

Leadership for Syria

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated 5 December 2014

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Please note:

Our FAQs are intended to guide you through the application process and answer some of your questions. Please read this document carefully before you contact us with any additional question you might have.

All answers provided here in the FAQs are given to our best knowledge. However, please understand that this document is not legally binding. DAAD reserves the right to make corrections and amendments at any time.

I. Basic Application Conditions

- **Is there an age limitation for the programme?**

No, if you meet all the other formal requirements you can apply. But please note that your last academic degree must not be older than six (6) years at time of application.

- **Can I apply, if I don't have a (valid) passport?**

Yes, you can apply if you do not have a (valid) passport. We will try to support you in obtaining the necessary travel documents to enter Germany and are in contact with the

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German authorities to assess all options in this regard. At time of application, please provide us with a copy of any identity paper in your possession if you do not have a passport. If your passport has expired, please submit a copy anyway.

Please note: In case you are preselected you will have to manage to get to the interview in Istanbul, Amman, Beirut or Bonn. We will try and assist with invitation letters etc. which may help you to cross the border.

- **I do not have Syrian citizenship, but I have been a permanent resident in Syria before the conflict or until now. Can I apply?**

Yes, you can apply. Please provide proof of your permanent residence in Syria with your application.

- **I am currently living in a third-country, but I am not registered as a refugee with UNHCR. Can I still apply?**

No, in this case you cannot apply for this scholarship. UNHCR registration is mandatory, if your current place of residence is not Syria or Germany.

- **What does UNHCR registration mean and how do I get it?**

UNHCR is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, an UN-funded agency taking care of refugees' issues worldwide. Talk to your local [UNHCR office](#) in order to find out if you are eligible for registration with UNHCR. Without valid registration, your application for this scholarship cannot be accepted.

- **I just arrived as a refugee in a third country and did not get my registration with UNHCR, yet. I have made an appointment at the UNHCR office, may I apply?**

Yes, you can apply. In case you are preselected, you will have to provide us with your UNHCR registration at the personal interview.

- **I am living in Turkey as a refugee and there is no UNHCR registration, what can I do?**

Turkey released a new law in the past year, regulating, that all refugees from Syria will be registered through the Turkish authorities and not through UNHCR. All Syrians, who are currently living in Turkey, should register with the Turkish authorities who will issue them with an identification card. This card will be accepted by the DAAD as proof of your status. Please upload (for online application) or attach a copy (for hardcopy applications) to your application documents. We are aware that there are different types of registration documents that may be issued.

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- **I am already living in the European Union (but not in Germany) and have a legal title as a refugee or an asylum-seeker. Can I apply for this scholarship?**

No, if you already have a legal title as a refugee or an asylum-seeker in any other country of the European Union than Germany, you cannot apply for this scholarship. Please look for information on study and scholarship opportunities in your country of residence.

- **I have applied for legal status as a refugee or an asylum-seeker in Germany, but my case has not been decided yet. Can I apply for this scholarship?**

Yes, you can apply. Please include proof of your current status (registered asylum-seeker etc.) in your application.

II. Courses of Study – Degrees Offered

- **What are the subjects and courses of study offered under this scholarship scheme?**

In general, this scholarship scheme is open to all fields of study and to all courses currently offered at German universities with the exception of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, law, fine arts, music and architecture. Please note: For the decision about your scholarship application, it is irrelevant which course of study you would like to follow in Germany. Language or cultural studies carry the same value to us as engineering or natural science courses.

- **Can I study fine arts, music or architecture with this scholarship?**

No, all study programmes which require a folder with your previous works or a qualification exam are excluded from the scholarship. Have a look at www.study-in.de and find out if your desired programme requires the above mentioned proof of qualification. Unfortunately, fine arts, music and architecture have these very restrictive admission policies.

- **Can I study medicine with this scholarship?**

Unfortunately, the DAAD cannot offer a scholarship for the study of medicine (including dentistry and veterinary medicine). We do regret this very much, but due to the special admission procedure and the length of study and to certain legal aspects involved (in case of specialized training), the field of medicine is excluded. Please do not ask us for exceptions, it will be useless.

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The only exception granted is in case of PhD studies for students with a medical degree whose research does not involve contacts to patients (i.e. lab work only). Specialized training ("Facharzt") is NOT possible!

You may apply for Master's courses or PhD work in the field of public health or public health management.

- **Can I study pharmacy with this scholarship?**

Yes, you can. Please visit the website www.study-in.de and search for pharmacy as Bachelor's or Master's degree studies. The degree of "Staatsexamen" is not included in the scholarship.

You can also apply for a PhD: Dr. rer. nat. (doctor rerum naturalium).

