show what they can do, they want to be encouraged and supported. And they want to be respected as personalities.

From kindergarten to school

The pre-school preparatory year at kindergarten and the school-starting phase constitute one combined stage of education. To ensure every child can integrate properly into the new learning and living environment that is school, kindergartens and primary schools co-operate closely with one another during this phase.

The Saxon curriculum provides the content framework to individually support children's holistic development. And the primary-school syllabuses tie in with this.

Day-care/after-school-care placements for primary-school students are available, catering to market requirements. This involves a care contract being signed between the parents and the day-care facility. The co-ordinated collaboration between the primary school and day-care facility ensures full-day education for children.

The child as the centre of focus

Classes in the first two years of school tie in with the children's individual level of knowledge and personal experiences. The focus is on understanding things holistically. As the children must also first learn how to learn, dedicated periods of practical exercises alternative with times of relaxation. Years 3 and 4 then prepare the children for the requirements of secondary school/«Oberschule» and grammar school. Interdisciplinary projects increasingly

give them the opportunity to independently apply their learnings to complex contexts.

Look what I can do!

Reading and writing

A good command of language is the most important requirement for success, and this must be fostered right from early childhood. Learning to read and write at school are two very closely interrelated activities. Right from the start, the children write short texts and stories, and become acquainted with children's literature.

General studies

This subject focuses on the world, human co-existence, encounters with plants and animals, age-based discovery of and experience with phenomena such as light and air, health, media, and traffic. The topics are presented in such a general, comprehensive manner that the children are able to combine new knowledge with things they have already learned. Experiments, excursions and off-campus learning thus become lasting learning experiences.

Mathematics

Active exploratory learning, visual examples, and real-life topics make it easier for children to identify and practise mathematical elements. And particular support is offered if children are indeed able to find their own solutions.

Foreign languages

All children start taking two classes of English a week as of year 3. Some schools enable an additional foreign language to be learned right from year 1.

Religion/Ethics

From year 1 onwards, all children are offered the subject of Protestant, Catholic or Jewish religion. Those who do not participate in religion classes take ethics instead.

Recognising performances

The first two years of school constitute one phase, and every child can witness their own learning progress and abilities for themselves. That's why no decisions regarding promotion to the next year level are made after year 1. Grades are gradually introduced from year 2 onwards. This enables teachers to more accurately monitor learning progress and support children in a more targeted manner. But the children themselves also want to know where they stand. Grades are a recognition of their performance, and are designed to encourage and motivate. In addition to academic performances, they also rate behaviour, tidiness, diligence and co-operation. As such, both the child and his/her parents are able to know whether the child is punctual, whether he/she adheres to specific rules, how he/she participates in class, and how determined and meticulous he/she can be when working. Students whose native language is not (or not exclusively) German can learn it as a second language as part of a preparatory class after a special educational counselling session, and are then gradually integrated into regular classes. They do not receive any grades while attending the preparatory class.

Dialogue between schools and parents

An accessible channel for discussing a child's development is the hallmark of a good relationship between a school and parents. Parent evenings are an opportunity for both parties to talk about lessons, class projects, and educational issues, while consultations put the teachers at the parents' disposal to answer any specific queries. The parents of the class also elect a parent representative who raises the children's and parents' interests on school committees.



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What next?

The transition to secondary school, »Oberschule+« or grammar school is accompanied by educational counselling sessions. Consultations with parents address the child's level of development, his/her potentials, and the parents' wishes. At the end of the first semester of year 4, all pupils receive an education recommendation regarding the type of school best suited to the next phase of their education. No education recommendation is required when moving to a community school.



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Tips and info

Detailed information on primary school in Saxony can be found in this brochure:



A good start
Primary schools in Saxony

Secondary school.

Learning for real life



There are many pathways open to secondary-school students. Secondary school («Oberschule») provides general and preparatory vocational education. When choosing the right secondary school, parents and children should first read up on the respective curriculum, electives, foreign-language options, and any special services offered. Students whose native language is not (or not exclusively) German can learn it as a second language as part of a preparatory class after a special educational counselling session, and are then gradually integrated into regular classes.

Qualifications

The educational pathways at secondary school are tailored to the pupils' interests through a wide range of electives. Secondary school caters to the children's performance requirements by offering individual, targeted support. The following qualifications can be obtained at a secondary school:

- «Hauptschulabschluss» (lowest school-leaving qualifications) or «qualifizierender Hauptschulabschluss» (a «Hauptschulabschluss» with entrance qualification to a vocational school) at the end of year 9
- «Realschulabschluss» (intermediate school-leaving certificate) at the end of year 10

After year 9, pupils attending inclusive classes and receiving targeted learning support can obtain a qualification in targeted learning support or, in some cases, a «Hauptschulabschluss» or other qualification equivalent to one of these two aforementioned qualifications. Students who have been admitted into the special «Productive learning» offering from year 8 onwards can obtain a qualification equivalent to the «Hauptschulabschluss» at the end of year 9.

Orientation

Years 5 and 6

These two years familiarise pupils with the new requirements: They are exposed to new

subjects, practise new methods of learning, and test out their capabilities. They grow more independent, and receive targeted support based on their performance requirements. In year 6, a decision is made as to which course («Hauptschule» or «Realschule») the pupil will follow.

