

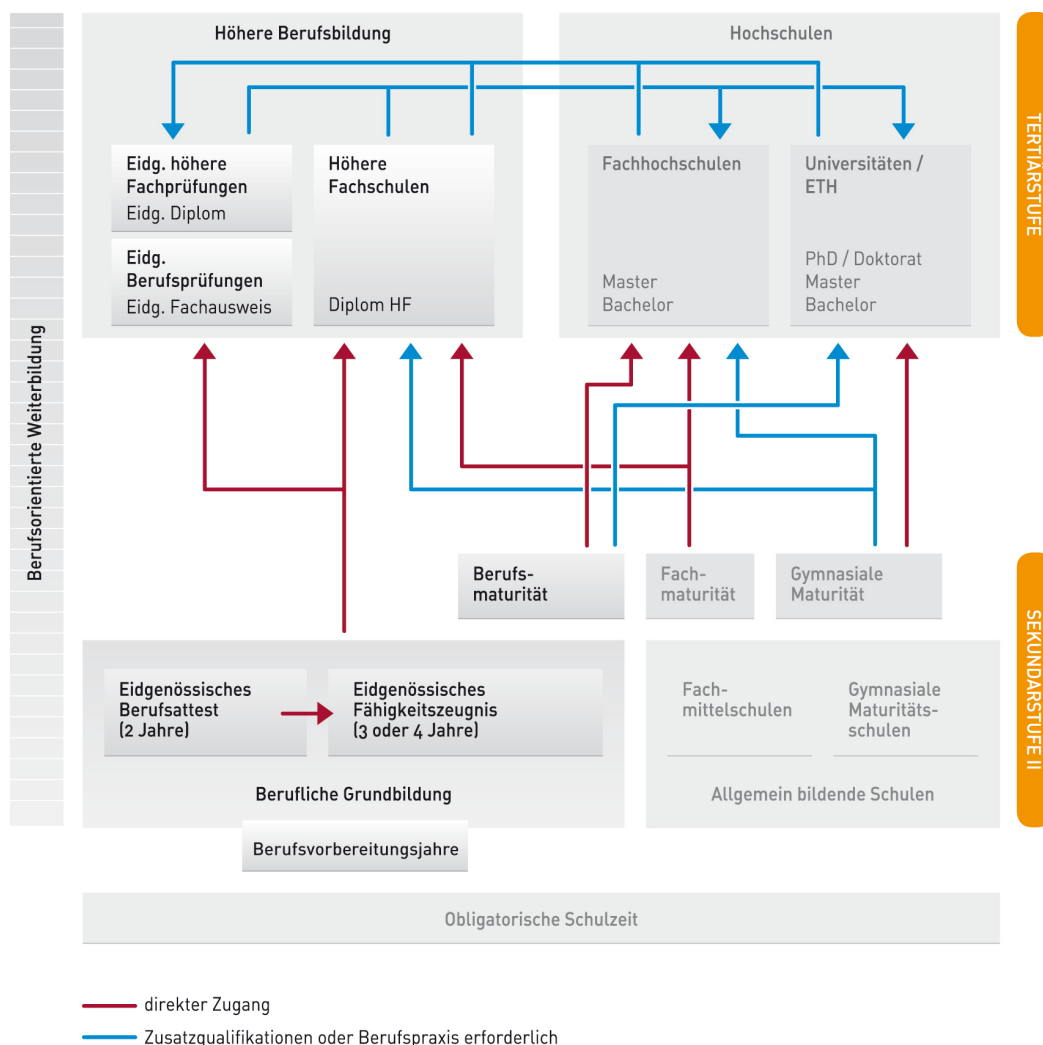


What's next after compulsory education?

Vocational training and higher education

A variety of profession-specific training and study routes are available to young people after finishing compulsory education

Please refer to the chart below as you read on. It illustrates the many different routes available to young people using the official terms for Switzerland. The translation includes many of these terms in brackets.



