



DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Ready for the future

Higher education programmes
for refugees

“Determining the language skills and subject knowledge of refugees is the first step on their path towards higher education.”

German Academic Exchange Service

Supporting the application for a place in higher education

Many young refugees in Germany are well qualified for a place in higher education. Free examinations for university admission enable them to gain access to degree courses, preparatory programmes or language courses.

- The Test for Academic Studies (TestAS) helps universities to better assess refugees' aptitude for higher education. It examines the subject-related knowledge and cognitive skills required for university study in German, English or Arabic. TestAS is a precondition for a free application through uni-assist.
- Refugees who would like to study in Germany can apply to roughly 180 higher education institutions free of charge through the uni-assist association. The association examines whether they are entitled to enter higher education in Germany and passes the application on to up to three universities.
- Many refugees have to attend a language course before they can begin a degree course. The onSET online test organised by the TestDaF Institute helps them to find the appropriate German or English course.



Kenan Heiloun

is a university applicant from Syria who has lived in Cologne since 2014

“ **My life has always been** very international: I was born in Homs in Syria, where I completed my university entrance exams. A Bachelor’s programme in mechanical engineering followed in Russia; later I worked in Lebanon. I moved to Cologne in April 2014, and since then I have been learning German. Through the International Office at the University of Cologne I heard about TestAS, the higher education aptitude test. I took the exam in German. It was a real challenge! But I wanted to prove to myself I could do it. I also passed the German language test for admission to higher education (DSH). Using the uni-assist system, I can now apply for Master programmes in mechanical engineering all over Germany; the two certificates increase my chances. There are so many opportunities; I don’t know yet which one I will decide to take.”

Creating the prerequisites for a successful higher education: Integra

The Integra programme enables refugees to prepare for higher education in language and subject-related courses at German universities and preparatory colleges.

- Over 170 universities and preparatory colleges are currently participating in the Integra programme and preparing refugees for higher education through counselling, language courses and subject-related foundation courses.
- Good language skills are a basic prerequisite for studying in Germany. Accordingly, universities and preparatory colleges offer German courses and preparatory courses for a recognised language exam as part of the Integra programme.
- Preparatory colleges prepare refugees without direct higher education entrance qualifications for the so-called Feststellungsprüfung (FSP), an assessment test that enables access to higher education. In addition, universities offer subject-related preparatory courses within the Integra framework.

→ [study-in.de/refugees/assistance](https://www.study-in.de/refugees/assistance)



**Dr Benedetta
Gennaro**

Refugee Integration
Coordinator, Technische
Universität Darmstadt

“**Language is the most important catalyst** for integration. I know this from personal experience: in addition to my Italian mother tongue, I have learned two foreign languages and, as a result, been able to live and work in the United States and Germany. Most refugees do not have the C1 language level you need to study. Together with two colleagues I support them in finding the right programmes. I coordinate integration services, such as counselling, funding and language acquisition – it’s a job that makes me very happy. Using Integra funding, we offer German courses at the language centre and the preparatory college ranging from Level A1 to DSH, the German language exam for entry to higher education. It is an invaluable asset to be able to open up opportunities for young people in this way.”

**“This programme
aims to provide lasting
support for the great
voluntary effort.”**

Professor Margret Wintermantel,
DAAD President

Supporting initiatives at universities: Welcome

Since mid-2015 hundreds of students all over Germany have been involved in voluntary initiatives for refugees who are interested in higher education, facilitating their start at universities.

- The DAAD Welcome programme finances student assistant positions in nearly 450 initiatives at over 160 universities, art and music colleges and teacher training colleges.
- Especially popular are so-called buddy programmes, tandems and refugee law clinics, where law students advise refugees. Regular debates about topical subjects are also held at several higher education institutions. In addition, students organise campus tours, tutorials and so-called encounter cafés.
- This commitment constitutes a social responsibility for the universities and colleges involved. They rely on the competence of their students, who explain degree programmes and study regulations in the respective native languages.

→ [study-in.de/refugees/assistance](https://www.study-in.de/refugees/assistance)



**Maria-Sophia
Dellasega**

Student assistant,
Welcome programme,
Humboldt-Universität
zu Berlin

“**When so many refugees arrived** in Berlin in summer 2015, I had just returned from doing voluntary service in Belgium. I immediately got down to work: cooking food and distributing blankets. At university I got together with eight fellow students and organised tandems for refugees and Berlin students. The students help the refugees to find their feet at the university. Recently one of our tandem teams, a female psychologist and a Tunisian physician, presented a lecture. In addition to a large number of other initiatives, almost all departments of the Humboldt-Universität have tandem groups like our “Welcome Tandems @ Faculties of Humanities & Social Sciences”. Since April 2016 several student assistant places have been funded by Welcome; the university supports us in key areas. That’s a great help.”