Individual support

Years 7 to 9/10

As of year 7, students are prepared for the «Hauptschulabschluss» or «Realschulabschluss», based on their individual performance requirements. Both courses teach the same subjects, with lessons in German, mathematics, English, physics and chemistry taking place in «Hauptschule» and «Realschule» groups or classes. Depending on performances, pupils may also switch between the courses. From year 7 onwards, performance-oriented options are made available to accompany the pathway to the «Berufliches Gymnasium» or «Fachoberschule».

Preparing for a career

A systematic and practical focus on career guidance is the particular hallmark of secondary school, and co-operations with the German Federal Employment Agency's career counsellors play a key role here. The common goal is for all students to become competent enough to make the right career choice. Building on from the respective strengths and weaknesses identified in year 7, the vocational and study-oriented focus is «tailored» to each individual. From year 7 onwards, the subject encompassing business, engineering, home economics and social studies (known in Saxony as «WTH») teaches students the practical foundations of economics. And one of its primary objectives is to prepare students to choose their career pathway. In addition to compulsory course content, it also includes compulsory work experience, and projects with companies, thereby providing ample options for identifying a career focus.

Foreign languages

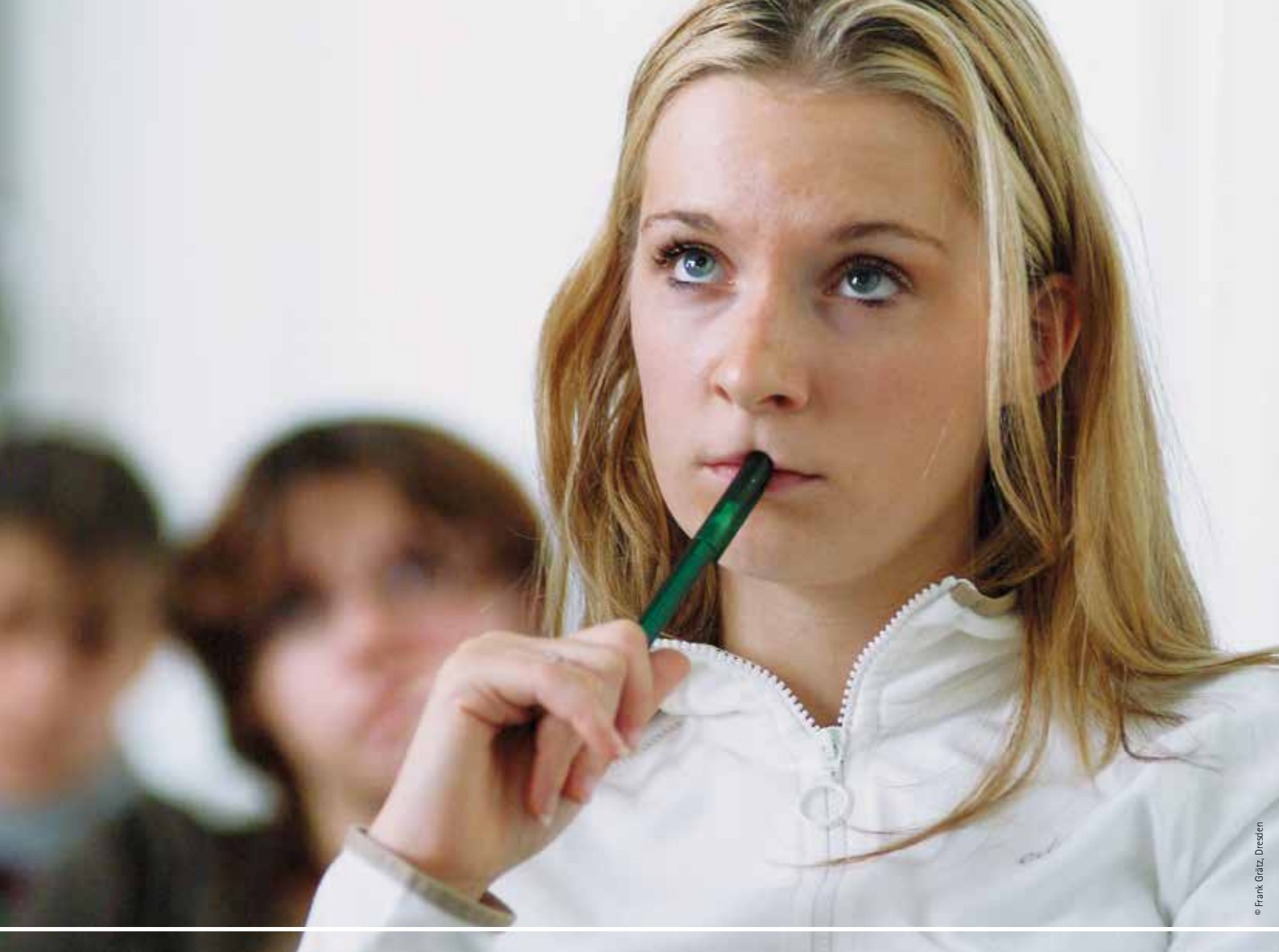
The primary focus here is on English classes, which begin back in primary school, and are continued for all pupils until secondary-school completion. From year 6 onwards, a second, certificate-based foreign language can be learned up to the end of year 10, after which it no longer has to be pursued at a grammar school or «berufliches Gymnasium». French and Russian are generally offered, though some schools also offer Czech, Polish or Spanish, depending on requirements. Foreign languages can also be learned as part of study groups.

