

## **The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2010/2011**

**A description of the responsibilities, structures and  
developments in education policy for the exchange of information in Europe**

**- EXCERPT -**



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## 6. SECONDARY EDUCATION AND POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION

### 6.1. Introduction

Secondary education breaks down into lower secondary level [*Sekundarstufe I*], which comprises the courses of education from grades 5/7 to 9/10 of school, and upper secondary level [*Sekundarstufe II*], which comprises all the courses of education that build on the foundations laid in the lower secondary level. Secondary level education includes courses offering general education, a combination of general and vocational education, or vocational education.

The function of all the courses of education at lower secondary level is to prepare pupils for courses of education at upper secondary level, completion of which is required for vocational or university entrance qualification. Accordingly, lower secondary education is predominantly of a general nature whereas, apart from *Gymnasien*, vocational education predominates at upper secondary level.

Lower secondary level covers the age group of pupils between 10 and 15/16 years old and upper secondary level the pupils between 15/16 and 18/19 years old. Both age groups are required to attend school: the former full-time, the latter, 15- to 19-year-olds, generally part-time for three years or until they have reached the age of 18, unless they are attending a full-time school.

Secondary level educational institutions do differ in terms of duration and school-leaving qualifications, but they are so interrelated that they largely constitute an open system allowing transfer from one type of course to the other. The same qualifications can, as a rule, also be obtained subsequently in adult education institutions [see chapter 8.5.].

### General objectives

#### General objectives – lower secondary education

The organisation of lower secondary level schools and courses of education is based on the principle of basic general education, individual specialisation and encouraging pupils according to their abilities. The schools endeavour to achieve these goals by:

- furthering the overall intellectual, emotional and physical development of pupils, teaching them to be independent, make decisions and bear their share of personal, social and political responsibility;
- providing instruction based on the state of academic knowledge that takes the pupils' age-related conceptual faculties into account in its organisation and in the demands made on them;
- gradually increasing the degree of specialisation in line with each pupil's abilities and inclinations;
- maintaining an open system allowing transfer from one type of school to the other after an orientation stage.

### General objectives – upper secondary education – general education schools

The courses of education provided at general education schools within the upper secondary level lead to a higher education entrance qualification.

The aim of learning and work within the upper level of the *Gymnasium* is to obtain the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*, which entitles the holder to a place in higher education and also enables them to commence a course of vocational training. The instruction at the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* provides an in-depth general education, general capacity for academic study and the propaedeutics of scientific work. Of particular importance are in-depth knowledge, skills and competences in the subjects German, foreign language and mathematics. The instruction is organised along specialist, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary lines. It offers an introduction by example to academic issues, categories and methods, and provides an education which facilitates the development and strengthening of personality, the shaping of a socially responsible life, and participation in democratic society. Instruction at the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* includes appropriate information on higher education institutions, on vocational fields and on structures and requirements of higher education and of the professional and working world.

### General objectives – upper secondary education – vocational schools and vocational training in the duales System

The courses of education provided at vocational schools within the upper secondary level lead to a vocational qualification for skilled work as qualified staff, e.g. in the *anerkannte Ausbildungsberufe* [recognised occupations requiring formal training] or the assistant occupations. Resolutions of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK] ensure, moreover, that many professional qualification training courses can lead to the acquisition of a higher education entrance qualification.

The *Berufsfachschulen* serve to provide an introduction to one or several occupations, provide part of the vocational training in one or several recognised occupations requiring formal training or lead to a vocational training qualification in a specific occupation. At the same time, they expand the level of general education previously acquired. In the *Berufsoberschule*, the knowledge, capabilities and skills acquired by pupils during their initial vocational training are taken as the basis for an extended general and in-depth subject-related theoretical education, which shall enable pupils to pursue a course in higher education. The three- to four-year courses of education for double qualification provide both vocational qualification [e.g. the assistant occupations or vocational qualifications in a number of recognised occupations requiring formal training] and a higher education entrance qualification. The *Berufsoberschule* provides two years of full-time education and leads to the *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife*. Pupils can obtain the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* by proving their proficiency in a second foreign language. The *Fachoberschule* requires a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* and leads as a rule in a two-year course of study up to the *Fachhochschulreife*, i.e. the higher education entrance qualification for the *Fachhochschule*. It equips its pupils with general and specialised theoretical and practical knowledge and skills. The Länder may also establish a grade 13, after successful completion of which pupils can obtain the *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* and, under certain conditions, the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*.

The educational function of the *Berufsschule* within the framework of the dual system of vocational education is to provide basic and specialised vocational education and at the same time to expand the previously acquired general education. Training in recognised occupations requiring formal training [*anerkannte Ausbildungsberufe*] is directed at the acquisition of vocational competence and includes preparation for active participation in economic and social life.

### **Specific legislative framework**

#### Secondary schools providing general and vocational education

Based on the Education Acts [R85, R87, R89, R91, R93, R96, R98, R100, R102-103, R105, R107, R113, R115-117] and Compulsory Schooling Acts [R108] of the German Länder the school regulations known as *Schulordnungen* for schools providing general and vocational education contain detailed regulations covering the content of the courses as well as the leaving certificates and entitlements obtainable on completion of lower and upper secondary education.

#### Vocational training

The legal provisions for in-company vocational training and in handicrafts are contained and supplemented in the Vocational Training Act [*Berufsbildungsgesetz* - R80] of 1969 and the Handicrafts Act [*Gesetz zur Ordnung des Handwerks* - R81] of 1953, respectively. Among other issues, these two laws govern fundamental matters of the relationship between young people and companies that provide training [e.g. contracts, certificates, pay], in other words the rights and obligations of trainees and trainers. They also govern the regulatory aspects of vocational training [e.g. the suitability of training providers and instructors, the terms of the training regulations known as *Ausbildungsordnungen*, the examination system and supervision of training] and the organisation of vocational training [e.g. the function of the various chambers of industry and commerce as the *competent bodies* and of their vocational training committees].

The Protection of Young Persons at Work Act [*Jugendarbeitsschutzgesetz* - R6] lays down special provisions for the protection of young trainees.

## **6.2. Organisation of General Lower Secondary Education**

### **Types of institutions**

Following the primary school stage at which all children attend mixed-ability classes [grades 1 to 4, in Berlin and Brandenburg grades 1 to 6] the structure of the secondary school system [grades 5/7 to 12/13] in the Länder is characterised by division into the various educational paths with their respective leaving certificates and qualifications for which different school types are responsible, namely

- *Hauptschule*
- *Realschule*
- *Gymnasium*
- *Gesamtschule*,

while the following Länder have additional or alternative school types, namely

Baden-Württemberg:	<i>Werkrealschule</i>
Bayern:	<i>Mittelschule</i> <i>Wirtschaftsschule</i>
Berlin:	<i>Integrierte Sekundarschule</i>
Brandenburg:	<i>Oberschule</i>
Bremen:	<i>Sekundarschule</i> <i>Oberschule</i>
Hamburg:	<i>Haupt- und Realschule</i> <i>Stadtteilschule</i>
Hessen:	<i>Verbundene Haupt- und Realschule</i> <i>Förderstufe</i>
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern:	<i>Regionale Schule</i>
Niedersachsen:	<i>Zusammengefasste Haupt- und Realschule</i>
Rheinland-Pfalz:	<i>Realschule plus</i>
Saarland:	<i>Erweiterte Realschule</i>
Sachsen:	<i>Mittelschule</i>
Sachsen-Anhalt:	<i>Sekundarschule</i>
Schleswig-Holstein:	<i>Gemeinschaftsschule</i> <i>Regionalschule</i>
Thüringen:	<i>Regelschule</i> <i>Gemeinschaftsschule</i>

Each type of lower secondary level school offers one or several courses of education. All the courses at schools offering a single course of education are related to a certain leaving certificate. Schools offering a single course of education are as a rule the *Hauptschule*, the *Realschule* and the *Gymnasium*. Schools offering several courses of education combine two or three courses of education under one roof. Schools offering two courses of education include the *Mittelschule* [Sachsen], the *Regelschule*, the *Sekundarschule*, the *Erweiterte Realschule*, the *Verbundene* or *Zusammengefasste Haupt- und Realschule*, the *Haupt- und Realschule*, the *Regionale Schule*, the *Realschule plus*, the *Regionalschule* and the *Oberschule* [Brandenburg]. Comprehensive schools [*Gesamtschulen*] and schools offering three courses of education include the *Integrierte Gesamtschule*, the *Kooperative Gesamtschule*, the *Gemeinschaftsschule* [Schleswig-Holstein, Thüringen], the *Integrierte Sekundarschule*, the *Oberschule* [Bremen], the *Stadtteilschule* and, in some cases, the *Regionale Schule*.

Grades 5 and 6 of all general education schools constitute a phase of particular promotion, supervision and orientation with regard to the pupil's future educational path and its particular direction.

A description of the special educational support available at *Förderschulen* [special schools] providing general education, also called *Sonderschulen*, *Förderzentren* or *Schulen für Behinderte* in some Länder, may be found in chapter 12.3.