- **I have not completed my studies at the time of application. Can I still apply?**

If you wish to apply for a Master's or PhD Programme

1) At the time of application we need your current academic transcript including your grades. Additionally, you have to provide us with proof from your university that you will graduate before your departure to Germany on 1 April 2015.

2) As a general rule we expect you to be able to provide your original university diploma until 1 April 2015, before your departure to Germany and before the start of the German language course! In exceptional cases (e.g. your university did not confer the original university diploma yet, but you have already passed all your final exams) we might agree to accept an official paper from your university which states that you have passed all your exams and your thesis and that the Certificate will be awarded on - DATE - .

3) The original diploma must be in your possession at latest in summer 2015 and before the time of university registration.

If you had to suspend your studies and wish to continue in Germany

You can of course apply. Please submit an overview of your course work and academic achievements (e.g. your grading sheets/transcripts). Please note that acceptance of previous coursework is to be decided by the German university only.

- **I had to suspend my studies in Syria and my last academic degree is older than six years - can I still apply for this scholarship?**

No, unfortunately you cannot apply.

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- **I have already completed one, two, three semesters of study at a German university. Can I still apply for this scholarship?**

In general, yes. As long as you have not completed more than half of your degree requirements already and have not been registered as a student at a German university for more than 3 semesters at time of application, you can apply.

- **Having a legal residence title for Germany, a German university has already accepted me but I have not started my course of study yet. Can I still apply for a scholarship?**

Yes, you can apply. Please include proof of your residence title and your letter of admission in your application.

- **I have already completed most of my degree requirements at a German university. I just need some financial support in order to finish. Can I still apply?**

No, in this case an application is not possible. You might be eligible to apply for a scholarship for the next step of your academic career if you can finish your current degree on time (e.g., you are currently doing a Master's degree, you might want to consider applying for a PhD scholarship).

- **I have completed my PhD and want to work as a Postdoc at a German University. Can I apply for this scholarship?**

No, unfortunately, this scholarship does not offer support for postdoctoral work. Please use the DAAD scholarship database in order to look for alternative funding.

- **Can I change the subject of study after being granted the scholarship?**

No, if you decide to change the field of your study, you will lose the scholarship. We therefore recommend that you choose your course of studies wisely.

III. Language Requirements

Language proficiencies

German

If you chose a subject of study which is solely available in German, you should generally have a German level of **B2** before you come to Germany. Otherwise you will not be able to follow the lectures held in German!

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Definition of level B2:

Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

- **I do not speak German; do I have to take German classes before I can apply?**

No, you do not need to know German in order to apply. You can apply if you consider a degree course in English language. A basic knowledge of German is helpful but not necessary. The scholarship programme itself will offer German Language courses before your first semester at the German university begins. If you chose a study programme in English, you only need to have a very good command of English language.

English

If you choose to study a subject offered in English, you need a high proficiency of the English language. The universities clarify on their websites which level you must provide in order to be accepted as a student. A good starting point for your online search is <https://www.study-in.de/en/> with the selection of "English" as "Course Language" There you can find all the degree courses which are taught in English.

- **I speak German, but I do not speak English very well. Can I still apply?**

Please be aware that the mandatory side study programme will be in English.

If you are not comfortable communicating in English or your TOEFL/IELTS scores are below 500/5.0, then chances for obtaining the scholarship are very low. We recommend you to work on your English skills and apply for a different kind of DAAD scholarship next year.

Language certificates

German

It would be ideal if you could provide us with a DSH or TestDaF certificate by the time of application. The exact scores can be found in the call for applications.

- **I am currently participating in a German language course in order to get a certificate to prove the necessary language skills; can I apply?**

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Yes, you can apply if you will have completed your language programme until April and can hand in a letter of your teacher confirming this.

- **I have no DSH or TestDaF; can I still apply?**

Yes, you can apply. Please submit any official document that can prove your sufficient knowledge of the German language. It does not necessarily have to be a DSH or TestDaF, if there is currently no chance for you to take the test. You may f.ex. also submit the following documents:

- A slightly outdated DSH or TestDaF
- A confirmation by the Goethe institute
- Secondary Education Certificates indicating language courses you successfully attended in school

English

It would be ideal if you could provide us with a TOEFL or IELTS certificate by the time of application. The exact scores can be found in the call for applications.

- **I don't have a certificate of my TOEFL or IELTS scores, what can I do?**

Please submit any official document that can prove your sufficient knowledge of the English language. It does not necessarily have to be a TOEFL or IELTS score, if there is currently no chance for you to take the test. You may f.ex. also submit the following documents:

- A slightly outdated TOEFL or IELTS
- A Secondary Education Certificate indicating language courses you successfully attended in school
- An official language test certificate provided by your home university

Very important:

Please note that the interviews at time of selection will be held in the language you chose for the course of your studies! So, be prepared to answer all our questions in either English or German. Candidates who show insufficient language skills during the personal interview will not be awarded a scholarship.