Electives

From year 5 onwards, the compulsory subjects are joined by electives, which can include targeted support depending on the pupils' interests, abilities and needs. A second, certificate-based foreign language may be offered for particularly motivated students. In the final year, students are given the opportunity to earn a «complex academic achievement» in an elective subject, whose grading is credited to a related subject.

Inclusive teaching

Students with special educational needs or a disability can be taught inclusively at secondary school if the parents request this and there are provisions in place for inclusive teaching. Since the 2018/19 school year, this has also been possible for students with special educational needs in the target areas of learning and intellectual development, which are taught with different learning objectives.



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»Oberschule+«

- The rules for primary school (page 10) apply to years 1 to 4
- The rules for secondary school (page 12) apply to years 5 to 10.

Education recommendations are only issued in year 4 at the parents' request.

What next?

Vocational training can be undertaken after completing school. Anyone who has achieved a good »Realschulabschluss« result can continue their schooling directly at a »Berufliches Gymnasium«, with a view to taking the secondary-school completion examination (»Abitur«) and qualifying to study at a university (»allgemeine Hochschulreife«), or at a »Fachoberschule«, with a view to qualifying to study at a university of applied science (»Fachhochschulreife«). Around a third of students who have obtained their »Realschulabschluss« opt for this pathway. Provided a student has achieved adequate grades, he or she may switch from secondary school (»Oberschule«) to grammar school (»Gymnasium«) after any school year. Detailed information on vocational education is available from page 20 onwards and in the »Career pathways« brochure.



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Grammar school.

Preparing for tertiary study



The eight years of schooling at a grammar school (»Gymnasium«) is tailored to specifically supporting academically gifted children and preparing them for university. Anyone wanting to attend grammar school thus needs the relevant education recommendation from their primary school, or must be able to demonstrate the necessary talent and grades at secondary school/»Oberschule+« or community school. If a child has received an education recommendation for secondary school (»Oberschule«) for year 5 but is enrolled by his/her parents at a grammar school (»Gymnasium«), the parents are required to attend a consultation at the grammar school. The result of a student performance assessment, among other things, serves as the basis for this consultation. At the end of the consultation, the parents will be given a recommendation regarding their child's future schooling at either a secondary school (including »Oberschule+«) or grammar school. But the decision is ultimately up to the parents. Each grammar school has its own specific profile, focusing on particular areas of specialisation.

Gifted pupils have the opportunity to attend special grammar schools offering academic extension from year 5 onwards. Those highly gifted in multiple fields can also choose to study at the »Landesgymnasium Sankt Afra zu Meissen« from year 7 onwards. This pathway requires an education recommendation for a grammar school, as well as successfully making it through a special admission process.

Initial orientation

As is the case at secondary school/»Oberschule+« or community school, years 5 and 6 at grammar schools also serve as orientation. Similar syllabuses make it possible to easily switch between the different types of schools. Most schools offer support lessons for advanced or weaker students, free-choice activities, or courses that teach learning techniques.

From year 5 onwards, the new subjects of history, geography, biology, and technology/computing are added. The English lessons which began in primary school are continued at grammar school. From year 6, all students start learning a second foreign language. Physics is also introduced during this year, and IT and chemistry follow suit in year 7.

Fostering interdisciplinary thinking and work methods

The aim of the school-specific profile from year 8 onwards is to foster interdisciplinary thinking and work methods. It unlocks various pathways into the wider world, and accommodates students' aptitudes, interests and abilities. Every grammar school offers school-specific profiles.

Two classes a week are dedicated to profile-related lessons. For students learning a third foreign language from year 8 onwards, this acts as a substitute for the school-specific profile lessons.

The respective profile may be geared around social sciences, art, natural sciences or physical education. Concepts developed independently by the grammar schools are also offered as school-specific profiles whose classes pick up on regional and local elements, and help facilitate schooling in areas such as planning for career and tertiary-study planning, media studies, political studies, or education in sustainable development.

Study groups, competitions and work experience round off the study options available at grammar schools. As many study groups are run in co-operation with companies, universities or the municipal government, students are constantly given the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the working world.

»Gymnasiale Oberstufe« (equivalent to A-levels or senior high at a grammar school)

Year 10 marks the start of preparations for the final run to the school-leaving examination (»Abitur«). Students tackle topics and complex learning content with increasing independence, because this phase places great emphasis on independent working. Students can also find out detailed information on structure, elective options and lesson formats in years 11 and 12.

