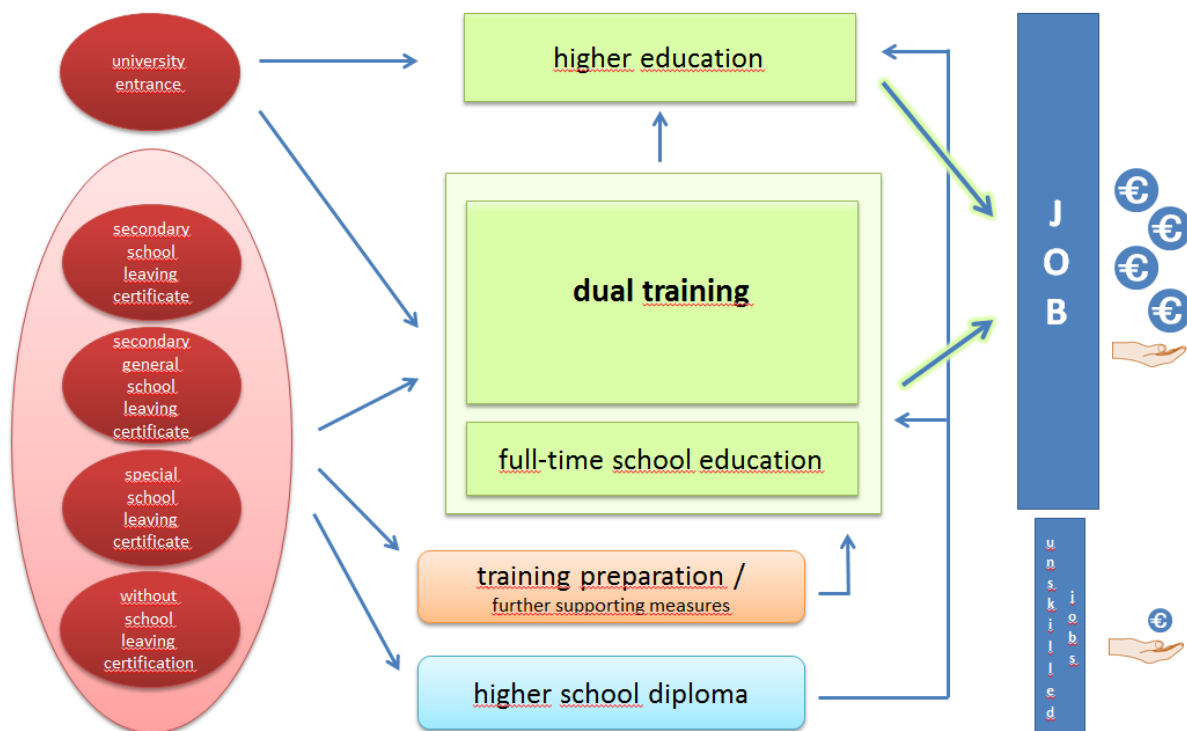




School leaving and the world of work – the North-Rhine Westphalian vocational orientation scheme

If you want to have a well-paid job in Germany it is advisory to complete an apprenticeship successfully or get a university degree. Dual Training is highly appreciated in Germany and differs from training in many other countries. Choosing the right job is a big issue here. A scheme called „KAoA“ (no school leaving without an adequate follow-up step) comprises instruments and measures of vocational orientation as from grade 8.

Ways of Transition from school to profession (simplified representation)



Students are being prepared at school for the dual training system or university studies. Secondary schools (as from grade 5) may grant the following school leaving certificates:

- special (foster) school leaving certificate
- secondary general school leaving certificate (after grade 9 or 10)
- secondary school leaving certificate (similar to O-levels)
- secondary school leaving certificate after sixth form (“Abitur” or “Fachabitur”, similar to UK A-levels).

You may then reach a higher degree of qualification through dual training in business supported by tuition in part-time vocational schools. Form and counselling teachers provide you with further information.

Early pre-vocational career guidance at school makes sure that young people find their adequate field for an apprenticeship or studies. This job orientation scheme starts in grade 8 in all secondary schools.

Grade 8:

Career portfolio (“Berufswahlpass”)

At the beginning of grade 8 students receive their personal copy of a filing folder (job or career portfolio) in which they collect all items that relate to jobs and career guidance. They may also file their credentials and all kinds of certificates in their portfolios. Students are e.g. asked to file letters of application and CVs here. Their career portfolio will play a role in the guidance process at the employment exchange (“Bundesagentur für Arbeit”) or when they apply for studies at a vocational college.



School guidance

As from grade 8 teachers and other pedagogical staff provide careers guidance for employment or studies. They co-operate with job counsellors from the employment agency who come to school and offer opportunities for guidance talks. Form teachers or guidance counsellors can give further information.

Potential analysis

During the first term of grade 8 all students undergo an analysis of their abilities with the help of an extra-mural educational provider. This is a one-day scheme with many practical tests and exercises telling the students about their skills, strengths and fields of interests. One day later, the providers’ staff observing and controlling the students in the scheme come to school in order to have a feedback talk with the students and their parents.

The results of the exercises and tests carried out are summarised and commented on, emphasising the youth’s strengths.

