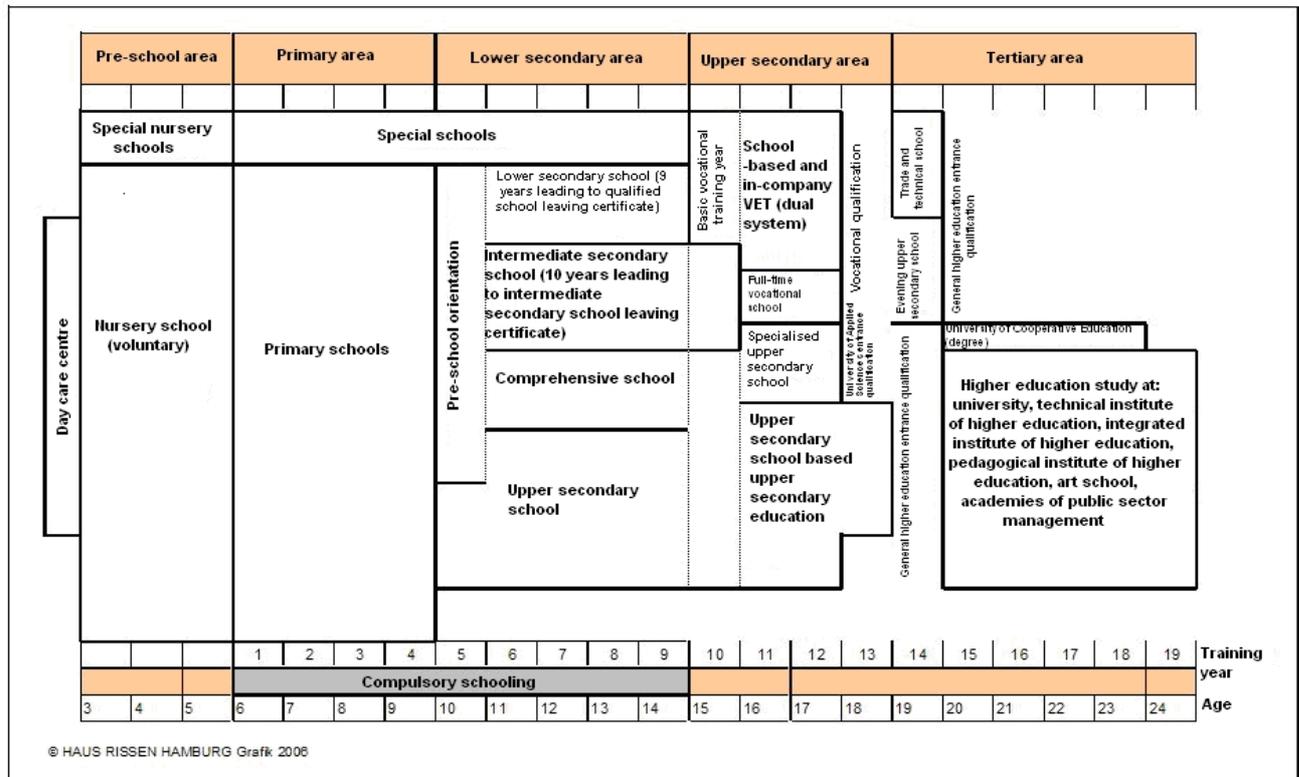


The educational system in Germany



Explanation of the German educational system

<p>1. Pre-school</p>	<p>From the age of 5, voluntary</p>
<p>2. Primary and lower secondary school</p>	<p>Primary school is of 4 years' duration. As far as transfer to further schools is concerned, the basic principle is freedom of choice by parents.</p> <p>A choice exists between the following types of school:</p> <p>Comprehensive school: integrates all general educational qualifications: lower secondary school leaving certificate, intermediate school leaving certificate and upper secondary school leaving certificate. Comprehensive schools are relatively thin on the ground in most federal states.</p> <p>Lower secondary school: leads to the lower secondary school leaving certificate after 5 years. Due to the low attendance rate, this type of school is increasingly becoming a "sink school" in most federal states.</p> <p>Intermediate secondary school: leads to the intermediate secondary school leaving certificate after 6 years.</p> <p>Upper secondary school: leads after 8 or 9 years (depending on the federal state) to the Abitur (upper secondary school leaving certificate).</p>
<p>3. Upper secondary education</p>	<p>Concludes in 8 - 9 years subsequent to primary school (depending on the federal state) with the Abitur (upper secondary school leaving certificate). After conclusion of the upper secondary school pathway at a comprehensive school or at an intermediate secondary school, it is possible to transfer to a 2 to 3 year upper secondary school based upper secondary level. In most federal states, a switch from 13 to 12 years of schooling is underway.</p> <p>Alongside the classical upper secondary schools, there are 3-year vocational upper secondary schools which conclude with the Abitur (upper secondary school leaving certificate) and pre-vocational</p>

	training in a chosen specialist direction.
	Compulsory schooling or training takes place until the age of 18. About 20 - 35 % of pupils within a year group conclude their general education with the Abitur. Around 10 % of each cohort fail to achieve a school leaving certificate.
4. Vocational education and training	<p>There are no entry requirements of any kind, even pupils who fail to achieve a school leaving certificate being entitled to pursue vocational education and training. Most occupations, however, have high prerequisites in terms of previous education. Up to 15 % of school leavers are unable to undergo VET without further vocational preparation.</p> <p>60 % of initial vocational education and training takes place within the dual system, which combines in-company training with attendance at a state-run vocational school. Duration of training is between 3 and 3 ½ years, 2 years in a very small number of individual occupations. VET is based on framework regulations stipulated by the state, but is organised autonomously by means of a process of self-administration on the part of trade and industry, the chambers enacting examination regulations and conducting journeyman or skilled worker examinations.</p> <p>Vocational qualifications may also be obtained at specialist schools or academies, these usually concluding with a state recognised qualification. Continuing vocational training courses leading to a recognised qualification may also be pursued at specialist schools or academies.</p> <p>Continuing vocational training is predominantly not subject to state regulation, qualifications being structured by the state on an individual basis. This structuring is primarily undertaken by the chambers within the scope of the process of self-administration on the part of trade and industry, the chambers also being responsible for conducting continuing training examinations. The prerequisite for embarking upon master craftsman training is to have completed initial VET in the respective occupation. A recent development is that there is no longer any requirement for occupational experience as a journeyman in order to be admitted to the master craftsman examination. Certain continuing training qualifications (such as master craftsman) provide entitlement to pursue a freely chosen or subject related course of higher education study at universities, Universities of Applied Sciences or Universities of Cooperative Education.</p>
5. Higher education	<p>There are various forms of institutes of higher education.</p> <p>Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences: Entry requirements are the Abitur (upper secondary school leaving certificate), other higher education entrance qualifications or certain continuing training qualifications (such as master craftsman). In Germany, a changeover is currently ongoing to Bachelor and Masters courses of study, the aim being to complete this process by 2010. Doctorates may only be obtained at universities.</p> <p>Universities of Cooperative Education: Type 1 Universities of Cooperative Education form part of the tertiary sector. Entry requirements are in line with those operated by universities and Universities of Applied Sciences. Universities of Cooperative Education offer practically oriented Bachelor courses of study, it being possible within the dual system to combine a course of vocational education and training with a Bachelor course. A Bachelor qualification achieved at a University of Cooperative Education is completely equivalent to a Bachelor degree obtained at a university or University of Applied Sciences and therefore confers the entitlement to embark upon a Masters course of study. Masters courses of study cannot be pursued at a University of Cooperative</p>

	Education.
--	------------