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IV. Application Requirements and Procedure

- **Is my Syrian school-leaving qualification sufficient for an application (Bachelor)?**

In order to be able to start a Bachelor in Germany you need to have the Syrian **General Secondary Education Certificate**:

Scientific Section:

With final grades between 60% and 69% you need to have already completed one year at a (Syrian) university in order to be eligible to study at a German university. Your field of study would also have to be the same or close to your previous course of studies.

With final grades of more than 70%, you are eligible to study at any German university and can choose freely from all fields of study.

Literary Section:

With final grades between 60% and 69% you need to have already completed one year at a (Syrian) university in order to be eligible to study at a German university. Your field of study would also have to be the same or close to your previous course of studies.

With final grades of more than 70%, you are eligible to study courses in the fields of humanities or social sciences at any German university of your choice.

- **The application requires a statement of motivation for the study programme, what does that mean?**

This scholarship concentrates on talented Syrians who are willing to rebuild their country after the end of conflict. Please explain in your statement how you – with your academic knowledge and skills – can contribute. Very important: We are NOT interested in a political statement.

- **I don't have my professor's recommendation letters anymore, what can I do?**

You may ask your professors to send a recommendation letter via email and hand in a copy of your email correspondence. If you are currently enrolled in a degree programme, you may also ask your current professor to issue a recommendation letter. If there is no way to obtain a recommendation letter from a professor of yours, you might want to ask any official who knows you well. This could be somebody from a refugee support group, from UNHCR, from the Red Cross or the Red Crescent etc. Please do NOT ask any relatives to give you a recommendation letter.

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- **Is it necessary to have a sealed letter of recommendation from my professor?**

No, your letter(s) of recommendation do not have to be sealed. It is also sufficient for your professor to send an email with the recommendation. You can upload the email in our online application portal, or in case of a paper application, include the printed email.

- **How I can get help with the application process?**

Please get in touch with [the local DAAD offices worldwide](#) and make an appointment for counselling. If you are in Syria, please direct any questions you might have to lfs.syrien@daad.de. If you are already in Germany, you might want to ask your German contacts or friends to help. Of course, you can also get in touch with us directly at lfs.syrien@daad.de.

- **How can I find my intended course of study in Germany?**

All necessary information (including searchable databases) can be found on the Internet. A very good place to start is <http://www.study-in.de> Help is also available from our DAAD offices worldwide – please make an appointment.

- **I have found a suitable course of study (Bachelor or Master) at a German university. Do I have to apply directly to the university before I apply for the scholarship?**

No, you do not have to apply directly to the university. Just include a printout with some basic information and the admission requirements of your selected course with your application. You can just go on the website of your desired university, open the information about the course of study you would like to attend and print out this overview. You can upload a scan of this information in the online portal or include the print with your paper application. We will arrange students' placement. Please note: If you are granted a scholarship, DAAD cannot guarantee a place of study at the university you selected. DAAD reserves the right to place students at a university of our choice with good reason.

- **I have found more than one suitable course of study; can I include more than one printout in my application?**

No, please choose **one** course of study and include the printout of the university's website and your desired course in your application. Please note: If you are granted a scholarship, DAAD cannot guarantee a place of study at the university you selected. DAAD reserves the right to place students at a university of our choice with good reason.

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- **I want to apply for a Bachelor's and a Master's/PhD at the same time. Can I do that?**

Please only apply for the scholarship which suits your current academic status.

- **I already have a PhD; can I apply for my second PhD?**

No, unfortunately you cannot apply.

- **I have already been granted a DAAD scholarship in the past. Can I apply again?**

Yes, you may apply.

- **I want to do my PhD in Germany. How do I get a letter of acceptance from a German professor?**

If you already have a Master's degree, you may apply for a PhD scholarship. However, you will have to present your research proposal to a German professor and obtain his or her approval prior to the application deadline. Please find more information on how to find a PhD supervisor here ([How to find a German PhD Supervisor](#)). Of course, if you have a chance to visit one of our DAAD offices, our colleagues are most willing to help.

- **Do I have to submit my application online?**

Only if you are already in Germany, you need to submit your application online. If you are currently out of Germany, we would prefer to receive your application online. However, if that is not possible, you may bring your application papers to any DAAD office worldwide.

- **I have difficulties with the online application. What do I do?**

For any problems with the online application process at DAAD portal, please contact portal@daad.de. If your problem cannot be solved, please arrange an appointment with your regional DAAD office for support.

- **After registering in the DAAD portal I found two LFS programmes with different numbers. Which one do I choose?**

57168867 stands for the Bachelor's programme.

57169181 stands for the Master's/PhD programme.

