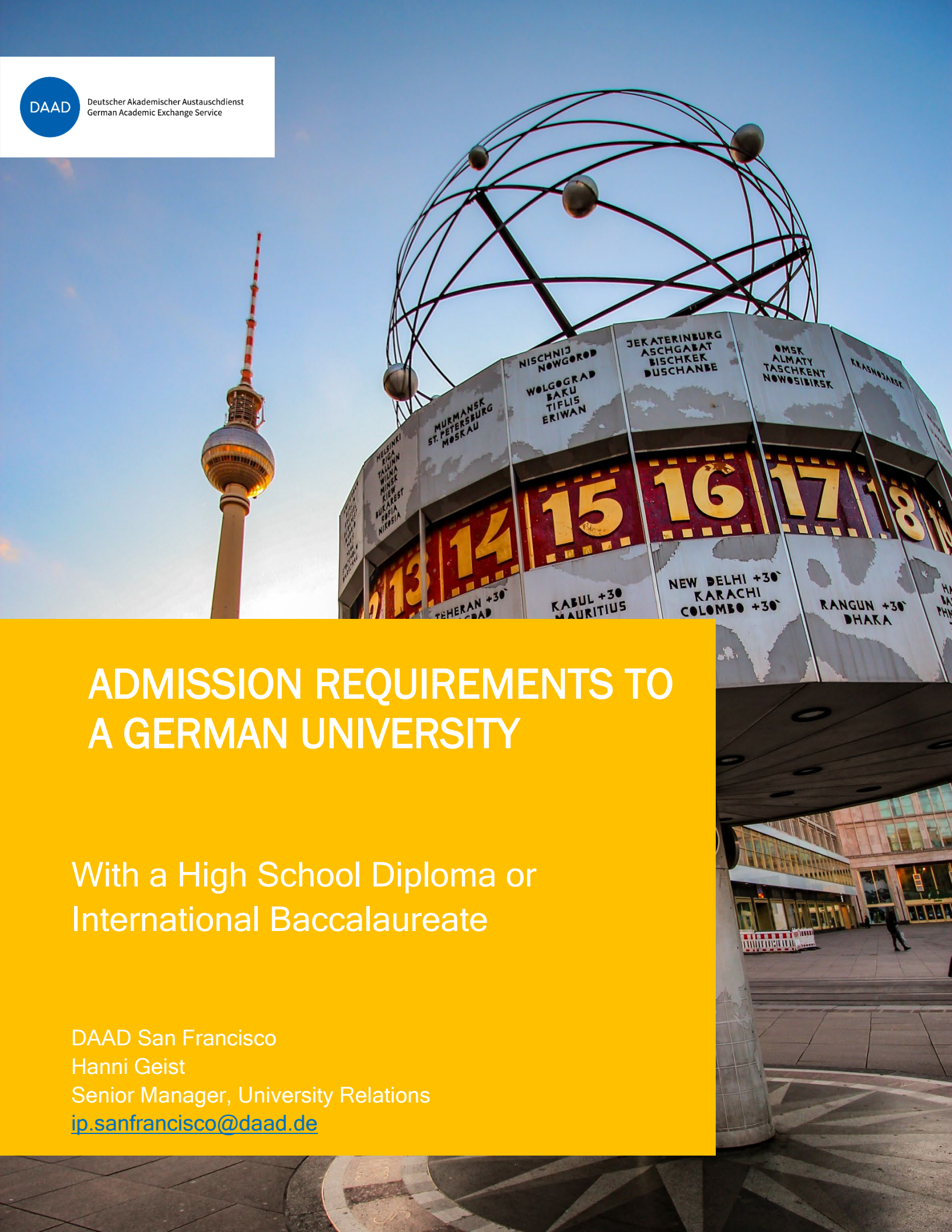

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS TO A GERMAN UNIVERSITY

With a High School Diploma or International Baccalaureate

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Guide for Graduates with US High School Diploma or IB Diploma Seeking Admission to German Universities for an Undergraduate Degree

This guide aims to give a general overview of admission requirements. The consultation offered by DAAD USA offices is based on internal knowledge and best practices and is offered in good faith. DAAD USA, however, accepts no liability for the correctness and accuracy of the information provided. Please check Schulabschlüsse mit Hochschulzugang and choose USA or International Baccalaureate. Further information is available under: KMK Bildungswesen USA or International Baccalaureate for the most accurate and up-to-date information. The websites are only available in German. For clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please contact each university for specific admission requirements, required application documents, and application deadlines. We recommend that you get in touch with the universities of your choice before you apply.