Common principles for lower secondary education were laid down by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK] in the *Agreement on types of school and courses of education at lower secondary level* of December 1993, amended in March 2011.

Schools offering one single course of education at lower secondary level

*Hauptschulen*, *Realschulen* and *Gymnasien* are schools offering one single course of education. All the instruction at such schools is geared to the attainment of one specific leaving certificate.

### **Hauptschule**

The *Hauptschule* provides its pupils with a BASIC GENERAL EDUCATION. It normally covers grades 5–9. With ten years of compulsory full-time education, the *Hauptschule* also includes grade 10.

As a rule, the subjects taught at *Hauptschulen* include German, a foreign language [usually English], mathematics, physics/chemistry, biology, geography, history, *Arbeitslehre* [i.e. pre-vocational studies] and social studies, music, art, sport, religious education and, in some Länder, domestic science and economics and other work-related subjects. In some Länder subjects have been combined into subject groups. Mathematics and foreign language lessons are frequently taught in sets according to the pupils' aptitude. The aim of this is to better accommodate pupils' different abilities, to enable them to obtain the *Hauptschulabschluss* and to facilitate their transition to other types of secondary school.

Länder in which full-time school attendance is compulsory for nine years offer pupils an opportunity to attend the *Hauptschule* for a tenth year, if they wish, in order to obtain another leaving certificate, e.g. the extended *Hauptschulabschluss*. As a secondary school, the *Hauptschule* also affords particularly able pupils an opportunity to obtain a more advanced qualification under certain conditions such as the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*, either in a 10th year or in a subsequent vocational education. See chapter 6.4. for more information about qualifications.

In Baden-Württemberg the *Werkrealschule* was newly introduced in the 2010/2011 school year. It covers classes 5 to 10 and leads to the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*. The six-year course of education is characterised by continuous individual support, progressive career planning, and compulsory elective subjects in classes 8 and 9. In grade 10 pupils attend a *Berufsfachschule* alongside the *Werkrealschule* two days a week; at the *Berufsfachschule* they receive initial vocational basic training in preparation for vocational training. Pupils who are not working towards the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* can leave the *Werkrealschule* after successfully completing grade 9 and passing the final examination to obtain the *Hauptschulabschluss*.

In Bayern the *Mittelschule* was introduced as a further development of the *Hauptschule* in the 2010/2011 school year. The *Mittelschule* provides, on its own or in association with other schools, a range of education that habitually covers the three vocational orientation branches [technology, business, social affairs] and incorporates whole-day training. *Mittelschulen* are expected to foster structured cooperation with a vocational school, the regional economy and the labour administration. They lead to the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*. Schools working in association are expected to agree a pedagogical and specialist cooperation concept.

### **Realschule**

*Realschulen* provide a MORE EXTENSIVE GENERAL EDUCATION. The standard *Realschulen* cover grades 5 to 10.

As a rule, the subjects taught at *Realschulen* include German, a foreign language [usually English], mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, history, politics, music, art, sport and religious education. In some Länder subjects have been combined into subject groups. In addition to compulsory courses, pupils are generally required to take three to six hours a week of compulsory electives as from grade 7 or 8. According to their personal inclinations and abilities, the pupils may take additional classes in certain compulsory subjects or choose new subjects, including, among others, a second foreign language [usually French] as from grade 7 or 8. Some Länder provide the option of choosing a second foreign language from as early as grade 6.

A *Realschule* leaving certificate qualifies a pupil to transfer to a school that provides vocational or higher education entrance qualification [see also chapter 6.4.].

### **Gymnasium**

*Gymnasien* provide an INTENSIFIED GENERAL EDUCATION. The course of education in the standard *Gymnasium* comprises both the lower and upper secondary level and covers grades 5 to 13 or 5 to 12 [or years 7 to 13 or 7 to 12 following a six-year primary school]. Apart from standard *Gymnasien*, there are special types of *Gymnasium* into which *Hauptschule* pupils can transfer following grade 7, as well as special courses for particularly able *Realschule* and vocational school leavers. In almost all Länder, the conversion from nine to eight years at the *Gymnasium* is currently under way. In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Saarland, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Thüringen, since 2010 in Hamburg, and in the future also in Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hessen, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen and Schleswig-Holstein, the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* is obtained after 12 years. In Rheinland-Pfalz, selected *Gymnasien* providing eight-year courses of school education are set up in combination with all-day schools.

In Schleswig-Holstein *Gymnasien* can return to nine-year courses of school education or offer both courses in parallel from 2011/2012 onwards. In Nordrhein-Westfalen some *Gymnasien* will be given the opportunity of testing a new nine-year course of education within the framework of a pilot project.

In grades 5–10 of the *Gymnasium*, which comprise the lower secondary level there, the main subjects taught are: German, at least two foreign languages, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, history, politics, music, art, sport and religious education.

### **Schools offering several courses of education in lower secondary level**

Depending on the Länder, the *Schularten mit mehreren Bildungsgängen* [schools offering more than one type of course of education] include the comprehensive school known as *Gesamtschule* and the following types of school: *Mittelschule* [Sachsen], *Regelschule*, *Sekundarschule*, *Erweiterte Realschule*, *Verbundene* or *Zusammengefasste Haupt- und Realschule*, *Stadtteilschule*, *Regionale Schule*, *Oberschule*, *Realschule plus*, *Gemeinschaftsschule*, *Regionalschule* and *Integrierte Sekundarschule*.

Schools offering several courses of education provide instruction in certain subjects and grades either in classes organised according the desired qualification or – in some subjects – in courses divided up into two or more two levels of proficiency defined in terms of the curriculum covered. Instead of courses, in order to avoid excessively long ways to

school and to test special pedagogical concepts, in-class learning groups may be formed in all grades for German and the natural sciences, and in grade 7 only for mathematics.

For demographic reasons or due to school structure in-class learning groups in the above subjects may be extended to other grades.

### **Geographical accessibility**

One of the responsibilities of the Länder in their education policy is to maintain a sufficiently varied range of schools. As the highest school supervisory authority, the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of each Land is therefore concerned with establishing the base for an efficient school system. Accordingly, present and future school needs and school locations are identified in a school development plan drawn up at Land level. The establishment of plans for developing schools is regulated by the Education Acts in some Länder.

The *Kommunen* [local authorities], i.e. the municipalities, districts and municipalities not being part of a district, must, in their capacity as the maintaining bodies of public-sector schools, ensure that a well-balanced choice of education is available in their area. This means that school development planning is also a task of the local authority maintaining bodies, which identify the school capacity required and determine the location of schools. The plans of each of the local authorities must be established on the basis of mutual consultation and approved by the schools' supervisory authorities, in most cases by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. The exception to this is Bayern, where schools are generally established by the Land in consultation with the local authorities.

### **Admission requirements and choice of school**

In terms of the choice of school, a distinction must first of all be made between the choice of a particular school type and the pupil's acceptance into a specific school establishment.

#### **Choice of school within the differentiated school system**

The Länder have different regulations governing the transition from primary into secondary education. In some instances, a binding decision on the choice of school attended and/or course of education pursued in lower secondary education [*Sekundarstufe I*] is made in grade 4, and in others during grades 5 and 6, while in others still this decision is only made at the end of grade 6. No such decision has to be made if the pupil is entering an *integrierte Gesamtschule* [integrated comprehensive school].

During grade 4 in the primary school, a vote is taken by the school which the pupil is leaving that contains general information about the pupil's progress in primary school and concludes with an overall assessment of her or his aptitude for certain types of secondary schools. This is accompanied by detailed consultations with parents. The vote of the primary school is either the basis for the decision or an aid in the decision regarding the pupil's future school career. Depending on Land legislation, various methods can be used to assess the pupil's suitability for a future school career at the *Realschule* or *Gymnasium* [trial half-year, trial lessons, entrance examination]. The final decision is taken either by the parents or by the school or school supervisory authority. An overview of the regulations of the individual Länder regarding the transition from primary to lower

secondary education is available on the website of the Standing Conference [www.kmk.org].

### Choice of a specific school establishment

The right of parents to choose a school for their children does not mean that a pupil has the right to be accepted by a specific school. The right to a free choice of the place of training which is laid down in the Basic Law [*Grundgesetz* – R1] does not refer to acceptance into a specific school. As a result, as long as attendance of another school of the same type is possible and can reasonably be expected, some Länder rule out a legal right to acceptance into a specific school in their Education Acts.

Pupils wishing to complete their compulsory schooling at the *Hauptschule* or *Berufsschule* must always attend the local school. This rule also applies to pupils at other types of secondary school if school catchment areas have been fixed for the type of school they have chosen. However, parents may choose a school other than that which is responsible for the local area and apply to the school authority to admit their child to that school. The school authority then decides on the merits of each particular case, following consultations with the parents and the authority maintaining the school, with the well-being of the pupil concerned being the decisive factor.

If no catchment areas have been fixed for a type of secondary school, parents are always able to choose which school their child attends. In this case, the capacity of the chosen school is the only limiting factor affecting the pupil's right to admission.