The road to the school-leaving examination

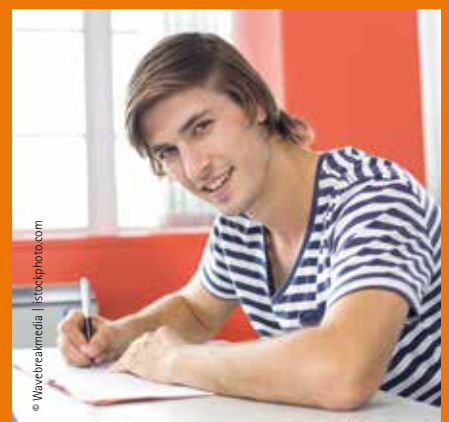
Classes in the »gymnasiale Oberstufe« are taken in two advanced-level subjects and a series of basic-level subjects. The first advanced-level subject is either German or mathematics. The second can be history, physics or a continued foreign language; some grammar schools also offer art, chemistry or biology here. Grades are replaced by a differentiated points-based system ranging from 0 points (worst score) to 15 points (best score). The primary focus is on preparing for scientific/academic work. Students are taught different methods for independently tackling complex tasks, finding suitable solutions, and consciously controlling the personal learning process. They also have the opportunity to earn a »separate academic achievement« in a field of their choice. This may be included in the overall grading instead of an oral »Abitur« examination.



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What next?

By achieving »allgemeine Hochschulreife« through the »Abitur« school-leaving examination, students qualify to study at any German university. They can also study abroad.



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Community school.

Learning together for longer



On 15 July 2020, the Saxon State Parliament enacted the law to introduce community schools in the Free State of Saxony. This saw community schools implemented as a new type of school in Saxony. Community schools will be able to be established as of the 2021/2022 school year.

Community schools provide a space for developing solid bases for independent learning, thinking and working, and offer a general, vocational and in-depth education building on from this. Students of community schools continue to learn together in the same location even beyond the primary level. Anyone attending a community school, or wishing to move to a community school, does not require an education recommendation and thus does not have to provide one.

Community school encompasses years 1 to 10, as well as years 11 and 12. It can also encompass years 5 to 10 and years 11 and 12, meeting the needs for primary level by co-operating with at least one primary school.

The following qualifications can be obtained from a community school:

- »Hauptschulabschluss« or »qualifizierender Hauptschulabschluss« after year 9
- »Realschulabschluss« after year 10
- »Allgemeine Hochschulreife« (secondary-school completion and qualification to study at a university) after year 12.

Individual support

Individual support in the classes, which predominantly have differentiated learning objectives within them, enables community schools to cater to the children's aptitudes, talents and intended education pathways. Some of the classes span multiple year groups, and students learn in a project-oriented, self-reflected, independent manner. They also learn from and with each other.

From year 7 onwards, classes are run at different curriculum-based requirement levels (lower secondary-school requirements, intermediate secondary-school requirements, grammar-school requirements) in selected subjects (differentiation subjects). Depending on each student's individual progress, they can switch requirement levels on a half-yearly basis.

From year 6 onwards, a second foreign language can be learned at the grammar-school level.

Electives

From years 5 to 10, community schools offer electives in addition to the compulsory subjects. These electives can include offerings relating to individual support and school-specific profiles, depending on the students' interests, needs and talents. A third foreign language may be offered as an elective from year 8 onwards.

»Abitur« (school-leaving examination)

In years 11 and 12, lessons at community schools are run at a higher level in two advanced-course subjects, and in a series of basic-course subjects. The first advanced-level subject is either German or mathematics. A second advanced-course subject can either be history, physics or a continued foreign language. At some community schools, it can also be art, chemistry or biology. Grades are replaced by a differentiated points-based system ranging from 0 points (worst score) to 15 points (best score). The primary focus is on preparing for scientific/academic work. The students learn how to handle different methods, independently complete complex tasks, find suitable solutions, and consciously manage their personal learning process.



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What next?

Vocational training can be commenced upon achievement of a »Hauptschulabschluss« or »Realschulabschluss«. By earning »Allgemeine Hochschulreife« through the »Abitur« school-leaving examination, students become eligible to study at universities across Germany. They can also study abroad.

Special-needs schools.

Personalised assistance



Saxony has two different but equivalent pathways to support students with special educational needs: Lessons at special-needs schools, and inclusive classes at primary schools and secondary schools, if certain requirements have been met. The parents' right to choose is given a high priority here. The child's wellbeing is always the determining factor when selecting the most suitable support facility. Teachers and staff from the school supervisory board advise the parents on the type of school and specific school that will be able to cater to the child's special needs.

Saxony is committed to offering a wide range of support facilities, and therefore also remains committed to special-needs schools. Many such schools only teach their students for a limited time in order to prepare them to study at other types of schools. As such, the school provides pupils with a supportive framework consisting of small study groups, personalised special-education support, teachers specifically trained in the various support focus areas, and special equipment tailored to the support requirements.

Special-needs schools also act as regional competence centres for special-education support by advising, diagnosing, and supporting inclusive teaching at regular schools.

Schools focused on supporting emotional and social development

These schools are for students who are being supported by special support measures as a result of developmental disorders, traumatic experiences, or sociocultural factors. This type of school encompasses years 1 to 4, after which the students usually continue their education at other general schools. In exceptional cases, classes can be taken all the way up to year 10. They follow the primary-school and secondary-school syllabuses.