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General Information on Studying in Germany

Are you interested in studying in Germany at the undergraduate level? There are many things to consider. DAAD has many resources available and is your gateway to a German university.
For general information about studying in Germany, visit www.daad.de and www.study-in-germany.de. These websites provide detailed information on the process of applying to a university, finding the right program, and logistical questions, such as: the visa process, health insurance, and finding accommodation.
DAAD's My GUIDE is a comprehensive tool to identify the right program and the necessary steps to make the goal of studying at a German university a reality.

For country-specific information for applicants from the US, visit www.daad.org.
For any questions, please contact one of our DAAD USA offices:

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Applying to a University with Late Final Transcript and Diploma or Late Test Results

Worldwide, it is common for students to not have their final diploma and transcript by the application deadline if they apply for a degree program the Winter Semester of the same year that they graduate from a high school or IB school.
Prospective students need to get in touch with the universities of their choice and request an extension. This is a formality, but it is a necessary step to be considered for admission. If the university accepts applications via uni-assist, they will let uni-assist know via their message portal.

German & AP German for German Heritage Speakers

Who is considered a native German speaker or German heritage speaker? And are native German speakers or German heritage speakers allowed to take German at their high school as a foreign language? This is a relevant question for families in the US that speak German either exclusively or with some family members.
In the context of German admission requirements, there are clear guidelines:
Students who have grown up in the US in a German-speaking or bilingual household, regardless of their German fluency, and attend a US high school may take German as a foreign language.

Exception:

For students who attended school in Germany before attending school in the USA or currently attend a school in the US with German as the language of instruction, German, which is usually taught in the USA as "German as a foreign language," does not count as a foreign language.

Students who only attended a German *Grundschule* and attended a US High School after that may take German (AP) as a foreign language. The above-mentioned rule only applies to students who left a German-speaking school after 7th grade.

German Test Requirements

Applicants, regardless of their citizenship, will have to prove their German skills by taking an official test if they attended a US High School. Only students who attend a German school with German as the language of instruction do not have to take a test to prove their German skills.

Applying with a High School Diploma

High School Course Requirements

You can find detailed information on course requirements here and more detailed explanation on further requirements here.
The high school diploma[1] must be acquired after continuous attendance of grades 9 to 12 at a US high school and must comprise a total of 16 "academic units" (1 unit = 1 year)[2]:

- 4 units of English with a minimum grade of C: English IV or Honors or AP English,
- 2 units of a Second Language,
- 3 units of Social Studies (Please check the anabin database of the KMK/ZAB)
- 5 units in total of Mathematics and Science:
    - 2 or 3 units of Mathematics with a minimum grade of C: Algebra II or Trigonometry in grade 11 and Precalculus in grade 12 is required,
    - 2 or 3 units of Science with a minimum grade of C: Biology, Chemistry or Physics,[3]
- 2 additional academic units of the student's choice, for example, one further unit in the languages, social studies, math, science, but also one unit in physical education or arts or music

Eligible applicants must have an **unweighted cumulative** Grade Point Average (CumGPA) of at least 3.0. Transcripts that only have the weighted cumulative GPA will not be considered.
Please note that if only grades 10-12 are completed at a high school, only 3 units of English (with a minimum grade of C) are required, for a total of 15 academic credits.

