



# The Bavarian school system



## Welcoming address

### Dear parents and guardians,

We would like to support every child in the best possible way. This is why our differentiated Bavarian school system offers a variety of educational paths. Here, we provide an overview of the different options for your child to consider upon completion of primary education.

Every type of secondary school in Bavaria offers support for a smooth school transition, and every school qualification offers the opportunity to start vocational training or to pursue the next higher qualification – right up to the general qualification for university entrance.

The differentiated Bavarian school system offers the best conditions for adapting the educational path to the individual development of your child. The right school is the one that offers your children the best conditions to develop their special talents and learn with joy and success.

We wish you and your child all the best for their school career!

Prof. Dr. Michael Piaolo,  
Bavarian State Minister for Education

Anna Stolz, State Secretary at the  
Bavarian State Ministry of Education

## The differentiated Bavarian school system

**Primary school** (*Grundschule*) is the first school that all children attend. At the end of primary school, pupils transfer to a secondary school. The different types of secondary schools can be classified into three streams, *Mittelschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. From year 6, pupils may transfer to a commercial school (*Wirtschaftsschule*).

It is possible to switch to another type of **secondary school** if academic achievement develops accordingly. Every school-leaving certificate opens up new academic paths and possibilities.

**Special needs schools** (*Förderschulen*) are for children and young adults with special educational needs. They offer pedagogical support in the areas of language, learning, emotional and social development, hearing, seeing, physical and motor development and intellectual development.

**Schools for the sick** (*Schulen für Kranke*) provide schooling to pupils in hospitals and similar facilities.

### Options upon completion of *Mittelschule*

(qualifying or standard certificate of middle school):

- vocational training:
  - dual vocational training: trade school (*Berufsschule*)
  - full-time school-based training: vocational school (*Berufsfachschule*)
  - options upon completion: technical school (*Fachschule*), technical academy (*Fachakademie*) or upper vocational school (*Berufliche Oberschule BOS*)

### Options upon completion of *Realschule*, *Wirtschaftsschule* or *M-Zweig Mittelschule*:

- vocational training:
  - dual vocational training: trade school (*Berufsschule*)
  - full-time school-based training: vocational school (*Berufsfachschule*)
  - options upon completion: technical school (*Fachschule*), technical academy (*Fachakademie*) or upper vocational school (*Berufliche Oberschule BOS*)
- technical college (*Berufliche Oberschule FOS*)
- senior years of grammar school (*gymnasiale Oberstufe*)

## Consultation and support

The teaching staff at primary school help you choose a secondary school through intensive consultation and support. In addition, secondary school teachers serving as guidance counsellors in the transfer process (*Übergangskoaches*) – they may also offer counselling at your local primary school on request – as well as secondary school teachers offer information on this topic.

Furthermore, other counselling teachers, school psychologists as well as the state school career guidance service may help you decide on a career path for your child.

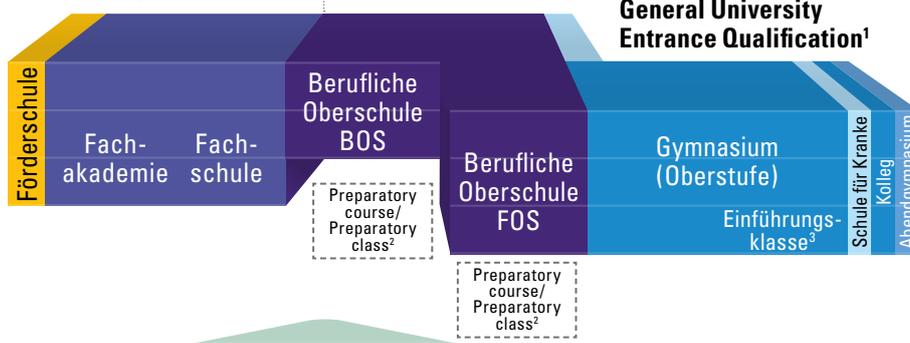


**Professional training qualification (and access to higher education)**

**General or subject-specific university entrance qualification/University of Applied Sciences Entrance Qualification**



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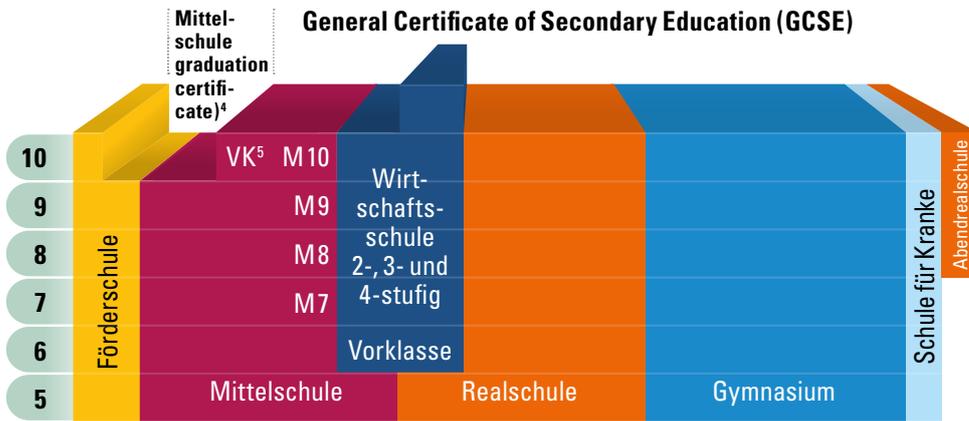


These school types provide access to higher education.

**Apprenticed trade (General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) possible)**



**General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)**



These types of schools allow students to graduate with a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE).

**Transition to secondary schools**



Primary school (*Grundschule*) is the first type of school generally attended by all students.

Grade

**Preschool education**  
(e.g., Preparatory German language course 240; Special-education preschool)

Preschool education prepares students for their transition to elementary school.

1 Beginning with grades 5 and 6, conversion to the nine-year upper secondary school ("Gymnasium") system was implemented during the 2018/19 academic year. The first cohort of the nine-year upper secondary school ("Gymnasium") system will take their university-entrance qualification (baccalaureate) exam in grade 13 during the 2025/26 academic year. Students are provided the opportunity to personally reduce their overall schooling time to eight years.

2 Before attending vocational upper secondary school ("Berufliche Oberschule"), students are offered (part-time) preparatory courses and (full-time) preparatory classes (at vocational secondary schools ("Berufsoberschule") to graduate with a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)).

3 Introductory classes are offered to qualified graduates of secondary schools ("Realschule"), secondary schools for business education ("Wirtschaftsschule"), and middle schools ("Mittelschule"), allowing them to obtain their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) as an introductory phase to the upper secondary school qualification phase; successful attendance of these introductory classes qualifies students for entering the upper secondary school qualification phase;

4 Successful or qualifying secondary school diploma (General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)).

5 Preparatory classes: VK1 and VK2