### Age levels and grouping of pupils/students

At schools offering one course of education, pupils aged 10 to 16 are taught by subject teachers in classes made up of children of the same age group. *Schularten mit mehreren Bildungsgängen* [schools offering several courses of education] provide instruction in certain subjects and grades in classes organised, as a rule, either according to the desired qualification or to the required performance at a minimum of two levels of proficiency.

At any school at lower secondary level grades 5 and 6 are organised as an orientation stage called *Orientierungsstufe*, a period of special promotion, observation and orientation to determine a child's subsequent educational path and the main thrust of his/her subsequent studies. Beginning in grade 7, the school types and courses of education increasingly diverge in terms of the subjects offered, the requirements with regard to individual specialisation and the qualifications being aimed at.

### Organisation of school time

#### Organisation of the school year

For the organisation of the school year in the secondary sector, see chapter 5.2. on the primary sector.

#### Weekly and daily timetable

At lower secondary level [*Sekundarstufe I*], lesson times are generally laid down from 7.30/8.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. [Monday to Friday] or 7.30/8.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. [Saturday]. With the exception of the eight-year *Gymnasium*, pupils generally have 28 to 30 weekly

periods in compulsory and optional subjects in grades 5 and 6 of all types of school, and 30 to 32 periods in grades 7 to 10. Each period is 45 minutes.

For general information about the daily and weekly timetable and the five-day or six-day week see chapter 5.2.

### All-day education and supervision offers

Education and care outside morning lessons is provided to lower secondary level pupils at *Ganztagschulen* [all-day schools] and extended *Halbtagschulen* [half-day schools], via all-day offers in schools, as well as in programmes run in cooperation with providers of youth welfare services or cultural education, sports clubs, parents' initiatives or other external cooperation partners. Many Länder have signed cooperation agreements with education providers outside the school sector. Currently these offers are, with particular emphasis depending on the respective Land, being developed in many Länder. Both concepts strengthen the aspect of education and individual support as compared to the aspect of mere supervision. Within the compass of the investment programme Future Education and Care [*Investitionsprogramm Zukunft Bildung und Betreuung* – IZBB], the Federation supplied the Länder with investment funding amounting to Euro 4 billion for the demand-driven establishment and expansion of all-day schools for the period from 2003 to 2009. The objectives of the expansion of all-day offers include a sustainable improvement of the quality of schools and teaching as well as a decoupling of social background and competence acquisition. In detail, the new all-day facilities are aimed at creating the prerequisites for improved individual promotion, closer linkage between the education available in schools and out-of-school educational facilities and the stronger participation of parents and pupils. The schools and the *Schulträger* [the body maintaining the school] will continue to be supported by a number of accompanying measures developed in close cooperation with the Länder and the German Children and Youth Foundation [*Deutsche Kinder- und Jugendstiftung*] until 2014.

In all-day schools in the primary or secondary sector, in addition to timetabled lessons in the morning, an all-day programme comprising at least seven hours per day is offered on at least three days per week. There are three different forms:

- in the *fully bound form*, all pupils are obliged to make use of the all-day offer
- in the *partially bound form*, part of the pupils [e.g. individual class units or grades] commit to making use of the all-day offer
- in the *open form*, the all-day offer is made available to the pupils on a voluntary basis

Activities offered in the afternoon are to be organised under the supervision and responsibility of the head staff and to be carried out in cooperation with the head staff. The activities are to have a conceptual relationship with the lessons in the morning. All-day supervision is organised by teachers, *Sozialpädagogen* [graduate youth and community workers], pedagogic staff [*pädagogische Fachkräfte*] and, if necessary, by other staff and with external cooperation partners. All-day schools provide a midday meal on the days on which they offer all-day supervision.

Between 2003 and 2009 the investment programme Future Education and Care [*Investitionsprogramm Zukunft Bildung und Betreuung* – IZBB] has supplied funding to a total of around 8,000 schools in all of the Länder. The large increase in the number of schools providing all-day activities is reflected in the report on general education schools

providing all-day activities and care – statistics 2005–2009 [*Allgemeinbildende Schulen in Ganztagsform in den Ländern in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland – Statistik 2005 bis 2007*] which is available on the website of the Standing Conference. The internet portal [www.ganztagschulen.org](http://www.ganztagschulen.org) provides information on the development of all-day offers in the Länder within the scope of the investment programme Future Education and Care and the ongoing accompanying empirical research.

Outside school there is a large variety of institutions, both public and private, active in youth work as well as others concentrating on cultural and educational activities and private groups offering pupils a midday meal, help with homework and recreational activities. Out of the large choice available, special mention should be made of the concerted cooperation with youth music schools, youth art schools, with youth culture centres and bodies maintaining cultural education, youth sport clubs and with maintaining bodies of youth welfare.

### **6.3. Teaching and Learning in General Lower Secondary Education**

#### **Curriculum, subjects, number of hours**

The agreement reached in December 1993, as amended in March 2011, by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder [*Kultusministerkonferenz – KMK*] concerning the types of schools and courses of education in lower secondary level [*Vereinbarung über die Schularten und Bildungsgänge im Sekundarbereich I*] lays down a framework schedule for grades 5–9/10, requiring certain core subjects in every type of school and course of education: German, mathematics, the first foreign language, natural and social sciences. Music, art and sport, at the very least, have to be among the other compulsory or elective subjects offered. A second foreign language is mandatory at *Gymnasium* in grades 7 to 10. In the course of the expansion of foreign language lessons in the primary sector, at the *Gymnasium* lessons in a second foreign language are often given from as early as grade 6. At other types of school, a second foreign language may be offered as an elective course. An introduction to the professional and working world is a compulsory component of every course of education and is provided either in a special subject such as *Arbeitslehre* [pre-vocational studies] or as part of the material covered in other subjects or subject groups. Religious education is subject to the respective regulations in each Land, according to which religion is a standard subject in nearly every Land [see also chapter 1.4.]. For the situation of Protestant and Catholic religious education see the reports of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder of 2002. An amended version of the report on the teaching of ethics was published in February 2008.

Where courses are taught according to level of proficiency at *Schularten mit mehreren Bildungsgängen* [schools offering several courses of education], this teaching begins in grade 7 in the case of mathematics and the first foreign language, in grade 8 for German, as a rule, and in grade 9 at the latest, and from grade 9 onwards in at least one natural science subject [physics or chemistry].

With regard to the curricula, the remarks in chapter 5.3. for the primary level apply, according to which the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder are principally responsible for developing the curricula. The results of international comparative studies of pupil achievement are taken into consideration in the process of re-

vising the curricula of the various types of schools providing general education on the lower secondary level. In most Länder the revision focuses on the following main areas:

- in the *Hauptschule*: acquisition of basic competences in German and mathematics, orientation towards professional practice and promotion of social competence
- definition of compulsory key areas of learning, provision of scope for measures to activate pupils and inspire problem-solving thought processes
- development of educational standards binding for all Länder, which are based upon the areas of competence for the individual subject or subject group, that determine the capabilities, skills and knowledge students should dispose of at a certain stage of their school career

To implement the *Bildungsstandards* [educational standards] of the Standing Conference for the *Hauptschulabschluss* and the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*, the subjects in the curricula are adapted accordingly. The national educational standards specify the goals themselves, whilst the curricula describe and structure the way to achieve these goals. For further information on quality development and assurance through national educational standards, see chapter 11.2.

Grades 5 and 6 usually have 28 periods per week in compulsory and elective subjects, grades 7 generally have 30. A period is 45 minutes long. The courses in German, mathematics and the first foreign language take up three to five periods each per week, natural and social sciences two to three periods each. As of grade 7, at the latest, another three to five periods per week are spent on a second foreign language as a compulsory or elective subject, depending on the type of school. The amount of time devoted to other compulsory or elective subjects [music, art, sport, pre-vocational studies] and religious education varies depending on the subjects and type of school the total of weekly instruction being 28-30 periods. At lower secondary level of the eight-year *Gymnasium*, the number of weekly periods is generally increased by two to four weekly periods [cf. chapter 6.2].

Foreign language teaching is an integral part of basic general education at all lower secondary level schools as from grade 5 and a core element of individual specialisation as from grade 7. Coordination of foreign language teaching at primary level with courses taught in subsequent school grades is becoming increasingly important, provided that foreign languages are compulsory subjects at primary level [see chapter 5.3. for the teaching of foreign languages in the *Grundschule*]. Continuous instruction in a foreign language as from grade 5 is a prerequisite for a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*. The educational policy objective of the Länder is for every pupil to learn two foreign languages, if at all possible, in the course of his/her education. For more on foreign language instruction, see the document *Überlegungen zu einem Grundkonzept für den Fremdsprachenunterricht mit Gutachten* [Reflections and Report on a Basic Conception of Foreign Language Instruction] published by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in 1994.