Admission with a High School Diploma and AP Courses – General Admission

Students with the following credits are eligible to apply to any degree program at any public German higher education institution:

A high school diploma (see details above) **AND**

5 Advanced Placement exams with at least a 3 in:

- Mathematics (AP Calculus AB or BC)
- Natural Sciences (AP Biology, AP Chemistry or AP Physics)
- English (AP English Literature or AP English Language and Composition)

[1] Online High School Diplomas, Homeschooling and GEDs are not accepted.
[2] OR continuous attendance of grades 10 to 12 at a US High School and must comprise a total of 15 "academic units" (1 unit = 1 year); in that case only 3 units of English are required.
[3] Subjects like Earth Science or Forensic Science may be taken in addition, but cannot be substituted for Biology, Chemistry, or Physics.

- Foreign Language (For example: AP French, AP Spanish, AP Latin or AP German*)
- 1 additional AP subject (e.g. AP European History, AP American History, AP Computer Science, etc.)

Admission via High School Diploma and AP Courses – Subject-specific

Math, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Pharmacology and Technology

To be eligible to apply for field specific admission for degree programs in the field of **Mathematical study courses, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Pharmacology or Technology**, students must provide the following:

A high school diploma **AND**

4 Advanced Placement exams with at least at least a 3 in:

- Mathematics (AP Calculus AB or BC)
- 1 Natural Science (AP Biology, AP Chemistry or AP Physics (AP Physics C: Mechanics **and** AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism)
- 1 Language (Foreign languages, such as AP French, AP Spanish, AP Latin or AP German **OR** English, such as AP English Literature or AP English Language and Composition)
- 1 Additional AP subject (e.g. AP European History, AP American History, AP Computer Science, etc.)

Humanities, Social Sciences, Law and Economics/Business

To be eligible to apply for field-specific admission to degree programs in the Humanities, Social Sciences, Law, or Economics/Business, students must provide the following:

A high school diploma that fulfills the above-mentioned requirements, see here **AND**

4 Advanced Placement exams with at least at least a 3 in:

- AP English (AP English Literature or AP English Language and Composition)
- 1 Foreign Language (e.g. AP French, AP Spanish, AP Latin, or AP German). (AP German is strongly recommended.[4])
- Math OR Natural Sciences (AP Calculus AB or BC, AP Biology, AP Chemistry or two half AP Physics C, see above.)
- 1 additional AP course (e.g. AP European History, AP American History, AP Computer Science, etc.)

[4] Please check each university and program for their language requirements. AP German is one of the 4 AP courses required for direct, subject specific admission to a university, it may, however, not be sufficient to prove language skills.

Admission to German University via Studienkolleg and Feststellungsprüfung

If all High School course requirements are met, but not all AP course requirements are met, it is possible to gain admission to a German Studienkolleg. You can find more information on Studienkollegs at www.studienkollegs.de/.
Please be sure to always submit an "official transcript of records" from the school or higher education institution with the application, clearly providing information on your subjects and grades as well as the period of study.

The “Feststellungsprüfung” assesses the qualifications of international student applicants for entering universities in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Please note that passing the exam provides you with a subject-restricted university entrance qualification ("fachgebundene HZB"), meaning that you may only apply to a Bachelor program (or a comparable undergraduate course of study) in your subject area and related fields ("Fachrichtung").

In some Studienkollegs, you may take the "Feststellungsprüfung" without having attended the Studienkolleg ("externe Feststellungsprüfung"). In this case, students must prepare for the exam themselves. There is no comprehensive database, so those interested should search online for an “externe Feststellungsprüfung” at universities that offer the exam without requiring students to attend the classes.

Please note: Both "Universitäten" (universities) and "Fachhochschulen" (universities of applied sciences) offer Studienkollegs. A university qualification exam by a "Fachhochschule" only qualifies you to study at a "Fachhochschule," not at a "Universität." A university qualification exam by a "Universität" qualifies you to study at both types of universities: "Universitäten" and "Fachhochschulen".

