

Learning German at the University of Potsdam? No problem! This will help you get your bearings.

1. What kind of courses are there?

We generally offer three kinds of German courses:

- **General integration courses** at the A1 to B2 levels (listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary)
- **Special skills courses** starting at the B1 level (grammar, oral communication, phonetics, self-study with learning advising)
- **Subject-specific courses** starting at the B2/C1 level (law, the social sciences)

There are also additional offers that take place outside of the classroom, such as **language tandems** and the self-study area (Media Center).

Our tip:

- ✓ In order to be able to actively and successfully participate in courses within your field, you should have B2 level language skills!

2. How do I register for a German course?

online – registration (see the list of links) only for:

- Beginners for the A1 courses via the web page (see the list of links)

Prerequisite for all other courses (starting at A2 level) are:

1. A **mandatory online placement test** (aside from students with DSH/TestDaF; test available as of October 1 / April 1)
- +
2. A **personal advising meeting** with the teachers during registration week (one week before courses begin).

You can find information on the placement test and the registration week on the DaF Department's website (see list of links).

Information on the individual courses is in the course catalogue or course list.

Our tips:

- ✓ Try out the sample test in advance (see the list of links). It will show you how the placement test works (also in technical terms).
- ✓ Our courses begin at the start of the lecture period (see the "Schedule and deadlines" list of links)
- ✓ Registration week is always one week before the start of the courses. It therefore makes sense to arrive in Potsdam at least two weeks before courses start.

Important links for registration:

DaF Department: <http://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/zessko/languages/german.html>

Course catalogue: https://ees.zessko.uni-potsdam.de/angebote/aktueller_zeitraum/_DaF.html

Online registration: <https://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/zessko/languages/german/enrolment/application-a1.html>

Sample test: <https://ees.zessko.uni-potsdam.de/cgi/ctest2.cgi?testcode=825224ff96195865e7c6daadcbc4cd31>

Online placement test: on the DaF Department's website as of October 1 / April 1

<https://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/zessko/languages/german.html>

Schedule & deadlines:

<https://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/studium/dates-and-deadlines/important-dates-and-deadlines-during-your-studies.html>

3. What exactly is it like to attend a DaF course?

Most of the language courses are not intensive courses, so they only meet once or twice a week. The maximum number of participants for each course is 20-25 students. Our language courses are supported by online materials. We use Moodle, an e-learning platform, to provision and administer these materials. A majority of the communication between instructors and students (e.g., organizational questions, course materials, submitting homework, etc.) is done outside of classroom time, on the Internet (Moodle). The instructor will help you with registration for the Moodle course.

Our tips:

- ✓ When planning your semester schedule, include both contact time (classroom hours) and online work and self-study.
- ✓ Wait before purchasing course materials!!! Your instructor will provide information in the course about these materials.
- ✓ Please remember: The subject-specific courses in law and the social sciences are held on the Griebnitzsee Campus; all general language courses are held at the Neues Palais Campus.

4. How many ECTS points do I receive for the course?

This depends on the course, attendance, and on how many tasks are completed outside of the course.

For example:

For a grammar course that meets once a week (2 semester hours), students can receive 3 ECTS points for properly active participation. Only one-third of the work is completed in contact hours (about 25 hours); the rest is completed in self-study time (about 50 hours).

Our tips:

- ✓ Expect to encounter different learning methods and forms of instruction. Get information from course commentaries and ask your lecturers.
- ✓ Read the course commentaries in the DaF course catalogue in advance. You can find information in this way about the individual courses (that correspond to your level).
- ✓ As a student at the Uni Potsdam, you automatically receive a university e-mail account. You will use this e-mail account on a daily basis for working with Moodle. Our recommendation: Set up forwarding so that your university e-mail goes to your private e-mail address.

5. Will I receive a certificate at the end of the semester?

If you **successfully participate** in a language course, you will receive a certificate of participation that includes the number of ECTS credits and (if you like) a grade.

This is not an officially recognized language certificate!

The exact methods of performance evaluation will be discussed at the beginning of the course.

Our tips:

- ✓ Get as much precise information as you can from your home university regarding the achievements you have to document after your semester abroad (ECTS points, grades, etc.).
- ✓ Speak with your coordinators about learning agreements. Will everything that you have done be recognized at your home university?

6. Do I have to pay anything for the course?

DaF courses are offered free of charge to bachelor's and master's students enrolled at the University of Potsdam, as well as Erasmus / exchange students at the University of Potsdam.

However, you will have to buy course books for some courses (instructors will provide information in this regard at the beginning of the semester); in other courses, we expect you to print out learning materials from Moodle and bring them to class with you. So you should also budget some money for this.

And now a small **checklist:**

Before starting a language course at the University of Potsdam

Deadlines

- ✓ Check the University schedule: When does the semester start? When are there holidays (legal holidays, breaks)? How long does the semester last?
- ✓ Be at the place where you plan to study 2 weeks before the courses start.
- ✓ Register for your language course 1 week before the courses start (online test + advising in DaF Office)

Recognition

- ✓ Establish and clarify your learning agreements with your coordinator: how many ECTS points you need, whether you need a grade, etc.

Language

- ✓ Do you have B2 level language skills for studying your subject in German?
- ✓ If not, review whether courses are also offered in other languages (English).
- ✓ It may be helpful to attend a language course in advance to prepare for university studies.