Possibilities for Refugees to receive BAföG (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz, the law governing educational funding in Germany)

General information:

- The so-called BAföG is state-funded financial support for school and university students. 50% of the BAföG are a grant and 50% are a loan that has to be repaid up to a maximum amount of €10,010. Repayment begins, as a rule, 5 years after the regular study period is over.
- Students of the preparatory college Studienkolleg can receive support, but only in the form of the BAföG for school students (currently to a maximum of €590 per month, however 100% of this is a grant). Persons who have their own apartment/room can receive a supplement to the rent payment from the Jobcenter. For this purpose, the BAföG letter must be submitted to the Jobcenter. Persons who live with their parents cannot usually receive student BAföG (unless the travel time to the training center is over 70 minutes), so the Jobcenter should then continue to pay.
- DSH courses that last more than 6 months can also be supported through the BAföG for school students.
- PhD studies are generally not eligible for support.
- University students can receive support to a maximum of currently €861 per month (for BA or MA studies, of which 84€ for health insurance and 25€ for nursing care insurance) for students who do not live with their parents. For students over 30 years of age, the rates for health and long-term care insurance increase, so that the maximum rate is 941€. Students with a child receive an additional 150€ as a childcare supplement.
- It is possible to take a part-time job earning up to a maximum of €450 monthly without this reducing the BAföG support.
- As a rule, support is granted for the duration of the standard period of studies (for BA courses, this is usually 6 semesters, for MA studies usually 4 semesters, for state exams this depends on the applicable study regulation). Exception may be possible in individual cases. In addition, an interest-free BAföG full loan can be claimed, e.g. as assistance for graduation. Up to the end of the fourth semester in the Bachelor's degree, evidence of sufficient achievement (ECTS) must be provided for further funding.
- Applications should be submitted as early as possible, however not before the student has been admitted / received confirmation that she or he has been admitted at university. The Jobcenter is obligated to continue paying until the BAföG decision is made.
- You can apply for a preliminary ruling, which is then valid for one year – see: www.studentenwerke.de/de/content/bafo%C3%B6g-beratungspflicht-und-vorabentscheid.
- Applications made for the winter semester usually take 6-8 weeks to process; in the summer semester this is usually faster. However, processing can only begin when all the required documents are available. Therefore: Collect documents as early as possible!

There is advice and consultation available from the BAföG-Amt at the Studentenwerk Frankfurt:
www.studentenwerkfrankfurt.de/bafoeg-finanzierung/bafoeg/

When applying for BAföG, the following documents must be provided / the following criteria will be assessed:

1. Residence document as follows:
   - Residence permit pursuant to §§ 22, 23 para. 1, 2 or 4, §§ 23a, 25 para. 1 or 2, §§ 25a, 25b, 28, 37, 38 para. 1 no. 2, § 104a are eligible for BAföG.
   - Foreigners whose deportation is suspended (§ 60a of the German Residence Act) and who are permanent residents in Germany can receive support if they have been in Germany for an uninterrupted period of at least 15 months and such presence was lawful or permitted or deportation was suspended. (§8 para. 2a BAföG)
   - A preliminary residence permit or a confirmation that the applicant is seeking asylum does not, as a rule, grant entitlement to BAföG; however, if the applicant takes up studies during the first 15 months of his / her residency in Germany, she or he will continue to be entitled to basic income support. (§ 2 para. 1, sentence 2 no.2 AsylbLG)
   - In the first 18 months after entry, asylum seekers or tolerated persons can also receive benefits according to §3 AsylbLG while studying, however, they must cover the costs for health insurance and semester fees themselves. From the 19th month on, students are entitled to benefits according to SGB XII, however, the social welfare office decides at its discretion whether the benefit is provided as a loan or as an allowance.
Asylum seekers (with a residence permit) are excluded from BAföG benefits unless they or their parents have been employed in Germany for many years (§8 para. 3 BAföG). After a stay of at least 19 months, however, you can receive benefits along the lines of BAföG (according to §2 AsylbLG).

Students who have come to Germany via family reunification with Germans or foreigners with a settlement permit are also entitled to BAföG (§28, 30, 32 AufenthG). In the case of family reunification with foreigners with a residence permit according to §30, 32 AufenthG, BAföG can be claimed after at least 15 months of permitted or tolerated residence.