Admission to a German University with a US HS Diploma and 2 years of college/Associate’s Degree

Applicants with a US high school diploma (see High School Course Requirements for Admission to a German University for details) are eligible to apply for direct admission to all fields if:

They possess a high school diploma that fulfills the above-mentioned requirements, see here **AND**

- they have taken college-level courses:
  - 5 independent general education subjects: English and a foreign language, mathematics, a natural science subject, and a further subject
  - have completed at least three progressive courses in three of the above mentioned subjects here or here, respectively
-
- their transcripts show:

a) Junior standing
or
b) Proof of completion of 50% of the credits required for a bachelor's degree
or
c) an associate's degree in an academic program (transfer program) with college-level courses.

Please note: Each university may require specific courses to be considered for admission to a German university. Please check course requirements in advance and get in contact with the "Akademisches Auslandsamt" of the university of your choice to make sure your course selection will be accepted.

International Baccalaureate Diploma / Diplôme du Baccalauréat International (IB)

You can find detailed information on the admission requirements for the International Baccalaureate Diploma / Diplôme du Baccalauréat International" (IB) in anabin, the database run by the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB):

- In anabin, choose „Schulabschlüsse mit Hochschulzugang“
- Select the „International Bacchalaureate (IB / GIB)“

For additional information and clarification, check the “Bildungswesen” page and select International Bacchalaureate (IB / GIB).

You can find the latest agreement between Germany and the IBO on the recognition of the “International Baccalaureate Diploma/Diplôme du Baccalauréat International” here. The information is only available in German. However, you can find an unofficial translation of the agreement here.

IB Course Requirements

a) Among the six subjects of the "International Baccalaureate Diploma / Diplôme du Baccalauréat International" (IB), the below must be taken according to the terminology of the IB. Additionally, up-to-date information and clarification for each requirement can be found on the anabin kmk Bildungswesen page for the IB. Applicants should check for any changes in regulations.

   - 2 languages at level A or B (of which at least one advanced foreign language is continued as "Language A" or "Language B HL")[5],
   - 1 Natural Sciences Subject (Biology, Chemistry, Physics),
   - Math: (Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches or Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation) **– check anabin for detailed information on Math requirements since 2019**
   - 1 Social Sciences subject (History, Geography, Economics, Psychology, Philosophy, Social Anthropology, Business and Management, Global Politics).
   - The 6th compulsory subject can also be one of the following subjects as designated by the terminology of the IB: Art/Design, Music, Theater Arts; Film, Literature and Performance, another modern foreign language, Latin, Classical Greek, General Chemistry, Applied Chemistry, Environmental Systems, Computer Science, Design Technology, World Religions, Physical Education, and Health Science.

b) At least one of the three subjects to be included in the "International Baccalaureate Diploma / Diplôme du Baccalauréat International" at the "Higher Level" has to be either mathematics or a natural science subject, i.e. Biology, Chemistry or Physics.

[5] The term „continued foreign language“ implies that the language has already been studied in lower secondary education (classes/grades 5-9/10).

c) All subjects must be completed in the "IB Diploma Program" continuously, i.e. two successive years.
d) The required six subjects must be completed with an IB grade of at least 4. If one subject is graded with an IB grade of 3, it can be made up for if a subject of the same level of difficulty is completed with an IB grade of at least 5
e) a total of at least 24 points, of which at least 12 points need to be achieved on the Higher Level (HL)

Direct Admission to German Higher Education Institutions[6]

For direct admission to a German university in ALL subject areas, the following requirements need to be met in addition to the above-mentioned requirements:

IB-Diploma with a **Math** course at the **Higher Level (HL)** AND **Natural Science** (Biology, Chemistry, or Physics) on **Standard Level (SL)**

⬇

Direct admission, all subject areas ✓

Direct, Subject-Specific Admission to a German Higher Education Institution

In addition to the above-mentioned requirements, the following requirements need to be met for direct, subject-specific admission to a German university in all subject areas:

IB-Diploma with a **Math** course at the **Standard Level (SL)** AND **Natural Science** (Biology, Chemistry, or Physics) on **Higher Level (HL)**

⬇

Direct admission for subjects that do not belong to the mathematical-scientific-technical field[7], including medicine, humanities, and law (if all other requirements are met)[8] ✓