Schools focused on supporting language

These schools are for students with significantly limited communication abilities. They generally encompass years 1 to 4, and in exceptional cases also years 5 and 6. They follow the primary-school and secondary-school syllabuses, after which the students continue their education at other general schools

Schools focused on supporting learning

These schools are for students who have considerable difficulties with learning, performing and perception. Open lesson formats, project-oriented teaching, individual and group work enable the pupils' specific abilities, aptitudes and interests to be taken into account. In addition to acquiring useful knowledge, particular emphasis is also placed on developing practical abilities and skills. Qualifications in the specialised support area of learning can be obtained at Saxon schools focused on this field. This requires the pupil to achieve a grade of »pass« in all subjects, or be able to make up for a grade of »poor«. If the relevant requirements have been met, it is possible for the pupil to obtain a »Hauptschulabschluss« (lowest school-leaving qualification) or other qualification equivalent to a »Hauptschulabschluss«.

Schools focused on supporting intellectual development

These schools follow their own syllabus. In addition to general education in lower, middle and upper-school levels, this type of special-needs school also provides basic vocational education through an occupational skills programme. Each level encompasses three years of schooling. There are no grades. Assessments are based on the pupils' individual learning progress. At the end of the occupational skills programme, having fulfilled the specific support curriculum, pupils obtain a qualification in the specialised support area of intellectual development.

Schools focused on supporting seeing

These schools are split into a primary and secondary section, as well as classes simultaneously catering to special needs in the areas of learning or intellectual development. Blind and visually impaired children and adolescents are prepared for life in a predominantly vision-centred environment so that they can live their later lives in an active, socially integrated manner. Specific aids used here include computers with Braille script and voice output, screen-reading devices, and talking pocket calculators.

Schools focused on supporting hearing

These schools use special educational methods to help deaf or highly hearing-impaired children and adolescents build up language and develop forms of communication. Pupils are given the opportunity to learn sign language and fingerspelling in addition to spoken and written language. The aim of the training is to enable them to cope with both academic and vocational learning processes, as well as everyday life. Lessons follow the primary-school and secondary-school syllabuses. Classes simultaneously providing support with learning or intellectual development can also be arranged.

Schools focused on supporting physical and motor development

These schools are for children and adolescents who have physical or multiple disabilities. Depending on the special needs, syllabuses are geared around those of general schools, schools focused on supporting learning, or schools focused on supporting intellectual development.

Hospital schools

These schools are for sick children who regularly visit or spend extended periods in clinics, hospitals or other health-treatment centres. The aim here is to facilitate the pupils' reintegration into their last attended class. Lesson scope is established in consultation with the doctor.

Saxony implements the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by ensuring pupils with special educational needs are prepared for integration into society and the working world both at special-needs schools and regular schools. Some 11,000 students are currently being taught inclusively at regular schools.



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What next?

Graduates from special-needs schools can also start vocational training or obtain qualifications entitling them to study at university. If this is not possible, preparatory courses for jobs involving an independent lifestyle or for employment in a sheltered workshop are offered, tailored to the students' individual needs. Detailed information on vocational education can be found from page 20 onwards, in the »Making a successful transition« flyer, and in the »Career pathways« brochure.

The Saxon State Ministry for Education and Culture also runs a podcast on inclusive schooling in Saxony, in which people who work as carers for adolescents with special-education needs in private and/or professional settings, helping them transition from school to vocational training and the working world, recount their very personal experiences. The podcast is available at: www.inklusion.bildung.sachsen.de/inklusioniv-der-podcast-6235.



Counselling centres

Many special-needs schools have counselling centres, providing parents and teachers from general schools with expert advice on issues relating to personalised support..

Tips and info

Detailed information on special educational support can be found in the following brochure and on the Saxon State Ministry for Education and Culture's inclusion website, available at: www.inklusion.bildung.sachsen.de.



Diversity as opportunity

Special educational support in Saxony

Vocational school.

Dual system



Upon completion of secondary school/»Ober-schule+«, students are required to attend vocational school, generally for three years. The students sign a training contract in one of the 325 recognised trades/professions. The dual system thus sees the training workplace and vocational school co-operate as equal partners. The workplace provides the adolescents with practical training, while the vocational school's task is to teach theory and expand on general education. Classes are held either in multi-week blocks or one to two days a week. The trainees, who have not yet obtained a »Realschulabschluss« (intermediate school-leaving certificate), can earn a middle-school certificate depending on their performances at the vocational school and in the final examination. Vocational training through the dual system provides a solid basis for the pupil's future professional development.

Tips and info on choosing a career

The following school database provides an overview of the various vocational-school profiles: www.bildung.sachsen.de.

The most important ports of call for anyone wanting to learn about recognised trades/professions are the career information centres (BiZ) at the local employment agencies. The schools also provide support and advice in relation to career focuses. Various information events, such as the Saxon companies' open week, also provide the students with good insights into everyday professional operations.

Opportunities for adolescents who have not secured apprenticeships

Anyone who has left secondary school before completion can undertake a vocational preparative year, and anyone who, despite completing school, has still been unable to secure a training contract can commence their vocational training through a basic vocational training year. Both forms of training satisfy the requirement for attending vocational school. Students required to attend vocational school, and whose native language is not (or not exclusively) German can learn it as a second language as part of a preparatory class after a special educational counselling session,

and are then gradually integrated into regular classes at the vocational school.