At all levels of the education system the strengthening of natural science and technical education [MINT – mathematics, information technology, natural sciences, technology] is currently key. The Standing Conference has repeatedly addressed the development of school teaching in MINT subjects. By introducing educational standards in this area, it has facilitated the description of demanding and achievable objectives in the form of

competences. Against the background of the predicted need for specialists in mathematics and natural sciences, the Standing Conference adopted *Empfehlungen zur Stärkung der mathematisch-naturwissenschaftlich-technischen Bildung* [Recommendations to strengthen mathematics, natural sciences and technical education] in May 2009.

In 2007, the Standing Conference and the German Olympic Sports Confederation [*Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund* – DOSB] adopted Joint Recommendations for the Furthering of School Sport. The recommendations are aimed in particular at individually promoting pupils and at the same time putting demands on them. For the secondary sector, three weekly sports lessons are recommended.

### Cross-curricular topics

Cross-curricular topics predominantly concern questions of political and economic education in the broadest sense. This includes:

- sustainable development education,
- democracy education,
- educating about Europe in Schools,
- human rights education,
- National Socialism and the Holocaust,
- economic education.

Within the scope of the United Nations' World Decade of "Education for Sustainable Development", the Standing Conference and the German Commission for UNESCO [*Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission* – DUK] in June 2007 adopted a joint recommendation with regard to "Education for sustainable development at school". Also in June 2007 the Standing Conference and the Federal Government published a Cross-Curricular Framework for Global Development Education [*Orientierungsrahmen für den Lernbereich Globale Entwicklung*] which can be used as a basis for the development of curricula. The objective of education for sustainable development is to promote young people's understanding of the connection between globalisation, economic development, consumption, environmental pollution, population development, health and social conditions. In secondary education, there is a need to deal with issues of sustainable development in an interdisciplinary and subject-linking way and to strengthen the integration of education for sustainable development in the relevant subjects.

In March 2009 the Standing Conference adopted a *Beschluss zur Stärkung der Demokratieerziehung* [Resolution on the strengthening of democracy education]. In the secondary sector the examination of 20th-century German history is to be stepped up in particular within the framework of cross-curricular and interdisciplinary teaching.

More information on *Europabildung in der Schule* [educating about Europe in schools] may be found in chapter 13.4. Preparation for working life is addressed in chapter 12.5.

### Teaching methods and materials

Teaching in schools in Germany is governed by regulations of various kinds laid down by the Länder. The prescribed curricula include guidelines on the treatment of the various topics of instruction, distribution of materials and various didactic approaches. Of increasing importance are interdisciplinary coordination of material taught and teach-

ing objectives as well as interdisciplinary activities in such areas as health education, vocational orientation, computer literacy, environmental education and the treatment of European topics.

In almost all Länder, measures for the promotion of a professional approach to the increasing heterogeneity of learning groups in terms of pre-conditions and performance have been brought on the way. Such measures include, without limitation,

- the internal differentiation of learning groups [*Binnendifferenzierung*],
- self-regulated learning,
- pupil-oriented instruction.

The measures aim at enhancing the individual promotion, in particular of pupils with migrant backgrounds or from difficult social backgrounds. A professional approach to heterogeneity is one of the elements of a changing image of the teaching profession which have been specified by the Standing Conference and the teachers' unions and other unions in the field of education [more detailed information is available in chapter 14.5]. In the further development of in-service training for teachers, the approach to heterogeneous learning groups also plays an important part [see chapter 9.3].

The use of new media [multimedia] is growing increasingly important, both as a teaching aid and as the subject of teaching and learning. Access to electronic networks [Internet] is now granted at all schools. The latest information about the use of new media can be found on the Education Servers provided by the Länder Ministries and is also available on the information portal maintained centrally by the federal and Länder authorities, the German Education Server [[www.eduserver.de](http://www.eduserver.de)].

## 6.4. Assessment in General Lower Secondary Education

### Pupils/students assessment

The evaluation of a given pupil's performance is based on all the work he/she has done in connection with the class in question, specifically written, oral and practical work. Papers and written exercises are spread evenly over the school year. The requirements in this work are gauged to meet the standards laid down in the curricula. Oral work refers to oral contributions made by pupils and evaluated in class. Practical achievements serve as the basis of evaluation particularly in such subjects as sport, music, and arts and crafts.

Performance is assessed according to a six-mark system adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder:

- |                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| • very good    | = 1 |
| • good         | = 2 |
| • satisfactory | = 3 |
| • adequate     | = 4 |
| • poor         | = 5 |
| • very poor    | = 6 |

Each pupil's performance is set out on a report twice a year in the middle and at the end of the school year. In Bayern the intermediate report can under certain conditions be

replaced by two or more written notices relating to the overall performance level. During the school year, each assignment is marked by the respective subject teacher. On the report, the marks for each subject are given either by the subject teacher or, on the subject teacher's recommendation, by a teachers' conference known as the *Klassenkonferenz*. In addition to the marks in the various subjects, the report may contain comments or marks on class participation and social conduct at school.

The evaluation of a pupil's performance is a pedagogical process; but it is also based on legal and administrative regulations, whereby the teachers and the teaching staff as a whole are given some scope for discretion.

To ensure the comparability of the pupils' performances, increasingly orientation and comparative tests are being held in the Länder. As for the use of quality assurance procedures and the introduction of national *Bildungsstandards* [educational standards], see chapter II.2.

### **Progression of pupils/students**

Promotion of a pupil to the next grade depends on his/her level of achievement at the end of the school year as documented in the report received in the middle and at the end of the school year. An adequate mark [mark 4 or *ausreichend*] or better is generally required in each of the subjects that have a bearing on promotion. As a rule, poor or very poor marks in one subject can be offset to a certain extent by good or very good marks in another.

Whether or not to promote the pupils in a given grade is generally decided by the *Klassenkonferenz*, which is attended by all the teachers who have taught those pupils, and, sometimes, also by the teachers' conference [*Lehrerkonferenz*], which is attended by all teachers of a particular school. The decision is noted on the report issued at the end of the school year. In some Länder, pupils who initially have not been promoted to the next grade may, in certain school types and in certain grades, at the beginning of the next school year be granted a probationary promotion by the teachers' conference and/or take a re-examination in order to be subsequently promoted, in each case provided that certain conditions are fulfilled. A pupil who has not been promoted must repeat the last year attended. Depending on the type of school, in school year 2009/2010, 0.8 per cent to 4.5 per cent of pupils in lower secondary level repeated a year. If a pupil's performance is far superior to that of the rest of the class, it is possible to skip a year.

If there is a risk of a pupil's not being promoted, the school must report this to the parents by noting it in the mid-year report or sending a written notice prior to the date on which the decision is to be taken. Some Länder introduced an obligation of the school to provide assistance in cases of a pupil's promotion being at risk. In such Länder, pupils at risk of not being promoted are for example supported through individual assistance programmes or holiday classes.

Generally speaking, it is possible to transfer between courses of education or school types.

### **Certification**

On completion of the courses of education in lower secondary level, the pupils receive a leaving certificate, provided that they have successfully completed grade 9 or 10. In an

increasing number of Länder pupils are required to sit central examinations at Land level in order to obtain the leaving certificate. As a rule, pupils at the *Gymnasium*, which also comprises the upper secondary level, are not issued leaving certificates at the end of the lower secondary level, but a qualification to attend the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*, the upper level of the *Gymnasium*. Pupils who have not achieved the goal of the course of education they were pursuing receive a school-leaving report [*Abgangszeugnis*] instead. The forms for leaving certificates are prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of each Land. School-leaving certificates and reports are issued by each school and signed by the head teacher and class teacher. The stages of education successfully completed and qualifications acquired for continued education are noted on the leaving certificates.

### Qualification after grade 9

At the end of grade 9, it is possible in any Land to obtain a first general education qualification, which is called the *Hauptschulabschluss* in most Länder. A leaving certificate is issued after grade 9 if adequate marks [mark 4 or *ausreichend*] or better are received in every subject. In some Länder, the certificate is attained by successfully completing grade 9 and passing a final examination. At lower secondary level schools that go beyond grade 9, a corresponding qualification can be obtained in most Länder if certain marks are achieved. This first leaving certificate in general education is usually used for admission to vocational training in the so-called *duales System* [dual system]. In addition, it qualifies a pupil, under specific conditions, for admission to certain *Berufsfachschulen* [a certain type of full-time vocational school]. Moreover, it is a prerequisite for subsequent admission to certain *Fachschulen* [schools for continued vocational training] and institutions offering secondary education for adults known as *Zweiter Bildungsweg*. In some Länder, it is possible to obtain a qualifying *Hauptschulabschluss* testifying to an above-average performance. At the end of grade 10, in some Länder, an extended *Hauptschulabschluss* may be acquired which, under certain conditions, allows admission to further *Berufsfachschulen*.