[6] Higher education institutions include both universities and universities of applied sciences
[7] Mathematik / Naturwissenschaften: Astronomie, Biologie, Chemie, Ernährungswissenschaften, Geographie, Geowissenschaften, Informatik, Nanowissenschaften, Neurowissenschaften, Pharmatechnik, Physik, Umweltwissenschaften Technik: Architektur, Bauingenieurwesen, Bergbau, Bioingenieurwesen, Chemieingenieurwesen, Drucktechnik, Elektrotechnik, Energietechnik, Fahrzeug- und Verkehrstechnik, Gebäudeausrüstung, Geodäsie, Katastrophenschutz und -hilfe, Lebensmitteltechnologie, Luft- und Raumfahrttechnik, Maschinenbau, Mechatronik, Medientechnik, Nautik, Optische Technologien, physikalische Technik, Raumplanung, Schiffstechnik, Sicherheitswesen, Systemtechnik, Technisches Gesundheitswesen, Umweltschutz- und Entsorgungstechnik, Verfahrenstechnik, Vermessungswesen, Versorgungstechnik, Werkstoff- und Materialwissenschaften, Wirtschaftsingenieurwesen
[8] Humanities and social sciences, artistic study courses, economics and social science courses, medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, psychology, law and sports.

What if not all IB requirements are met for direct admission to a German university?

If a student does not meet all of the above-mentioned requirements, they may be eligible for **general admission to preparatory courses at a** Studienkolleg **and the university qualification exam.**

Studienkolleg courses are offered in various subject areas. The Studienkolleg ends with the university qualification exam, called a "**Feststellungsprüfung**".

The “Feststellungsprüfung” assesses the qualifications of international student applicants for entering degree programs at higher education institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany. Please note that by passing the exam you will receive a subject-restricted university entrance qualification ("fachgebundene HZB"), meaning that you may apply to a bachelor’s degree program (or a comparable undergraduate course of study) in your subject area ("Fachrichtung").

At some Studienkollegs, you may take the "Feststellungsprüfung" without having attended the Studienkolleg ("externe Feststellungsprüfung"). In this case, students must prepare for the exam themselves. There is no comprehensive database, so those interested should search online for an “externe Feststellungsprüfung” at a university that offers the exam without requiring students to attend the classes.

Please note: Both "Universitäten" (universities) and "Fachhochschulen" (universities of applied sciences) offer Studienkollegs. A university qualification exam by a "Fachhochschule" only qualifies you to study at a "Fachhochschule," not at a "Universität." A university qualification exam by a "Universität" qualifies you to study at both types of universities: "Universitäten" and "Fachhochschulen."

Information on High Schools with IB World School Accreditation

There are currently more than 800 IB high schools in the US. For a database of these schools, please visit www.ibo.org/programmes/find-an-ib-school/.
To have Germany recognize the US high school diploma or the IB diploma, all courses and exams need to be completed according to the KMK requirements for a high school diploma or the IB diploma.

A HS diploma with IB courses in 11th and 12th grade can only be assessed in Germany according to the criteria for the IB diploma. Recognition is only possible if the student took IB classes AND received the IB diploma. IB diploma program course results, IB certificates, and IB career-related programs are not eligible for university admission. The same applies to high school diplomas with IB courses in grades 11 and 12 but without the final IB diploma. In these cases, admission to a German University or a Studienkolleg is not possible.

If the IB diploma has not been awarded, the evaluation of either a high school diploma or IB is not possible, i.e. applicants are not eligible for admission to a German university or a Studienkolleg.
It is therefore important to decide beforehand whether to complete an IB Diploma. If a student is not sure about this, it is advisable to obtain a US high school diploma, which also lists courses that were completed according to the US curriculum. Here, of course, the required range of subjects and the course level required by German universities must be proven, see the anabin USA page here.
A high school diploma, in combination with AP exams administered by the College Board, also fulfills the requirements for admission to a German university, see details in this document here.

A cover letter and/or additional information may be needed for the university and uni-assist to recognize the coursework and final diploma. To ensure a smooth transition, please inquire about necessary documentation ahead of time.