Vocational preparative year

Training strengths and interests

During the vocational preparative year, adolescents are familiarised with two professional fields, enabling them to identify their strengths and interests. This is designed to help them choose their career, and motivate them to start an apprenticeship/training. Graduates of the vocational preparative year who have not yet obtained a »Hauptschulabschluss« are not 'granted a »Hauptschulabschluss«, but rather receive confirmation that they have successfully attended secondary school and achieved a level of education equivalent to a »Hauptschulabschluss«.

Basic vocational training year

A good foundation

The basic vocational training year provides full-time basic vocational training for several related professions, such as in the fields of metalworking or woodworking. Theory and practical components are taught in addition to general education. Once the year is over, students can commence vocational training following the dual system. The completed basic vocational training year can be credited to this dual system format as an initial year of training.



Some 103,900 trainees are taught by some 6,300 teachers at Saxony's 246 vocational schools.



Requirements

A training contract is required in order to attend vocational school.

What next?

- Technical college (qualifications for working professionals)
- »Fachoberschule« (qualification to study at a university of applied science)
- »Berufliches Gymnasium« (Abitur school-leaving examination)
- Night school (part-time study for the »Abitur«)

Tips and info

Detailed information on vocational schools can be found in this brochure:



Career pathways
Vocational schools in Saxony

Vocational college.

On-campus training



Vocational colleges allow graduates from general schools to obtain a state-accredited vocational qualification through a two to three-year course. The school generally bears overall responsibility for the course.

Vocational colleges predominantly specialise in health and social-welfare professions, though it is also possible to undertake training in traditional trades such as watch-making or instrument-building.

The training is split into theory and practice components at the college, and practical training at a relevant institution, or work experience at a company. This enables students to acquire professional skills, gain initial professional experience, familiarise themselves with professional processes and the social environment of training institutions, and apply their skills and knowledge to real working situations.

Students who have obtained a »Hauptschulabschluss« can earn a middle-school certificate after successfully completing the vocational training and demonstrating an appropriate level of performance.

Professions in health and social welfare

Saxony's vocational colleges run vocational training courses regulated by state or federal laws, predominantly in the fields of health and social welfare. These courses can lead to qualifications as:

- Nurse,
- Nursing assistant,
- Social assistant,
- Physiotherapist,
- Occupational therapist,
- Midwife/Entbindungspfleger,
- Medical documentation assistant,
- Pharmaco-technical assistant.

Traditional trades

Professions which have now become rarities, such as watch-making, violin-making, accordion-making, or stringed-instrument-making may be learned through a dual training system (see page 20 onwards) or at a vocational college. The specialised training establishments are part of a vocational training centre, and are located in Glashütte (for watch-making) and Klingenthal (for musical-instrument-building).





Requirements

A »Realschulabschluss« is generally a pre-requisite for the training, while a suitable state of health is required for the health and caring fields. In some cases, proof of a training contract may also be mandatory.

What next?

Once a vocational qualification has been obtained at a vocational college, graduates can start working straight away. Those who have subsequently gained professional experience have the opportunity to obtain qualifications as a clinical supervisor or undertake advanced training at a technical college. Those wishing to study further can obtain »Fachhochschulreife« (qualification to study at a university of applied science) at a »Fachoberschule« or complete the »Abitur« school-leaving examination at a »Berufliches Gymnasium«.

Tips and info

Detailed information on vocational colleges can be found in this brochure:

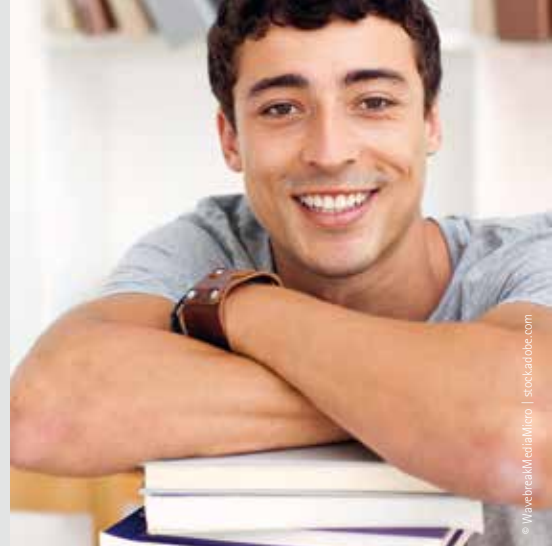


Career pathways

Vocational schools in Saxony

»Fachoberschule«.

The pathway to accessing a university of applied science



As an important next step after obtaining an intermediate school-leaving certificate at secondary school or »Oberschule+«, the »Fachoberschule« (specialised secondary education institution) provides a pathway to obtaining »Fachhochschulreife«, which serves as the basis for studying at a university of applied science or a vocational academy. The course encompasses both general and specialised content.

The subject areas

The following subject areas are offered at »Fachoberschulen«:

- Agriculture, biotechnology and environmental technology,
- Design,
- Health and social welfare,
- Engineering,
- Business and administration

The strong practical focus of the two-year »Fachoberschule« course is, along with the qualification to study at tertiary level, an important part of finding a career path in the chosen field. NB: There is no age restriction for admission. »Fachhochschulreife« can be obtained over two years of schooling (years 11 and 12) or one year of schooling (year 12), depending on the student's professional and life experience. The »Fachoberschule« thus gives a large number of adolescents, as well as adults of all ages, the opportunity to qualify for study at a university of applied science.