### Qualification after grade 10

At the end of grade 10, it is possible in any Land to obtain a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*, which is called *Realschulabschluss* in most Länder. In the majority of Länder, this certificate is issued after successful completion of grade 10 and after passing a final examination. The *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* can be obtained after grade 10 at other types of lower secondary schools as well if certain standards of achievement are met, and also at the *Berufsschule* with the requisite achievement level and average mark. It qualifies a pupil for admission to courses of upper secondary education, e.g. at special *Berufsfachschulen* and at the *Fachoberschule*, and is also used for entering a course of vocational training within the *duales System* [dual system].

### Entitlement to proceed to the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*

The entitlement to attend the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* [upper level of the *Gymnasium*] is obtained, as a rule, if certain standards of achievement are met, at the end of grade 9 or grade 10 at the *Gymnasium* or at the end of grade 10 at the *Gesamtschule*. An entrance qualification required for transfer to the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* may also be obtained at *Hauptschulen*, *Realschulen* or at *Schularten mit mehreren Bildungsgängen* [schools offer-

ing more than one type of course of education] if certain performance requirements are fulfilled.

### Mutual recognition of leaving certificates and qualifications

Qualifications and entitlements obtained after grades 9 and 10 are mutually recognised by all the Länder provided they satisfy the requirements stipulated by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder [*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK]. The requirements are laid down in the 1995 Agreement on Types of Schools and Courses of Education at Lower Secondary Level [*Vereinbarung über die Schularten und Bildungsgänge im Sekundarbereich I*] as amended in March 2011 and in the Agreements on Educational Standards for the *Hauptschulabschluss* [grade 9] and the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* [grade 10] in 2003 and 2004.

## 6.5. Organisation of General Upper Secondary Education

### Types of institutions

#### Gymnasiale Oberstufe

At present, in the majority of Länder the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* is still obtained after a 13-year course of school education [nine-year *Gymnasium*], in which the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*, i.e. the upper level of the *Gymnasium*, covers grades 11 to 13. In almost all Länder there is currently a change to the eight-year *Gymnasium*. However, at *Gesamtschulen* the *Gymnasium* course of education will not, as a rule, be reduced to eight years.

Common principles for upper secondary education were laid down by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK] in the agreement on the structure of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* in the upper secondary level [*Vereinbarung über die Gestaltung der gymnasialen Oberstufe in der Sekundarstufe II*] of July 1972, amended in October 2010.

The *gymnasiale Oberstufe* is divided up into a one-year introductory phase and a two-year qualification phase. Grade 10 may have a dual function as the final year of schooling in lower secondary education and the first year of schooling in the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*. At the eight-year *Gymnasium*, successful completion of grade 10 will entitle the pupil to enter the qualification phase of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*. At the nine-year *Gymnasium*, successful completion of grade 10 will entitle the pupil to enter the introductory phase of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*. Building on the foundations laid at lower secondary level, the classes in the qualification phase are usually structured in relation to half-year terms. Whilst still required to take certain subjects or subject combinations during the qualification phase, they now have scope for individual specialisation. Related subjects are grouped together under main areas. The three main areas with examples of subjects they include are listed below:

- languages, literature and the arts,  
[e.g. German, foreign languages, fine art, music]
- social sciences,  
[e.g. history, geography, philosophy, social studies/politics, economics]

- mathematics, natural sciences and technology  
[e.g. mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, information technology].

Every single pupil is required to study subjects from each of these three areas right up to the completion of the upper level of the *Gymnasium*, including *Abitur* examinations. Religious education in line with the provisions of the Land and sport are also compulsory. German, a foreign language, mathematics and physical education as well as, as a rule, history and one of the natural sciences must be taken throughout the qualification phase of the upper level of the *Gymnasium* and results must be taken into account in the certificate of the *Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife* [general higher education entrance qualification]. For more information on leaving certificates see chapter 6.10.

The subjects at the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* are taught at different levels of academic standards in accordance with the Uniform Examination Standards in the *Abitur* Examination [*Einheitliche Prüfungsanforderungen in der Abiturprüfung*]. They are divided in courses at a basic level of academic standards and courses at an increased level of academic standards. The courses at a basic level of academic standards teach the propaedeutics of scientific work, and the courses at an increased level of academic standards provide in-depth teaching of the propaedeutics of scientific work by way of specific examples. The courses at a basic level of academic standards in the subjects German, mathematics and foreign language comprise at least three weekly periods. The pupils are required to choose at least two subjects at an increased level of academic standards, comprising at least five weekly periods, or at least three subjects at an increased level of academic standards, comprising at least four weekly periods, one of which being either German, a foreign language, mathematics or a natural science. The Länder regulate the further details in their own responsibility. Generally, the pupils are required to take two foreign language courses during the introductory phase. Pupils who have not or not continuously been taught a second foreign language before entering the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* are required to take a second foreign language course throughout the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*. The four or five subjects of the *Abitur* examination must include:

- at least two subjects at an increased level of academic standards
- two of the following three subjects: German, foreign language or mathematics
- at least one subject from every main area of compulsory subjects [the Länder may decide at their own discretion whether or not religious education can represent the social sciences area]

The *gymnasiale Oberstufe* has also been established in other types of school in addition to the *Gymnasien*. In some Länder, these include the *kooperative Gesamtschule*, *integrierte Gesamtschule* and the *Berufliches Gymnasium* or *Fachgymnasium*.

### **Geographical accessibility**

For the geographical distribution of educational institutions in the secondary sector see chapter 6.2. on general lower secondary education.

### **Admission requirements and choice of school**

Admission to courses of general education at upper secondary level is based on leaving certificates and qualifications acquired at the end of lower secondary level [see chap-

ter 6.4.]. For the possibility of gaining admission into a specific school, see chapter 6.2. The admission requirements for the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* are set forth above.

### **Age levels and grouping of pupils/students**

At the latest upon entrance into the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*, the pupils are no longer taught in annual classes. The class unit is replaced by a system of compulsory and elective subjects, with the possibility of individual specialisation. The *gymnasiale Oberstufe* is divided into a one-year introductory phase and a two-year qualification phase, whereby grade 10 may have a double function as last school year of the lower secondary level and first school year of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*. During the qualification phase, courses are structured in half-year terms, defined thematically, and assigned to subjects to which specific curricula apply. The courses provided are principally divided up into different levels of academic standards: courses at a basic level of academic standards and courses at an increased level of academic standards. Within the scope of the relevant agreement of the Standing Conference [*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK], the responsibility for the organisation of lessons and for the design of the compulsory and elective subjects with the possibility of individual specialisation lies with the Länder. The above explanations regarding the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* equally apply to the *Berufliche Gymnasien/Fachgymnasien*.

### **Organisation of school time**

#### Organisation of the school year

For the organisation of the school year in the secondary sector, see chapter 5.2. on the primary sector.

#### Weekly and daily timetable

There is no fixed end to teaching times at upper secondary level [*Sekundarstufe II*]. The weekly instruction time at the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* usually is also 30 weekly periods which are taken within the framework of courses at a basic level of academic standards and of courses at an increased level of academic standards.

At the eight-year *Gymnasium*, the number of weekly periods at lower and upper secondary level is generally increased by two to four weekly periods. To guarantee the mutual recognition of the *Abitur*, all Länder have to ensure teaching of a total of at least 265 weekly periods in the lower secondary level and the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* to which up to five hours in elective subjects may be added.

For general information about the daily and weekly timetable and the five-day or six-day week see chapter 5.2.

## **6.6. Teaching and Learning in General Upper Secondary Education**

### **Curriculum, subjects, number of hours**

The range of subjects offered in the GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE [upper level of the *Gymnasium*] is described in chapter 6.5., as are the requirements for certain subjects and subject groups and the opportunities for individual specialisation. As a rule, classes take up at least 30 periods a week. Courses in the subjects German, mathematics and foreign

language comprise at least three periods per week. Subjects at a level of increased academic standards comprise at least four periods per week. If instruction in only two subjects at a level of increased academic standards is required, courses in these subjects comprise at least five periods per week. Subjects at a level of increased academic standards must include German, a foreign language, mathematics or a natural science. Whilst the compulsory courses are designed to ensure that all the pupils receive a common general education, electives, in conjunction with the compulsory curriculum, are intended to enable pupils to develop an area of specialisation. In the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* of the eight-year *Gymnasium*, the number of weekly periods is generally increased by two to four.

The comments in chapter 6.3. apply to cross-curricular topics addressed in upper secondary education.

### Teaching methods and materials

Based on the curricula, which also contain some guidance on teaching methods, the teachers take responsibility for teaching in their classes, taking the background and aptitude of each pupil into consideration. Use is made of new media [multimedia] and telecommunications [Internet etc.] in the classroom both as teaching aids and as the subject of teaching and learning. By utilising new resources and methods and by strengthening the individualist character of teaching, the aim is to promote creativity and independent learning skills.

## 6.7. Assessment in General Upper Secondary Education

### Pupils/students assessment

At the GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE [upper level of the *Gymnasium*], performance is assessed on a scale of 15 to 0, which correlates with the usual scale of 1 to 6 as follows:

- Mark 1 is equivalent to 15/14/13 points depending on the trend of marks.
- Mark 2 is equivalent to 12/11/10 points depending on the trend of marks.
- Mark 3 is equivalent to 9/8/7 points depending on the trend of marks.
- Mark 4 is equivalent to 6/5/4 points depending on the trend of marks.
- Mark 5 is equivalent to 3/2/1 points depending on the trend of marks.
- Mark 6 is equivalent to 0 points.

