



School and Education

Education System

Compulsory Education

Vocational Education and Training / Middle School

Universities / Universities of Applied Sciences

Recognition of Qualifications

Education System

In Switzerland, you can always learn something and develop yourself personally. Training for a vocation is particularly important. Those who have completed training can move on to further training or study at a university.

Structure / Authorities

There are three consecutive levels of education in Switzerland:

- Compulsory education (Volksschule: Kindergarten, Primarschule and Sekundarstufe I)
- Vocational education and training, or middle school (Sekundarstufe II)
- Universities of applied sciences / universities, and professional education and training (Tertiärstufe)

Public authorities deal with education and training: the confederation, cantons and commune divide the tasks and responsibilities among themselves. This is why there are different schools and school systems in different cantons.

Compulsory Education

In Canton Basel-Stadt, compulsory education lasts 11 years. This means that children must attend school for 11 years. Schooling begins when the child is 4 years old. If your child cannot go to school, you must excuse your child. If children do not attend school without a valid reason, the parents can be fined.

Children up to the age of 16, who move to Basel, can attend compulsory schooling.

Young people aged 16 years and above, who move to Basel, can go to the vocational information centre (Berufsinformationszentrum, BIZ). The BIZ provides information on what vocations and training the young people can do.

Education Following Compulsory Education

Young people undergo training after compulsory education. Many young people choose vocational education and training (apprenticeship, Berufslehre). This allows them to access higher vocational training and education in the future (höhere Berufsbildung). During or after their apprenticeship, they can do a federal vocational baccalaureate (Berufsmaturität). This qualification enables them to attend a university of applied sciences (Fachhochschule) in the future. Around 20 percent of young people do a baccalaureate at school (gymnasiale Maturität). This allows them to study at university.

Scholarships

Scholarships (Stipendien) are available to people with little financial means to help them attend higher education or undergo vocational training. Those people then receive money for training after compulsory schooling. You also might be able to receive a scholarship if you come from another country and live in Basel-Stadt. But this depends on which country you are from and how long you have been living in Switzerland. The office for education and training grants (Amt für Ausbildungsbeiträge) in the cantonal administration can provide further information.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/school-and-education/education-system

Compulsory Education

Children receive basic education in compulsory schools. They can then do further training and education programmes. Public schools are free of charge.

Registering a Child

The communes or the canton are responsible for running public schools.

You can register your child here:

Registration for nursery or primary school

- For children in Basel-Stadt: primary schools in Basel-Stadt
- For children in Riehen: community schools in Riehen
- For children in Bettingen: community schools in Bettingen

Registration for secondary school:

- Secondary schools in Basel-Stadt

School Levels

Compulsory education consists of three consecutive levels:

- 2 years of nursery (Kindergarten)
- 6 years of primary school (Primarschule). Does your child need special support or have special skills? They can receive suitable support here.
- 3 years of upper-level school (Sekundarstufe I). Upper-level school includes three different school types (A-Zug, E-Zug, and P-Zug), with different levels of difficulty.
- Is German not your child's mother tongue? They can receive special support in all three levels.

Lessons in Local Language and Culture (Heimatliche Sprache- und Kultur, HSK)

Besides compulsory school, children can attend classes in their local language and culture (heimatliche Sprache und Kultur, HSK). The children learn the language and can then better understand, speak, read, and write it. They learn about the history, geography, festivals and traditions of their home country, for example. We recommend these courses. They are voluntary and usually cost money.

Public School / Private School

Public school is free of charge. Boys and girls are taught together. The curriculum is confessionally neutral. Most children and young people attend public school (95%) during compulsory schooling. There are also private schools. If you want to send your child to a private school, you must pay for it yourself.

Parents' Rights and Duties

School is required to inform you about what your child does at school and how good they are at school. Meetings are held between you and the teacher for this purpose. There are also parents' evenings, where the teachers inform all the parents of a class. Plus, there are information events for the school. When your child goes to school, you need to attend these meetings and events. You are also responsible for ensuring that your child regularly attends school.

Perhaps your child is unable to go to school one day because they are ill, for example. You then need to inform the school. You must also make sure your child does their homework. You can help your child with this. For instance, you can ask what they did at school. You can also regularly take a look at the homework. This way, you show that you are interested.

If you are not yet familiar with the Swiss school system, you can find out about it at an event. There are information events especially for people who are new to Switzerland. For this reason, the events are also often held in other languages than German.

Questions / Support

If you have questions about school, you should always talk to the teacher first. The teacher is also there if you need support. Perhaps the teacher believes your child needs something. Or the teacher has a question about your child. In that case, talk to them first. It is important for parents and teachers to work well together.

Your child may have psychological or social issues. The school psychology service (Schulpsychologischer Dienst) can help you and your child. Its help is free of charge.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/school-and-education/compulsory-education

Vocational Education and Training / Middle School

Following compulsory education, most young people choose to attend vocational education and training. If you wish to study at a university, you need a baccalaureate. You can obtain a baccalaureate at middle school. You can also do a baccalaureate during your vocational education and training.