The subject area chosen is not binding for future fields of study.

Advantages at a glance

- No age limit
- No admission restrictions (e.g. specific grades required)
- Short course duration
- High practical relevance and professional orientation
- Wide range of applications





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Requirements

A »Realschulabschluss« (intermediate school-leaving certificate) is a pre-requisite for the two-year »Fachoberschule« course. The one-year course, meanwhile, requires a relevant vocational qualification accredited under state or federal law, with at least two years of training or three years of relevant professional experience (if the vocational qualification is not in a relevant field) and a »Realschulabschluss«.

What next?

»Fachhochschulreife« entitles the student to study at universities of applied science or vocational academies. Furthermore, students can commence vocational training after completing the two-year course, or take further vocational training at a technical college after completing the one-year course.

Tips and info

Detailed information on »Fachoberschulen« can be found in these brochures:



Career pathways
Vocational schools in Saxony



»Fachoberschulen«
in Saxony

»Berufliches Gymnasium«.

School-leaving examination upon completing secondary school



Anyone who has completed general schooling or vocational training with good results can obtain »allgemeine Hochschulreife« (secondary school-leaving certificate entitling entrance to universities) at a »Berufliches Gymnasium« (academic and vocational upper secondary school), paving the way for tertiary study at universities. Unlike the general »Gymnasium« (grammar school), the »Berufliches Gymnasium« teaches career-specific content in the chosen field, thereby introducing students to the professional working world in a unique way.

The course runs for three years. The introductory phase in year 11 is a chance for pupils to balance out differing learning requirements. During the qualification phase (years 12 and 13), classes are taught in advanced-level and basic-level subjects just as they are at general grammar schools. »Berufliche Gymnasien« end with the »Abitur« school-leaving examination.

The subject areas

- Agriculture
- Biotechnology
- Nutritional science
- Health and social welfare
- Information and communication technology
- Engineering, with specialisations in structural engineering, electrical engineering and mechanical engineering
- Economics

Subject choice is not binding for subsequent studies. For example, someone who chooses 'engineering specialising in structural engineering' can later study business administration.

Requirements

The training provided at »berufliche Gymnasien« is primarily aimed at graduates from a secondary school (»Oberschule«, including »Oberschule+«) or equivalent general school, whose average »Realschulabschluss« (intermediate school-leaving certificate) grade is better than 2.5. When starting year 11, students must not be over the age of 18, the exception being if they are able to prove they have completed vocational training, in which case they must not be over 21.

What next?

Students who have achieved »allgemeine Hochschulreife« through the »Abitur« school-leaving examination are eligible to study at universities across Germany. They can also study abroad.

Tips and info

Detailed information on »berufliche Gymnasien« can be found in these brochures:



Career pathways
Vocational schools in Saxony



The Abitur school-leaving examination at berufliche Gymnasien
Information on the senior-high »Oberstufe«

Dual qualification.

Vocational certificate and admission to tertiary study



The vocational education pathways include courses and services that prepare students for vocational qualifications and for »Fachhochschulreife« (entrance qualification to a university of applied science) or »allgemeine Hochschulreife« (secondary school completion and university entrance qualification).

Specialised secondary education institution and shorter dual vocational training system



Students seeking to complete a shorter dual vocational training course after attending a »Fachoberschule« can continue the practical component of their training in year 12. Part of the classroom-based lessons takes place here via e-learning using Saxony's central OPAL Schule online learning platform. Two qualifications can be obtained over four years: »Fachhochschulreife« and a certificate in a recognised dual-system trade/profession.

Saxon dual vocational training system with »Abitur« school-leaving examination



The dual-qualification pathway enables students to obtain »allgemeine Hochschulreife« and a vocational certificate in a recognised trade/profession within four years. It is available in the following subject areas:

- Information and communication technology,
- Engineering, and
- Economics

Technical college with additional training and examination to obtain »Fachhochschulreife«

»Fachhochschulreife« can be obtained in all subject areas except the two-year agriculture course.

Tips and info

Detailed information on the dual-qualification system can be found in this brochure:



Career pathways
Vocational schools in Saxony

Technical college. Continued vocational training



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Specialists already holding vocational qualifications, and who generally also have professional experience, can earn an additional qualification at a technical college. Technical colleges build on their students' professional experience, and prepare the students for middle-level tasks and independent, responsible roles. Fachhochschulreife (entrance qualification to a university of applied science) can also be obtained here.

The course lasts for two or three years full-time, or up to four years part-time. The final examination encompasses a written, oral and, if applicable, practical component. Technical colleges specialising in social-welfare professions also require an additional practical course to be taken, ending with a practical examination comprising a practical vocational task and a case-study oral examination.

Requirements

Technical colleges are open to specialists with vocational qualifications and professional experience.

What next?

Graduates will then have access to interesting medium-tier jobs between the level of skilled workers and university graduates. Anyone wanting to obtain additional qualifications can commence study at a university.