### Progression of pupils/students

In the GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE the last two grades are known as the qualification phase. Marks obtained in this phase are used to calculate a pupil's total marks, composed of marks received in courses taken in these two years and the marks achieved in the *Abitur* examination. There is no procedure for promotion during the qualification phase, however, it is possible to repeat a year if the marks required for entrance to the *Abitur* examination have not been attained. In school year 2009/2010, 2.5 per cent of pupils at the nine-year *Gymnasium* and 2.9 per cent of pupils at the eight-year *Gymnasium* repeated a grade.

## Certification

School-leaving certificates may be acquired at the end of upper secondary level courses of education subject to the same basic conditions as described for lower secondary level in chapter 6.4.

The GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE [upper level of the *Gymnasium*] concludes with the *Abitur* examination. The questions are either set on a uniform basis by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of a Land or drawn up by the teachers of the individual schools and approved by the responsible school supervisory authority. In the future, there will be central *Abitur* examinations at Land level in almost all Länder. In order to be admitted to the examination, certain requirements have to be met in the qualification phase. The *Abitur* examination covers four or five examination subjects, which must include at least two subjects at a level of increased academic standards and two of the following three subjects: German, foreign language and mathematics. Additionally, all three subject areas [languages, literature and the arts; social sciences; mathematics, natural sciences and technology] must be included in the examination. The required minimum three written examinations must cover at least two subjects at an increased level of academic standards, which must include at least one of the following subjects: German, foreign language, mathematics or a natural science. The oral *Abitur* examination is taken in a subject which has not been examined in written form. As a rule, written and possibly oral examinations are taken in three subjects, whilst in the fourth subject, only an oral examination is taken. Depending on the legislation of a Land, a fifth subject can be examined in either oral or written form, or a particular achievement [*besondere Lernleistung*] which has been performed over at least two half-year terms [e.g. a year paper or the results of a multi-disciplinary project] may be incorporated in the *Abitur* examination. The particular achievement is to be documented in written form, and is complemented by a colloquium. Upon passing the *Abitur* examination, a *Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife* [general higher education entrance qualification] is acquired, which also includes the academic performance in the qualification phase. The *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* is awarded if the total marks attained are at least adequate [average mark 4 or a minimum of 300 points].

At present, the general higher education entrance qualification is still awarded by most Länder after 13 years of school [nine-year *Gymnasium*]. In some Länder, the general higher education entrance qualification can also be awarded after 12 years of school [eight-year *Gymnasium*]. The conversion throughout the Land to the eight-year *Gymnasium* will take a few years as it generally takes place after grades 5 or 6. To guarantee the mutual recognition of the *Abitur* obtained after this shorter course, these Länder have to ensure teaching of a total of at least 265 weekly periods in the lower secondary level and the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*. The comparability of the examination procedures and examination requirements is guaranteed for all Länder by the Uniform Examination Standards in the *Abitur* Examination [*Einheitliche Prüfungsanforderungen in der Abiturprüfung*]. By the end of 2008, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz* - KMK] had passed 41 subjects for the Uniform Examination Standards in the *Abitur* Examination, which have, in part, been revised against the background of the results of international comparisons of school performance and on the basis of experts' reports.

In October 2007, the Standing Conference resolved to develop the Uniform Examination Standards for the *Abitur* examination initially in the subjects of German, mathematics and first foreign language [English/French] and furthermore for the natural sciences [biology, chemistry, physics] into educational standards for the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*.

## 6.8. Organisation of Vocational Upper Secondary Education

### Types of institutions

#### Full-time vocational schools

Full-time vocational schools include the *Berufsfachschule*, the *Fachoberschule*, the *Berufliches Gymnasium* or *Fachgymnasium*, the *Berufsoberschule* and other types of schools that exist only in certain Länder or are of marginal importance due to their small numbers. According to the International Standard Classification of Education [ISCED], continuing vocational training at the *Fachschule* is part of the tertiary sector. The *Fachschule* is thus described in chapter 7.

#### Berufsfachschule

*Berufsfachschulen* are full-time schools that introduce their pupils to one or several occupations, offer them part of the vocational training in one or several *anerkannte Ausbildungsberufe* [recognised occupations requiring formal training] or lead to a vocational training qualification in a specific occupation. They offer a very wide range of courses. There are *Berufsfachschulen* for business occupations, occupations involving foreign languages, trade and technical occupations, crafts industry occupations, home-economics-related and social-work-related occupations, artistic occupations, the health sector occupations regulated by federal law etc. In cases where such schools do not provide a full career qualification, the successful completion of the *Berufsfachschule* may, under certain conditions, be credited as part of the training period in occupations requiring formal training [Art. 7 of the Vocational Training Act - *Berufsbildungsgesetz* - R80]. In order to prove the equivalence of a vocational training qualification at a *Berufsfachschule* with dual vocational training, successful graduates can sit an examination before the competent authority. Admission to this so-called chamber examination is possible if the Land in question has adopted appropriate regulations pursuant to Article 43, paragraph 2 of the Vocational Training Act or if there are arrangements to this end between the vocational schools and the competent authorities. Depending on the training objective, *Berufsfachschulen* require their pupils to have a *Hauptschulabschluss* or a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*. The duration of training at *Berufsfachschulen* varies from one to three years, depending on the intended career specialisation. Under certain conditions, the *Fachhochschulreife* [higher education entrance qualification for the *Fachhochschule*] may be acquired at the *Berufsfachschule*.

#### Fachoberschule

As a rule, the *Fachoberschule* covers grades 11 and 12 and requires a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*. It equips its pupils with general and specialised theoretical and practical knowledge and skills and leads up to *Fachhochschulreife*, i.e. higher education entrance qualification for the *Fachhochschule*. The Länder may also establish a grade 13. After

successful completion of grade 13, pupils can obtain the *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* and, with sufficient competence in a second foreign language, the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*. The *Fachoberschule* is divided into the fields of study business and administration, technology, health and social work, design, nutrition and home economics, as well as agriculture, bio- and environmental engineering. Training includes instruction and professional training. Instruction is given in the subjects German, foreign language, mathematics, natural sciences, economics and society and also in a field-specific subject. Practical training takes place in grade 11, i.e. in the first year of this school type, as a relevant controlled placement in companies or equivalent institutions. Completed relevant vocational training or sufficient relevant work experience can serve as a substitute for grade 11 of the *Fachoberschule*, so that pupils with such qualifications can proceed directly with grade 12 of the *Fachoberschule*.

### **Berufliches Gymnasium/Fachgymnasium**

This type of school is called *Berufliches Gymnasium* in some Länder and *Fachgymnasium* in others. In contrast to the *Gymnasium*, which normally offers a continuous period of education from grade 5 to grade 12 or 13, the *Berufliches Gymnasium* or *Fachgymnasium* has no lower and intermediate level [grades 5 - 10]. This type of school exists in some Länder in the form of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* with career-oriented specialisations and comprises a three-year course of education. Starting on the basis of a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* satisfying the requirements for admittance to the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* or an equivalent qualification, the *Berufliches Gymnasium* or *Fachgymnasium* leads, as a rule, to the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* [a general entrance qualification for higher education]. Apart from the subjects offered at a *Gymnasium*, these schools have career-oriented subjects like business, technology, professional computer science, nutrition, agronomy, as well as health and social studies, which can be chosen in place of general subjects as the second intensified course and are examined in the *Abitur*. In some Länder, there are a limited number of schools providing further vocational courses and specialisations. The subjects relating to such vocational courses and specialisations may also be elected as second subject at an increased level of academic standards.

Furthermore, *Berufliche Gymnasien* or *Fachgymnasien* in some cases offer pupils the opportunity to obtain more than one qualification at the same time [double qualification courses of education], viz. a combination of *Hochschulreife* or *Fachhochschulreife* [higher education entrance qualifications] and a vocational qualification in accordance with Land law [e.g. for assistant occupations]. A vocational education of this kind may also be obtained at institutions combining the *Gymnasium* and vocational schools [e.g. *Oberstufenzentren*] or at a particular type of school such as, for example, the *Berufskolleg* in Nordrhein-Westfalen. These double qualification courses of education at upper secondary level take three to four years to complete.

### **Berufsoberschule**

In association with the deliberations of the Standing Conference on the equivalence of general and vocational education, the *Berufsoberschulen* have achieved greater importance. They have been established in some Länder in order to enable those who have completed vocational training in the *duales System* [dual system] to obtain a higher education entrance qualification. Providing two years of full-time education, the *Berufsoberschule* leads to the *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* and, with a second foreign lan-

guage, to the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*. Attendance of the *Berufsoberschule* can also be on a part-time basis for a correspondingly longer period.