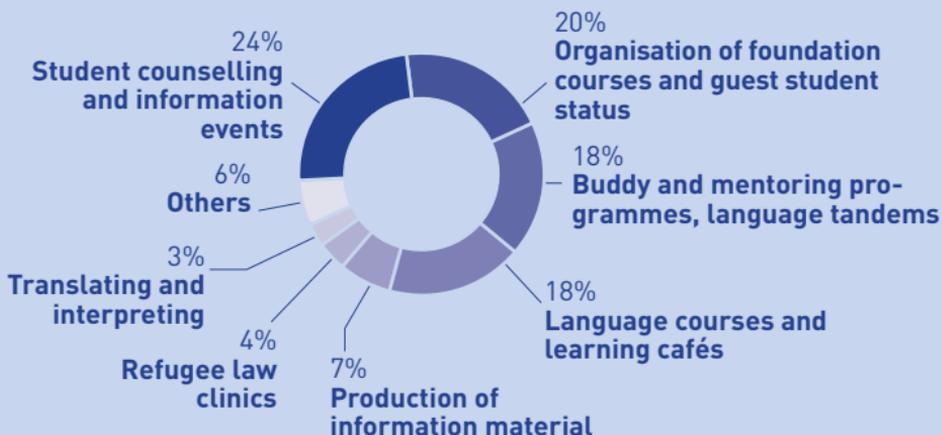


**Professor
Clemens Martin**

Dean of Studies, Business
Informatics, Baden-Wuert-
temberg Cooperative
State University
(DHBW)

“As a **‘dual university’** we work closely with the private sector and public institutions – at our Mannheim site alone we are partnered with over 2,000 companies. In March 2016 we began preparing refugees for a dual study programme in Mannheim thanks to support from the Integra programme and software producer SAP. The outlook is promising: participants who successfully complete the preparatory scheme will be admitted to a dual study programme with a training contract and a monthly salary. The refugees are highly committed, determined and serious; however, great demands are made on them. Other companies are also interested in supporting us, but some of them hesitate because of the administrative effort. The project is an opportunity for both sides. It has model character.”

The Welcome programme supports these measures



The Integra programme supports these courses



Overview of Welcome and Integra projects

State	Welcome universities	Welcome student initiatives	Integra universities
Baden-Württemberg	23	57	22
Bavaria	22	57	25
Berlin	13	33	12
Brandenburg	8	23	8
Bremen	3	7	2
Hamburg	5	12	4
Hesse	7	23	15
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	4	7	4
Lower Saxony	14	36	14
North Rhine-Westphalia	26	83	26
Rhineland-Palatinate	9	20	7
Saarland	2	9	2
Saxony	9	27	12
Saxony-Anhalt	5	22	6
Schleswig-Holstein	6	14	6
Thuringia	7	18	6

The way to university

Improving prospects Free of charge for registered refugees, **TestAS** examines general and subject-related aptitude for higher education. Participants receive a certificate they can use for applications – directly to a university or through uni-assist. → refugees.testas.de/en



Applying correctly The **uni-assist** association checks for refugees free of charge whether their qualifications entitle them to enter higher education. They can apply to several universities at once through uni-assist. → uni-assist.de/refugees.html



Consulting experts Refugees can also seek advice directly from a university. They will be issued with a certificate that they can submit to **uni-assist** with their application.



Improving language skills

Refugees can discover their level of competency in German or English free of charge with the Online Language Placement Test **onSET**. The test helps universities to select the appropriate language course.

→ refugees.onset.de/en



Qualifying for higher education

German courses and subject knowledge: many universities and preparatory colleges offer a wide range of **Integra** courses to prepare refugees for a degree programme.

→ www.daad.de/integra-en



Welcoming refugees

Support and advice: **Welcome** programmes at many universities help refugees to take their first steps as a student.

→ www.daad.de/welcome-en



Links and information at a glance



The DAAD website presents additional information on programmes and support services for refugees:

daad.de/der-daad/fluechtlinge/en



Refugees can find all kinds of information on higher education in the “Information for Refugees” section on the “Study in Germany” website:

study-in.de/en/refugees

TestAS is an assessment test that examines a candidate’s general and subject-related aptitude for academic studies:

refugees.testas.de/en

The uni-assist association examines whether people’s international qualifications entitle them to study in Germany:

uni-assist.de/refugees.html

The onSET language test helps to find the appropriate language course by testing the participant’s current knowledge of German or English:

refugees.onset.de/en

Education is the key to integration. Information on measures by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (in German only):

bmbf.de/de/fluechtlinge-durch-bildung-integrieren.html

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) offers information on integration and residence in Germany:

bamf.de/EN/Willkommen/willkommen-node.html

The DAAD commitment for refugees

The Welcome and Integra programmes are part of a DAAD package of measures for refugees that will receive 100 million euros of funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF) until 2019. This support makes it easier for suitably qualified refugees to enter higher education and prepares them for their studies with language programmes and foundation courses.

The DAAD as a funding organisation

The DAAD funds the internationalisation of German higher education and supports the development of education systems in developing countries. It is the world's largest funding organisation for the exchange of students and researchers.

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Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

assist

Arbeits- und Servicestelle für
internationale Studierendebewerber*innen

onSETI
online Sprachprüfungstest
für Flüchtlinge

TestAS
Test für Ausländische Studierende
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