Taking part in the potential analysis is a compulsory prerequisite for those schemes in the program that are subsidised by the NRW state government. Form teachers or guidance counsellors can give further information.



One-day work experience (“Berufsfelderkundung”)

All grade 8 students get the opportunity of having different one-day work experiences in order to take a first glance at the world of work. There are three days, on each of which they can try out a different field of work. These three days help them to get ready for their work experience in grade 9.

Providers and local business make sure that these measures are provided adequately, depending on the students’ interests, likes and aptitudes. Form teachers or guidance counsellors can give further information.



Grades 9/10

Work experience (“Praktikum”)

All students have a longer work experience allowing them to learn more about their future job or field of work. Depending on the type of school the work experience in a local business will last two or three weeks.

Practical training courses/long-term work experience and transition guidance (Praxiskurse/ Langzeitpraktikum/ Berufseinstiegsbegleitung)



A practical training course helps the young people to get a deeper practical insight into jobs. In addition they may acquire further professional and social abilities. Moreover they will also learn how to apply for a job successfully. As a rule a practical training course will last three days and a student may attend up to three different courses

Another way to individually help students is a long-term work experience while at the same time remaining student at school. This scheme is for students who find it difficult to qualify for a regular school leaving certificate. Their school and a local company co-operate on a special work experience scheme. The students go to school on three or four days allowing them a long-term work experience on one or two days a week during one or two school-terms. The local company helps them to gain or enhance their practical abilities preparing them for an apprenticeship. Their school provides tuition in main subjects so a school leaving certificate remains in reach.

Some students may receive help from a individual job guidance scheme covering two and a half years (**„Berufseinstiegsbegleitung“**, abbr. BerEb.) Job guidance helps the students to write letters of application, to find a work experience or an apprenticeship or to solve problems coming up at the beginning of an apprenticeship.

Form teachers or guidance counsellors can give you further information on all these kinds of help on offer.

Career planning agreement (“Anschlussvereinbarung”, abbr. AV)

At the end of grade 9 students have a very close look at how they want to carry on their career. They find out what kind of orientation or which qualifications they will need and how they can achieve their aims. They discuss these aspects with their parents and labour exchange counsellors and state the results in their individual agreement on career planning.

Employment Exchange guidance (“Beratung durch die Bundesagentur für Arbeit”, abbr. BA)

Students may ask for professional advice and can make individual appointments with guidance counsellors from the Employment Exchange at school or at the agency.

Job counselling by the Employment Exchange agency helps the students to find an adequate profession and gives them information on apprenticeship or fields of academic studies.

The guidance counsellors also help with advice on how to successfully apply for an apprenticeship and sign a contract with a business company.



Dual Training after a successful school career (Berufsausbildung nach der Schule)

In Germany skilled workers receive a mixture of dual (theoretical and practical) training and tuition. After school young people sign a training contract for two or three-years with a company and receive a salary from the beginning of dual training. They learn and acquire practical skills in the company for three or four days per week and go to a vocational school on one or two days. Going to a vocational school is compulsory for under 18-year olds. Students have to make sure they find a training company before their final year at school. Dual training gives them an insight into work pro-



cesses and special job tasks. The students' business contacts may result in a job contract after dual training in a specific field or they may start academic studies in the same field of work. However, dual training is not available for all professions. Some professions are covered by full-time training in a vocational school (including practical work placements). Students have to apply with these schools early, because going to school is still compulsory for them at that time.

The Employment Exchange Office („Agentur für Arbeit“), form teachers and vocational schools („Berufskollegs“) can give information on this issue.

University studies

If you want to start university studies you either need a certificate stating a successful dual training or a (specialised) university entrance certificate („Abitur“ or „Fachabitur“). A dual training certificate grants admission in special fields of study related to the training.

Students with a diploma of secondary education („Abitur“, similar to UK A-levels) may freely choose their field of study when entry admission is open. Sometimes a good average mark in your certificate is required because of a restricted entry.

These young adults have to make sure they find their fields of study for themselves. The local employment agency Krefeld, the center for studies Krefeld or Hochschule Niederrhein - studies guidance offer their help and guidance.



Contacts

- Staff from the Employment Agency's vocational guidance offer consultation hours in all schools regularly. You can ask for their names and make appointments with them in the schools.
- Agentur für Arbeit (*employment agency*)
Philadelphiastraße 2, 47799 Krefeld,
Telefon: 0800/4555500, www.arbeitsagentur.de
- Employment Agency's Integration Point:
Philadelphiastraße 2, 47799 Krefeld (for under 25-year olds)
Telefon: 02151/70480, www.jobcenter-krefeld.de
- Kommunales Integrationszentrum:
Konrad-Adenauer-Platz 17, 47803 Krefeld
Telefon: 02151/862814, www.krefeld-verbindet-menschen.de
- Studienzentrum Krefeld (FernUniversität Hagen):
Petersstr. 118 (Gebäude B), 47798 Krefeld
Telefon: 02151/777860, www.fernuni-hagen.de
- Studienberatung Hochschule Niederrhein
Reinarzstraße 49, 47805 Krefeld,
Tel.: 02151/822-2722, www.hs-niederrhein.de