Acceptance into the *Berufsoberschule* requires the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* or qualifications recognised as equivalent and at least two years' successful vocational training or at least five years' relevant practical experience. The first year of the *Berufsoberschule* can be replaced with other study courses leading to the *Fachhochschulreife*. The *Berufsoberschule* covers specialisations in technology, economy and management, nutrition and domestic science, health and social professions, design as well as agricultural economy, bio- and environmental engineering. The pupils are assigned a specialisation in accordance with the first vocational training or practical experience they have already completed.

### Vocational training in the dual system

In Germany, about two-thirds of the young people of any one-year age group undergo vocational training in the *duales System* for two or three years, depending on the respective occupation. It is described as a *dual system* because training is carried out in two places of learning: at the workplace and in a *Berufsschule* [vocational school]. The aim of vocational training is to impart, within a structured course of training, the vocational skills, knowledge and qualifications necessary to practise a skilled occupation in a changing professional world. Additionally, it is intended to provide the necessary professional experience. Those successfully completing the training are immediately entitled to do skilled work in one of currently around 350 *anerkannte Ausbildungsberufe* [recognised occupations requiring formal training].

Compulsory full-time schooling must be completed before commencing vocational training. There are no other formal prerequisites for admission to the dual system; training in the dual system is generally open to everyone. Each year around two-thirds of all school leavers enter vocational training in the *duales System*. Of the trainees with newly concluded training contracts, around 33.1 per cent achieved the *Hauptschulabschluss* as their first general education qualification at the end of the lower secondary level in 2009, whilst 43.0 per cent gained a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*. The number of those undergoing training within the dual system who have already completed the upper secondary level and obtained a *Hochschulreife* or a *Fachhochschulreife* [higher education entrance qualifications] corresponded to 20.4 per cent in 2009. The training is based on a training contract under private law between a training company and the trainee. The trainees spend three or four days a week at the company and up to two days at the *Berufsschule*. The training companies assume the costs of the on-the-job training and pay the trainee a training allowance which, as a rule, is in accordance with a collective bargaining agreement in the sector concerned. The amount of the allowance increases with each year of training and is, on average, about a third of the starting salary for a specialist trained in the corresponding occupation.

The vocational skills, knowledge and qualifications to be acquired in the course of training at the workplace are set out in the *Ausbildungsordnung* [training regulations], the particulars of which are specified by the training company in an individual training plan. A *Rahmenlehrplan* [framework curriculum] is drawn up for vocational *Berufsschule* classes for each recognised occupation requiring formal training as set out in the training regulations.

Comprehensive information and data on vocational education and training and especially about the dual system is available in the annual *Berufsbildungsbericht* [Report on Vocational Education and Training] of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research [*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* - BMBF] and, since 2009, in the *Datenreport zum Berufsbildungsbericht* [Data Report Annexed to the Report on Vocational Education and Training].

### **On-the-job training**

Vocational training places outside school [on the job] are available in industry and commerce as well as the civil service sector, in independent professions and, to a lesser extent, also in private households. The training companies are contractually committed to impart to the trainees the vocational skills, knowledge and qualifications as provided for in the *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations] for the respective recognised occupation requiring formal training. The binding *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations] have been established to set uniform national standards that are independent of the companies' current operational needs and meet the requirements in the respective occupation. Training may only be provided in training companies in which the skills demanded by the training regulations can be imparted by training personnel with the personal and technical qualification. The qualification of training companies and in-company training personnel is supervised by the competent autonomous organisations [chambers] of the various occupations and branches of industry [see chapter 10.4.]. The chambers also monitor the training to make sure it is conducted properly. The training company draws up a company training plan for the trainee. This should correspond to the requirements of the *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations] in terms of both content and time but can deviate from this if required by practicalities within the company and if the communication of all remaining training contents is guaranteed.

A training establishment may not only be the individual training company, but also an association of several companies which cooperate in order to meet the requirements of the training regulation [network training - *Verbundausbildung*]. Inter-company training centres, which can be linked to boarding-schools, provide supplementary training to young people who are being trained at small or specialised companies where they do not receive comprehensive training as defined by the *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations]. With modern technical equipment, these inter-company training centres can give training in areas most small companies are unable to cover for reasons of cost and capacity.

### **Training at the *Berufsschule***

In the context of the dual system of vocational education the *Berufsschule* is an autonomous place of learning. It works together on an equal footing with the companies participating in vocational training. The function of the *Berufsschule* is to provide pupils with general and vocational education, having particular regard for the requirements of vocational training. *Berufsschulen* are also expected to offer courses preparing for vocational education or accompanying professional activities. *Berufsschulen* equip their pupils with basic and specialised vocational training, adding to the general education they have already received. The purpose is to enable them to carry out their occupational duties and to help shape the world of work and society as a whole with a sense of social and ecological responsibility.

As a rule, teaching at the *Berufsschule* takes up four periods per week in general education subjects, namely German, social studies and economics, religion and sport, regardless of the training area, and eight periods per week in vocational education. Foreign languages are included in vocational education to the extent they are likely to be of importance in the pupils' future career, e.g. office jobs. Together with the companies providing training, the school supervisory body and the relevant bodies from industry, the *Berufsschule* decides on how to organise teaching time, drawing on a wide number of possibilities. The aim of the various different ways of organising the course is to guarantee the best possible attendance rate of the pupils within the companies providing training and, at the same time, to create a favourable situation in terms of educational gain and learning psychology.

The reform of the Vocational Training Act [*Berufsbildungsgesetz*] means that the Länder can enact regulations by statutory order concerning the crediting of periods of vocational education spent in school for dual vocational training [Art. 7 of the *Berufsbildungsgesetz*]. In this respect, the Standing Conference has recommended that

- the organisation of suitable education careers needs to achieve that learning periods spent in full-time vocational schools can be fully credited for the vocational training and
- the extent of the crediting be made dependent on the scope of vocation-related teaching given within the school education and a consideration of the *Rahmenlehrpläne* [framework curricula] and *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations] applicable to the vocational training.

Crediting only takes place upon a joint application by training company and student.

### **Geographical accessibility**

For the geographical distribution of educational institutions in the school sector, see chapter 6.2. on general lower secondary education.

### **Admission requirements and choice of school**

Admission to courses of vocational education at upper secondary level is based on leaving certificates and qualifications acquired at the end of lower secondary level [see chapter 6.4.]. The admission requirements for the various types of schools and courses of education in the sector of vocational education are explained above.

### **Age levels and grouping of pupils/students**

At the BERUFSSCHULE, classes in a specific or related *anerkannter Ausbildungsberuf* [recognised occupation requiring formal training] are given.

### **Organisation of school time**

#### Organisation of the school year

For the organisation of the school year in the secondary sector, see chapter 5.2. on the primary sector.

## Weekly and daily timetable

At full-time vocational schools, 30 weekly periods are required at the two-year *Berufsfachschulen*. At least 12 periods are compulsory in grade 11 of *Fachoberschulen*, together with practical on-the-job training while at least 30 weekly periods of general and specialist lessons are required in grade 12. As for vocational training in the *duales System* [dual system], where initial vocational training is carried out jointly in a company and in the *Berufsschule*, at least 12 weekly periods of teaching are required at the *Berufsschule*. This may be organised in a variety of ways with students either attending classes on a part-time basis with 12 weekly periods two days a week throughout their course or alternating between two days one week and one day the next. Teaching may also be received in coherent blocks [*Blockunterricht*].

For general information about the daily and weekly timetable and the five-day or six-day week see chapter 5.2.

## 6.9. Teaching and Learning in Vocational Upper Secondary Education

### Curriculum, subjects, number of hours

At BERUFSFACHSCHULEN [full-time vocational schools] instruction is given in general/multi-disciplinary and subject- or occupation-specific areas. Depending on the particular course being pursued, teaching in the two areas of learning accounts for a minimum of 30 periods per week.

See the description of the FACHOBERSCHULE in chapter 6.8. for an overview of the general and specialised curriculum.

In the BERUFSOBERSCHULE that pupils attend for two years, instruction covers a total of 2400 periods [approx. 30 periods a week]. Pupils are taught German, a compulsory foreign language, social studies [with history, politics, economics], mathematics as well as specialised subjects [*Profilfächer*] in accordance with the chosen specialisation, and natural sciences including information technology. For the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*, knowledge of a second foreign language must also be proven. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz* - KMK] passed common standards in June 1998 regarding the requirement level for instruction in German, a compulsory foreign language and mathematics.

The curriculum at the part-time BERUFSSCHULE, like that of full-time vocational schools, breaks down into general and vocational classes [see chapter 6.8.]. Twelve periods a week are spent in class, eight of which generally cover material specific to the occupation in question.