Please note: Students who are staying in Germany for educational or gainful employment purposes (§§ 16-21 AufenthG) and students whose residence permit was only issued for a temporary humanitarian reason (§§ 25 para. 4 sentence 1, 25 para. 4a, 25 para. 4b AufenthG) are not entitled to BAföG.

See also: www.bafög.de/de/8-staatsangehoerigkeit-224.php

2. Age

In Bachelor programmes, as a rule students are only entitled to BAföG if they are younger than 30 years old when they start their studies, for Master programmes they should be younger than 35 years. However, there are some exceptions – if you had to learn a language, sometimes up to three years are discounted.

3. Previous studies or change of study subject

Continued entitlement to BAföG after changing the subject of studies is only possible if the change happened before/by the end of the third semester.

If you have already completed a Bachelor’s degree abroad and this is recognised in Germany, as a rule it is not possible to receive financial support for further Bachelor’s studies (it may, however be advisable to appeal against any such decision). If you have studied but not completed a Bachelor’s programme, the time you already spent studying will sometimes be taken into consideration, i.e. the overall period of support will be shortened.

4. Parental income; support independently of any parental support may be given

If the parents’ whereabouts are unknown or they live abroad and there are legal or practical obstacles preventing them to pay support in Germany,

If you have already turned 30 by the time you take up your studies / education / training and are still eligible for support (see above, exceptional circumstances),

Currently only refugees from Syria are generally exempt from the need to prove the above, provided that the parents are located in a refugee camp abroad (this is based on a decision by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research). For all other countries, e.g. Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, it is decided on a case-by-case basis whether parental income is considered, and as a rule the minutes of the hearing by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees are consulted.


Please note: For the BAföG application, you always need your parents' proof of income from the second to last year before your application. If your parents do not have official proof of income, you can write a declaration yourself about the type and amount of income and submit it to your parents for signature.

Problem case second university degree:

If you have already completed a course of study in your country of origin, this does not always exclude funding for further studies (§7 para.1 BAföG).

The prerequisite, however, is that the previous course of study does not qualify for a profession in Germany or that a profession in the country of origin is reasonable (the latter is generally not the case for refugees).

A general assessment of equivalence with a BA degree, as is usually carried out by the ZAB, without access to a regulated profession, such as teachers, educators, social workers, does not mean qualified professional practice (OVG Saarland v.18.3.2019 - 2 A 295/18).

In the case of non-regulated professions, it depends on whether the qualification corresponds to a university degree in Germany and whether it is directly usable on the labor market (for this, a statement from the employment agency is necessary/useful).

If a course of study was started in the country of origin, the duration of the BAföG benefit entitlement depends on how many modules (allocated to the number of semesters) are recognized.
Contact:

- **BAföG-Amt des Studentenwerks Frankfurt**
  Campus Bockenheim
  BAföG-ServiceCenter (EG) in der Neuen Mensa (Sozialzentrum)
  Bockenheimer Landstraße 133
  60325 Frankfurt
  Telephone office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 09:00-11:00 a.m.
  also Monday 12:00-15:00 p.m.
  [www.studentenwerkfrankfurt.de/bafoeg-finanzierung/bafoeg/sprechzeiten/](http://www.studentenwerkfrankfurt.de/bafoeg-finanzierung/bafoeg/sprechzeiten/)

- **Service Point for Refugee Students** (support with writing applications etc.)
  Hörsaalgebäude, room 101 of the AWP (Academic Welcome Program
  Campus Bockenheim (Gräfstraße 54)
  Link to book appointments for telephone or online consultation (via Zoom): [https://www.terminland.de/uni-frankfurt/](https://www.terminland.de/uni-frankfurt/)
  [www.uni-frankfurt.de/65769759/Infos-Studium](http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/65769759/Infos-Studium)

At many departments of the Goethe University and at some institutes there are special BAföG representatives who can assist you, especially in case of objections. You can find an overview of the contact persons in this guide:

[www.uni-frankfurt.de/37619579/Adressbuch_Wegweiser.pdf](http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/37619579/Adressbuch_Wegweiser.pdf)

Please note that we cannot guarantee that the information given above is complete and correct.