© Infographic: SBFi



Vocational training

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship (Berufslehre) is formally agreed by contract. The length of time it takes to do an apprenticeship and the topics covered by the study programme are subject to regulation. A training contract (Lehrvertrag) is drawn up between the apprentice and the organisation offering the apprenticeship. Cantonal authorities approve the contract.

Study is also part of an apprenticeship and lessons cover general and profession-specific education. Lessons take place at vocational schools (Berufsfachschulen).

Apprentices also attend across-company courses offered by professional and industry associations.

Apprenticeships last from two to four years.

To complete an apprenticeship, individuals need to take a final exam (Lehrabschlussprüfung). After successfully completing the three- and four-year programmes, apprentices qualify with a Swiss federal vocational diploma (eidgenössischen Fähigkeitszeugnis). Apprentices who successfully complete the two-year programme are awarded a Swiss federal vocational certificate (eidgenössischen Berufsattest). By combining the diploma for the three- and four-year apprenticeship with a Swiss federal vocational baccalaureate (Berufsmaturität), students can also attain a vocational baccalaureate qualification (Berufsmaturitätszeugnis).

One-year training programmes

Programmes that prepare young people for profession-specific training (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr) and other preliminary courses (Vorlehre) take one year to complete. The programmes get young people ready for vocational training at a practical and educational level. Individuals can choose from education-focused programmes (5 days of school), practical programmes (3 to 4 days of school plus 1 to 2 days in the school's own workshop), or on-the-job training programmes (1 to 2 days at school combined with 3 to 4 days of on-the-job training (Praktikumbetrieb). The preparation programmes focus on integration and are aimed at individuals whose first language is not German and who are aged between 15 and 21.

Swiss federal vocational baccalaureate

To attain a vocational baccalaureate (Berufsmaturität), individuals need to successfully complete an apprenticeship (Berufslehre) and follow a further education programme taught at a vocational college (Berufsmaturitätsschule (BMS)).



The vocational baccalaureate programme teaches languages, social studies, mathematics and, depending on the person's specialisation, finance and accounting, science, social sciences or art and design. Studies run in parallel with on-the-job training and lessons take up to an average of two days per week.

To be awarded the vocational baccalaureate diploma (Berufsmaturitätszeugnis), students need to pass the exams for their apprenticeship and for the vocational baccalaureate. Successful individuals attain two qualifications: they are qualified skilled professionals and they can enter an institute of higher education without having to sit a further exam. The vocational baccalaureate is also an excellent basis for further professional qualifications.

Where and how to find out more about vocational training

Secondary school teachers help young people prepare for career decisions. Teachers are also an important initial contact person for parents. Career advisors can offer young people comprehensive information.

Some organisations that specialise in careers advice:

(career and study advisory services for young people)

Amt für Jugend und Berufsberatung
Zentralstelle für Berufs- und Studienberatung
Dörflistrasse 120
8090 Zürich
www.berufsberatung.zh.ch

(Middle school and vocational training authority – part of Zurich education authority)

Das Mittelschul- und Berufsbildungsamt
der Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich
Ausstellungsstrasse 80
8090 Zürich
www.mba.zh.ch

(central office for careers advisory services/online listing of open apprenticeships)

Zentralstelle für Berufsberatung
Lehrstellennachweis des Kantons Zürich
<http://www.lena.zh.ch>



Higher education

Baccalaureate schools - preparing students for university

Zürich's baccalaureate schools offer educational programmes based on Swiss matriculation regulations (schweizerischen Maturitätsanerkennungsreglement (MAR)) that lead to a recognised entrance qualification for university (Maturitätszeugnis). The qualification allows students to enter all universities in Switzerland. To qualify for medical school, however, students need to take an additional entrance exam. Lessons at baccalaureate school are of a high standard and are taught by teachers with an academic qualification. Attending baccalaureate school (Kurzgymnasium) is an option for talented and motivated secondary school students from level A (and from 2015 from level B) who attend classes at a higher or mid-range performance level. Students can apply to baccalaureate school after year 2 or 3 of secondary school.