As to the CURRICULA, the comments on the primary sector in chapter 5.3. apply. The Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder are responsible for drawing up the curricula. The *Rahmenlehrpläne* [framework curricula] for vocational instruction at *Berufsschulen*, on the other hand, are worked out by the Länder in the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz*] and resolved in a coordinated procedure with the agreement of the Federation, employers' associations and unions on the basis of the *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations] for on-the-job training [see chapter 2.7.]. They are structured in accordance with areas of instruction so as to support the acquisition of vocational knowledge, skills and com-

petences. Areas of instruction contain a complex statement of objectives oriented around typical vocational acts, as well as references and time guidelines as regards content, i.e. references to the time of communication in the course of education as well as to the number of lessons. The knowledge, skills and competences to be imparted in on-the-job training for professional qualification is set out in the training regulations. These regulations are issued for all *anerkannte Ausbildungsberufe* [recognised occupations requiring formal training] by the competent federal ministry with the assistance of the social partners as well as the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder. The coordination procedure ensures that the training regulations take account of what has been learnt from experiences in the working world and in the vocational schools, as well as the results of employment and occupational research and the results of pilot schemes of the Federal Institute of Vocational Education and Training [*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* - BIBB].

### Foreign language teaching in vocational schools

Since 1998, pupils of vocational schools have been able to gain a certificate testifying to their acquired or existing *vocational* foreign language skills, especially in English, French and Spanish. To this end, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder has developed a uniform certificate that is in line with the *A2, B1, B2* and *C1* levels established by the Council of Europe in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. The examinations are prepared and taken in the vocational schools.

### Teaching methods and materials

At the BERUFSSCHULE, it is particularly important to employ teaching methods that are task-based and practice-oriented in providing technical vocational training and a broader general education. The use of new information and communication technologies opens up a new scope of conveying up-to-date vocational knowledge. The basic didactic methods to be used in on-the-job training are outlined in the *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations].

## 6.10. Assessment in Vocational Upper Secondary Education

### Pupil/students assessment

For information about the assessment of pupils at VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS in the upper secondary level see chapter 6.4., in which the basis for assessing and marking in the lower secondary level is set out.

Under the DUALES SYSTEM [dual system] trainees take an intermediate examination according to the standards laid down in the *Ausbildungsordnungen* [training regulations] and *Rahmenlehrpläne* [framework curricula] around halfway through their training. These intermediate examinations are administered by the competent bodies [usually chambers of handicrafts or industry etc.]. They may consist of practical, written and oral components. The intermediate examination usually covers the knowledge, skills and competences listed in the training regulations for the first three half-year terms of training, as well as the material taught at the *Berufsschule* according to the framework curriculum, to the extent it is of material importance for the vocational training. After tak-

ing an intermediate examination, the trainee receives a certificate showing his/her current level of training.

### **Progression of pupils/students**

As far as FULL-TIME VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS are concerned, the comments on promotion in chapter 6.4. on the lower secondary level generally apply. Pupils do not repeat grades in vocational schools – if necessary, the training period may be extended.

### **Certification**

DOUBLE QUALIFICATION COURSES OF EDUCATION which lead up to the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* [a general entrance qualification for higher education] or to the *Fachhochschulreife* [higher education entrance qualification for the *Fachhochschule*] and a vocational qualification or partial vocational qualification take three to four years and conclude with two separate examinations [academic examination and vocational examination]. In addition, there are vocational training courses in which it is possible to obtain a vocational qualification, as well as the *Fachhochschulreife*. The acquisition of the *Fachhochschulreife* in vocational training courses requires the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* and, according to the version valid at any one time of an agreement of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK] made in 1998, is based on standards for contents and examinations.

The programme at BERUFSFACHSCHULEN [full-time vocational schools] normally concludes with a final examination. In the *Berufsfachschulen*, different qualifications can be obtained, depending on admission requirements; these qualifications are either of a vocational or a general education nature. At *Berufsfachschulen* offering basic vocational training, young people can obtain the *Hauptschulabschluss* or the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* in courses lasting one or two years. In contrast, the two-year full-time *Berufsfachschule*, for which a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss* is required, in its various branches of study leads to a professional qualification as a *state-certified technical assistant* in biochemistry, garment making, information technology or mechanical engineering or as a *state-certified business assistant* specialising in business administration, clerical operations, foreign languages or data processing. At *Berufsfachschulen*, under certain conditions the *Fachhochschulreife* can be obtained as well as the vocational leaving certificate.

The programme at the FACHOBERSCHULE concludes with a final examination after grade 12. This exam covers three general subjects [German, mathematics, foreign language] and one individual specialised subject [e.g. in engineering, business, administration or design]. On passing the exam, pupils receive the certificate of *Fachhochschulreife*, a higher education entrance qualification qualifying them to go on to *Fachhochschulen*. The Länder may also establish a grade 13 leading to the *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* or, if proficiency in a second foreign language is demonstrated, the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*.

The course of study in the BERUFSOBERSCHULE ends with a final examination and leads to the *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* and, with a second foreign language, to the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*. There is a written final examination in German, a compulsory foreign language, mathematics and a specific subject relevant to the chosen specialisation. Oral examinations can be held in all subjects. The achievements in the final exami-

nation count for at least one-third of the total marks obtained for the individual subjects in the final certificate.

In the DUALES SYSTEM of vocational training [dual system], trainees take a final examination or a *Gesellenprüfung* [final examination which, if successfully passed, leads to the award of a certificate showing proficiency as journeyman] administered by the *authorities responsible for vocational training*. The responsible authorities include regional and sectoral organisations from the various branches of industry and commerce, e.g. chambers of industry and commerce, of handicrafts, of liberal professions and of agriculture that perform governmental functions in the domain of vocational training. The responsible authorities can also be public service authorities. The boards of examiners are made up of representatives of industry and labour and teachers at *Berufsschulen*.

The final examination or *Gesellenprüfung* may consist of practical, written and oral components. The competent body assesses whether the students have acquired the qualifications necessary to practise a skilled occupation within the meaning of the Vocational Training Act [Art. 1, Section 3 of the *Berufsbildungsgesetz* - R80]. This includes the ability to plan and perform work processes independently and to inspect and to judge the work result. For the purposes of assessment of performances in individual areas, the board of examiners may solicit expert opinions from third parties, in particular from vocational schools [Art. 39, Section 2 of the Vocational Training Act]. Successful candidates are awarded an examination certificate. Concomitantly, the *Berufsschule* issues a leaving certificate if the trainee has achieved at least adequate performances in all subjects. This certificate incorporates a *Hauptschulabschluss* and may include a *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*, depending on the candidate's achievements. If the relevant tuition has been given, the *Fachhochschulreife* may also be attained. At the request of the trainee, a description of qualifications in German, English and French is included with the leaving certificate.

For a number of years, instead of an intermediate examination and a final examination, some training regulations have provided for a so-called *gestreckte Abschlussprüfung* [extended final examination]. This does away with the previously standard intermediate examination, which was not relevant to achieving a pass grade. In the extended final examinations, part of the professional competence is tested after around two-thirds of the training period in part one of a final examination. The second part of the final examination takes place at the end of the vocational training. Qualifications which were covered in the first part of the final examination will be included in the second part only to the extent required for the assessment of professional proficiency. The result of the extended final examinations is made up of the two partial results.

The Vocational Training Act [Art. 43, Section 2] enables the Länder to specify that pupils in specific courses of vocational education will be vested with a legal claim to an examination carried out by the authority responsible for the vocational training. This creates the possibility of also admitting students from full-time courses of education in schools to a final examination within the meaning of the Vocational Training Act. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [*Kultusministerkonferenz*] has recommended that the Länder should make enough room in these curricula for the provision of an appropriate portion of practical and vocation-related training sections.

The results of a trainee's learning and examination achievements in the *Berufsschule* can be stated on the examination certificate at his or her request. It is provided by the

authority responsible for the vocational training. In May 2007, the Standing Conference adopted a recommendation for the inclusion of results achieved in the *Berufsschule* into the examination certificate issued by the chamber. Accordingly, the appraisal of the trainee's achievements in the *Berufsschule* shall be based on assessments of her or his performance in the vocational subjects as well as in the multi-disciplinary and general subjects.

Within the companies, expert opinions can in particular apply to the assessment of practical examination assignments taking the form of operational tasks.

### **6.11. Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education**

According to the International Standard Classification of Education [ISCED], the post-secondary, non-tertiary sector covers courses of education which follow the acquisition of a general education qualification or vocational qualification but are not classified as further and continuing education or as part of the tertiary sector. In Germany this includes the one-year courses at *Fachoberschulen* and the two-year courses at *Berufsoberschulen/Technischen Oberschulen*, which lead to the *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* and, with sufficient competence in a second foreign language, the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife*, and the *Kollegs* and *Abendgymnasien*, at which the *Fachhochschulreife* [academic part] or the *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* can be obtained. The post-secondary, non-tertiary sector also covers combinations of general and vocational courses and the acquisition of an entitlement to study and of a vocational leaving certificate at a *Berufsschule* in the *duales System* or at a *Berufsfachschule*, which conveys a vocational training certificate.

In Germany these courses are allocated to upper secondary education. A description of vocational schools can be found in chapters 6.8. to 6.10. on the vocational upper secondary level, and a description of *Abendgymnasien* and *Kollegs* in chapter 8 on general and vocational adult education.