Tips and info

Detailed information on technical colleges is available in this brochure:



Career pathways
Vocational schools
in Saxony

The subject areas

Technical colleges offer advanced training in engineering, business, social welfare and design, while the agriculture-focused technical colleges offer similar continued education in a variety of disciplines.

Further information is available online at: www.bildung.sachsen.de.

School-leaving certificates for adults.

The alternative educational pathway



Adults can also obtain general school-leaving certificates to unlock new career opportunities. Night schools offer courses for this. Classes taken at colleges are done so on a full-time basis.

Night secondary school

»Hauptschulabschluss« and »Realschulabschluss« for adults

Participants are prepared for the »Hauptschulabschluss« (lowest level of school-leaving certificate), »qualifizierender Hauptschulabschluss« (a »Hauptschulabschluss« with entrance qualification to a vocational school), or »Realschulabschluss« (intermediate school-leaving certificate) through adult-focused approaches. Courses last for one or two years depending on

the education objective. In some cases, students can apply for the BAföG higher-education grant for the second half of their training. Classes are generally held at night at secondary schools /»Oberschulen+«.

Night grammar school and college

Adults are able to earn »Allgemeine Hochschulreife« (secondary-school completion and university entrance qualification) part-time at night grammar schools or full-time at colleges. Courses run for three to four years, depending on admission requirements. The subjects offered are generally the same as those taught at general grammar schools. Similarly, two subjects are taught at an advanced level, and other subjects at a basic level. Particularly

performance-oriented immigrant adults whose native language is not (or not exclusively) German can learn it as a second language as part of a preparatory class, and are then gradually integrated into regular classes. Class loading is around 23 hours a week at night grammar schools, and around 32 hours a week at colleges. Students attending a college can generally apply for the BAföG higher-education grant for their entire course, while those studying at a night grammar school may, in some cases, apply for it for the final eighteen months of the course.

Requirements

- Night secondary schools are open to anyone who has completed compulsory schooling but has not yet achieved their desired certificate. Other requirements are that students must be at least 18 years of age, and be currently working professionally, or have previously worked professionally, for six months, with equivalent activities (e.g. military service or civil service, or running their own family household) also being recognised.
- Night grammar schools and colleges have the following pre-requisite for admission: Completed vocational training or at least two years of work. An additional pre-requisite for night grammar school is that students must currently be working professionally. Unemployment certified by the employment agency will also be recognised as being engaged in professional work or as proof of at least two years' professional work experience. Time spent in military service or undertaking a year of volunteer social or environmental work will also be recognised. For students admitted with a »Hauptschulabschluss«, the course duration is generally four years. For students admitted with a »Realschulabschluss«, the course duration is generally three years.

Other options

Certificates obtained from a night secondary school provide opportunities for further academic and vocational education and training. By earning »Allgemeine Hochschulreife« through the »Abitur« school-leaving examination, students become eligible to study at universities across Germany. They can also study abroad.

Tips and info

Detailed information on night grammar schools and colleges can be found in this brochure:



The »Abitur« school-leaving examination at night grammar schools and colleges

Continued education.



Some 295,000 people attended the over 25,200 courses run by accredited general continued-education institutions (e.g. adult-education centres) in 2019.

Lifelong learning

Education is not something that only happens at a certain time in one's life; it's a lifelong process: A salesperson may complete a computing course at an adult-education centre; an additional qualification may lay the foundations for the next stage of a career; a retired engineer may start studying art history. These are just three of many examples. Lifelong learning is the catchphrase for anyone wanting to keep up on the job market, catch up on a vocational or school certificate, or simply develop personally.

Traditional educational pathways that end once schooling or university is complete often no longer suffice to meet the changing requirements of the working world and everyday life. Lifelong learning integrates pre-school education, schooling, vocational training, university education, and advanced general and vocational training into one flexible overarching system whose components build on from one another.

But people continue to educate themselves further even outside of educational institutions, learning new things from workplace colleagues, from friends while engaging in shared hobbies, during visits to museums and on educational trails in their local area. Saxony offers a number of options for this.

Opportunities for everyone

Numerous continued-education facilities across Saxony offer a wide range of programmes, aimed at advanced vocational, general, cultural or political training. Services range from single night classes, to weekend seminars or excursions, to multi-month general or vocational courses.



Further information



www.weiterbildung.sachsen.de



www.bildungsmarkt-sachsen.de



www.slpb.de (Saxon State Agency for Civic Education)

Information and advice.



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Saxon State Office for Schooling and Education

The branches of the Saxon State Office for Schooling and Education are points of contact for any education-related queries or issues. They are the school supervisory authorities, and attend to content and staffing matters at schools, as well as teacher placement. In doing so, they maintain close, regular contact with the schools, school patrons, as well as parent and student representatives. If an individual student is having problems at school, or in the event of problems arising in everyday school operations, the affected parties can contact the relevant branch for counselling by school psychologists.

Saxon State Students' Council

As the highest, official, decision-making students' committee in the Free State of Saxony, the Saxon State Students' Council represents the interests of Saxony's school students.

Saxon State Parents' Council

The Saxon State Parents' Council represents the schooling-related interests of parents of all school students across the Free State of Saxony.

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