Importance of Education

A good education and professional life are very important in Switzerland. Good performance during school opens up better opportunities later in professional life. Following compulsory education, you have various options to choose from to prepare for the world of work (Sekundarstufe II). It is easier to find a good position with further training.

Do you have any questions about education and training? Vocational, study and career counselling (Berufs-, Studien- und Laufbahnberatung) provides advice to young people and parents. The counselling is free of charge.

Vocational Education and Training

Following compulsory education, most young people choose to attend vocational education and training (apprenticeship, Berufslehre). During an apprenticeship, you work at a company. There you learn the practical skills you need for the vocation. At the same time, you attend vocational school. You can do an apprenticeship for more than 250 vocations. An apprenticeship lasts between two and four years. In the last two years of school, you need to look for an apprenticeship position at a company yourself. The school can help you with this. But your parents should also help. Vocational, study and career counselling (Berufs-, Studien- und Laufbahnberatung) has a number of offers and advice for young people. The counselling is free of charge. You can do a federal vocational baccalaureate during or after your apprenticeship (Berufsmaturität). This allows you to study at a university of applied sciences.

Middle School

Middle schools (Mittelschulen) provide preparation for studies at a university or a university of applied sciences (Fachhochschule). The students receive a broad, general education at the middle schools.

There are different kinds of middle schools:

- Middle schools with a baccalaureate: Afterwards, you can study at a university or a university of applied sciences.
- Middle schools with a specialised baccalaureate: Afterwards, you can study at a university of applied sciences. You may also be able to study at a university. You need to pass an exam in that case. Sometimes, there are also additional requirements.

Bridge Programmes

Are you aged between 18 and 25 and only moved to Canton Basel-Stadt after compulsory schooling? You may be able to take part in a programme of the Centre for Bridge Programmes (Brückenangebote, ZBA). There, the goal is to give you a good start to the world of work. The bridge programme helps you find an internship or an apprenticeship. Are you interested? Then contact the Centre for Bridge Programmes (Zentrum für Brückenangebote).

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/school-and-education/vocational-education-and-training-middle-school

Universities / Universities of Applied Sciences

There are two different types of universities in Switzerland. The universities and the universities of applied sciences. Questions concerning admission on the basis of a foreign diplomas should be directed to the universities.

Higher Education System

There are two different types of universities in Switzerland: universities and universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen). Universities of applied sciences are more practice-oriented and universities are more theory-oriented. The two types are equal and organised according to the European Bologna System. On completion, one receives a bachelor's or master's degree which is recognised throughout Europe.

Admission

Universities have varying admission policies. Swiss university preparatory school diplomas guarantee access to universities. Foreign diplomas will not always be recognised. Questions regarding the recognition of foreign diplomas for admission are answered by the respective universities. In general, very good German skills are required. An exception is made for courses of study which are offered entirely in English. Vocational, study and career counselling (Berufs-, Studien- und Laufbahnberatung) provides free information on higher education opportunities.

Professional Education and Training

In addition to the universities, professional education and training (höhere Berufsbildung) is a popular form of continuing one's education in Switzerland. This enables professionals to specialise and deepen their professional knowledge as well as their leadership skills. Professional education and training follows vocational education and training (apprenticeship, Berufslehre). A university preparatory school diploma is not necessary. Vocational, study and career counselling (Berufs-, Studien- und Laufbahnberatung) provides free information on the various possibilities.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/school-and-education/universities--universities-of-applied-sciences

Recognition of Qualifications

Foreign qualifications are not always valid in Switzerland. Under certain circumstances, it is possible to have qualifications validated. This is a requirement for some professions.

Recognition

People with foreign qualifications can, under certain circumstances, have them validated in Switzerland. Validation confirms that the foreign qualification is the equivalent of the Swiss qualification. Regulated professions (e.g. healthcare professionals, teachers, etc.) require validation. Which agency is responsible for the validation process is dependent upon the profession or training. A fee is charged for the validation process. Additional information is provided by the National Information Centre for the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications (Nationale Kontaktstelle für Diplomanerkennung) or in vocational, study and career counselling (Berufs-, Studien- und Laufbahnberatung).

Determining the Level of Qualification

A validation process is not necessary for unregulated professions. For these professions, it is possible to request that the level of qualification be determined (Niveaubestätigung). This process determines the status of a foreign diploma relative to the Swiss education system. Such a determination can be helpful in finding employment. Additional information is provided by the National Information Centre for the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications (Nationale Kontaktstelle für Diplomanerkennung) or in vocational, study and career counselling (Berufs-, Studien- und Laufbahnberatung).

Professional Qualification Later in Life

Adults with professional experience who do not have a recognised qualification can still obtain a Swiss qualification through vocational education and training or professional education and training. The process varies according to previous training, experience, and age. Good German language skills are an essential prerequisite (Level B1/B2 CEFR). Those interested can contact vocational, study and career counselling (Berufs-, Studien- und Laufbahnberatung) for free advice. Obtaining a professional qualification improves your position in the job market and grants access to continued education.



**Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets,
brochures)**

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/school-and-education/recognition-of-qualifications