- **I do not understand what I should fill in the application form under no. 12 "Short description of research/study/work project".**

Please enter your desired field of study.

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- **I do not understand this question in the application form: „Is your stay part of a cooperation agreement“. What do I fill in?**

Please put “no” under this question.

- **Can I only choose Bachelor/Master programmes or are the German degrees “Diplom” and “Staatsexamen” also available?**

This scholarship is intended to complete a Bachelor’s, Master’s or PhD degree. “Diplom” and “Staatsexamen” (state examination), however, are excluded from the LFS scholarship.

- **What do I do if I do not have any certificates from school/university?**

If you apply for a Bachelor’s degree, you must present your secondary school leaving certificate. If you apply for a Master’s or PhD you must present at least your last university diploma. If you cannot present any of these certificates, we can unfortunately not process your application.

- **Do I have to send originals of my documents?**

No. You should only send copies of the original documents. You will have to present the original copies during the personal interview.

- **Do I need to hand in translations of my certificates?**

If you have a school/university certificate in English, please use the English version for your application. If you only have your certificate in Arabic, please provide us with a translation. During the application process we do not need certified translations; you may hand in translations by any professional translator.

In case you live in circumstances which do not allow you to obtain a professional translation, you may hand in your Arabic documents with a self-made translation. But, be aware that we will verify that your originals match the translations. Attempts of deception will lead to your disqualification.

- **I have applied online for the LFS scholarship. What do I do now?**

Please print out your application summary and send it to the DAAD offices in Bonn, Germany:

Referat 441 - Nordafrika, Nahost
Section 441 - North Africa, The Middle East
- Leadership for Syria -
DAAD - Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst

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German Academic Exchange Service
Kennedyalle 50
53175 Bonn

You can also send the application summary to one of our Information Centres.

Please only send the application summary, not a complete set of application documents. If you are not able to send the application summary by mail, we may accept this in justified exceptional cases. Please notify us via the message system in the DAAD online portal!

- **I have applied online and I have forgotten to include something. Can I send you an email with the missing information?**

Please do not send us any additional documents or the summary via email. We cannot accept applications which are handed in via email. You have to upload everything to the portal. Additionally, the application summary has to be sent to our offices in Bonn, Germany.

- **I want to hand in my paper application. Does it matter to which DAAD Information Centre (IC) I go?**

No, you can hand in your paper application at any IC that is convenient for you to reach.

V. Scholarship Selections

- **How does your pre-selection procedure work?**

During pre-selections, DAAD members of staff will check your application to make sure all required documents are there. We will also check if any documents submitted are forgeries – which will exclude you automatically from this scholarship. Only candidates with complete applications will be admitted to the final selections.

- **Will I have to come to a personal interview?**

Yes, all pre-selected candidates will have to be present for a personal interview. Most likely, interviews will take place in Amman, Beirut, Erbil, Istanbul and Bonn (Germany). Interviews at additional locations may be possible, but cannot be guaranteed. Please note that travel to interview locations is at your own cost and risk.

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- **What about applicants still residing in Syria?**

Applicants still residing in Syria will have to travel to one of the locations mentioned above. For security reasons, interviews in Syria are currently not possible.

- **What is going to happen at final selections?**

You will be given a time slot when you have to show up at one of our offices. Please be on time, otherwise you may be excluded. First, you will have to present originals of your application documents to members of our staff who will once again check for authenticity. Secondly, a committee of German professors, asking you questions about your CV, your previous academic work and your study plan for Germany, will interview you. Some questions will be academic questions, making sure that you have the necessary qualifications for studying in Germany. Other questions are related to motivation, intercultural qualifications and to your plans for the future. Please note: All interviews will be conducted in English or German!

- **Is there a quota for female applicants?**

DAAD aims to have a high number of female applicants and of female scholarship holders, if possible as high as 50%. Female students are therefore especially encouraged to apply.

- **Are there any other criteria for selection?**

Academic achievements and academic potential assessed by our selection committee are the most important selection criteria. Additionally, language skills in English or German, intercultural qualifications and motivation will be taken into consideration.

Additional Information on the LFS Programme

- **Can I bring my family?**

Yes, in case you are granted the scholarship, you can bring your spouse and child(ren) with you.

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Last but not least - Very important

- Please be informed that the insurance policy available at portal.daad.de is NOT the insurance mentioned in the call for applications. It is a separate insurance policy for scientists going abroad which you are generally not eligible for and which is not covered by scholarship payments and will have to be paid by yourself.

Therefore, please do not register for the DAAD insurance!

We will arrange insurance coverage for you once you have been awarded a scholarship!

- All applicants submitting any forged documents will be excluded from the selection process.
- Applicants for PhD scholarships presenting their own research proposals should strictly adhere to international standards of good scientific practise. Any form of plagiarism found will lead to disqualification.