Students attending baccalaureate school need to choose a study focus:

- Classical languages study route (A) with Latin and/or Greek as well as modern foreign languages. One of the classical languages is the main area of study
- Modern languages study route (N) with modern foreign languages, of which one is the main area of study
- Mathematics-sciences study route (MN) with biology and chemistry or physics and applied mathematics as the main area of study
- Economics-law study route (WR) with the main area of study in economics and law
- Music study route (M) with creative arts or music as the main area of study

Students can also attend bilingual baccalaureate school (German/English, German/French or German/Italian) at 18 baccalaureate schools in Zurich. Students who are especially talented in sports or the creative arts can attend the arts and sports baccalaureate school at MNG Rämibühl and at the Liceo Artistico. Both schools offer five-year programmes (Kurzgymnasien). Programmes allow students to further develop their talent for the arts or sports, and also offer a recognised Swiss higher education entrance qualification. The programme at the Liceo Artistico also provides students with an Italian higher education entrance qualification.

The range of education programmes on offer is complemented by the International Baccalaureate (IB) which students can take alongside the higher education entrance qualification. Individuals can also combine the IB with three- or four-year middle school programmes (which students complete after secondary school); this route qualifies students for higher college or a university of applied sciences (höhere Fachschule or Fachhochschule). The 'Literar- und Realgymnasium Rämibühl' offers the IB programme.



Vocational middle schools - preparing students for higher college or university of applied sciences

Individuals who successfully complete a three-year programme at a vocational middle school (Fachmittelschule - FMS) receive a qualification (Fachmittelschulausweis) that allows them to pursue further studies at a higher college (Höheren Fachschule). Students can choose from the following five areas of study: health and natural sciences, education, communication and information, and music or theater. In all areas, students can also go on to complete a fourth year of study and, if successful, are awarded a specialised baccalaureate (Fachmaturität) that allows them to study certain courses at a university of applied sciences (Fachhochschule). Students usually spend the fourth year doing a traineeship in the professional environment of their chosen area of study. All fourth-year students need to complete a thesis. Individuals studying for a qualification in education take a one-semester module in the fourth year which concludes with a final exam. This module (Fachmaturität Pädagogik) allows individuals to study for an education qualification at university (Pädagogischen Hochschulen).

Middle schools offering qualifications in business or IT

Individuals attending a business school at middle school level (Handelsmittelschule - HMS) or an IT middle school (Informatikmittelschule - IMS) are on a pathway to attaining a vocational baccalaureate in business administration (kaufmännischen Berufsmaturität). The business school programme also awards a federal vocational diploma (eidgenössischen Fähigkeitszeugnis) in business administration while students completing the IT programme receive a federal vocational diploma in computer science.

How to apply

- The deadline to apply for baccalaureate schools (Gymnasien), vocational middle schools (Fachmittelschule - FMS) and business middle schools (Handelsmittelschule - HMS) is 10 February
- Applications for arts and sports baccalaureate schools need to be in by 15 January
- Students need to apply for a place at IT middle school (Informatikmittelschule - IMS) by 30 September

Baccalaureate schools, and business and vocational middle schools hold information evenings for potential students and their parents in November, while for IT middle schools they are at the end of August. Exact dates are available in the September edition of the schools update (September-Schulblatt) published by the county of Zurich.

Application forms are available at the information evenings. Schools also provide application forms. These can be picked up or ordered by phone for a fee of CHF 20. Applications are made by parents to the principal of the school in question.



Brochure about middle schools in the county of Zurich (in German)

Title: *Mittelschule ja – aber welche?*

Available from:

Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich (Zurich Education Authority)

Mittelschul- und Berufsbildungsamt

Ausstellungsstrasse 80, Postfach

8090 Zürich

Information and latest news from middle school and vocational training authorities is available at the following website:

www.mba.zh.ch

Further training opportunities (interim solutions)

Several options, including 10th School year and other training programmes to help students prepare for profession-specific training, are available to individuals who are unable to find an apprenticeship after compulsory education. More information is available here:

www.bws.ch

www.mba.zh.ch

Web guide for young people, family and work:

www.lotse.zh.ch

Highly recommended website for parents and young people who want to know more about what their options are after finishing compulsory education.