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# STUDYING IN SWITZERLAND

UNIVERSITIES

**2011**



 **swissuniversity.ch**

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# SWISS HIGHER EDUCATION

(by COHEP, CRUS, and KFH, Berne 2011)

## SWITZERLAND

### Country and People

Switzerland is a small country of 41,284 square kilometres situated in the heart of Europe between France, Germany, Austria, the Principality of Liechtenstein (FL), and Italy. Its capital is Berne. The country is one of the most mountainous in Europe: the Alps, Pre-Alps, and Jura occupy more than two-thirds of its territory. These mountain regions contrast with the Swiss plateau, which is home to a large majority of the country's nearly eight million people.

More than two-thirds of the population live in urban areas. Zurich is Switzerland's biggest city, with about 374,000 people. Four other cities have populations exceeding 100,000: Geneva, Basel, Berne and Lausanne. Zurich, Berne, and Geneva are all top-ranked with respect to quality of living, making them popular places of residence. Switzerland is home to many international organisations, including the second largest UN office (ILO, UNCTAD, UNHCR, WHO, etc.), the World Trade Organisation, the Red Cross, the World Economic Forum and the International Olympic Committee.

Geographically diverse, Switzerland is diverse also in terms of its spoken languages. Despite its small size, the country has no fewer than four national languages. German is spoken by 64% of the population, French by 20%, Italian by 6.5%, and Romansh by less than 1%. About 9% speak other languages. A fifth of the population is made up of resident foreigners.

### Economy

Switzerland's unique education and training system offers a wide variety of educational options ranging from vocational training and apprenticeships to university-level education, and produces a well-qualified workforce at all levels. On account of Switzerland's high-quality education system and its multicultural society, a large part of the population is fluent in several languages. As the workforce is generally highly motivated, Switzerland ranks fifth among the world's leading national economies with respect to overall productivity.

Switzerland's small size has favoured the emergence of well-developed networks between the various fields of expertise in research, development, and industry. Its location in the heart of Europe is another advantage. Situated at the nexus of European technologies and cultures, Switzerland is also equidistant from America and Asia. Close ties with the EU assure direct links to European science and innovation programmes. Bilateral contracts with the EU provide Swiss-based companies with excellent market access to 500 million consumers. Around 4.5 million people work in Switzerland. The country has

a flexible job market and the unemployment rate is very low. Last but not least, Switzerland has an ideal size – and spirit – to qualify as a pilot market in which manufacturers can analyse market response to new products.

### **Political Organisation**

Switzerland is a confederation of 26 states, the so-called cantons. In 1848, Switzerland adopted a new constitution that consolidated the power of the central government while at the same time granting the cantons a relatively high degree of sovereignty. This constituted a decisive step towards modern democracy. It promoted centralisation without rejecting liberalism, in line with Swiss traditions. This federalist system is still in place today.

Endowed with their own constitutions, their own governments and their own laws, the cantons enjoy rather far-reaching power of legislation in many domains of political life, including education.

Direct democracy is entrenched firmly at each political level: the communes, the cantons, and the Confederation. Citizens elect the members not only of their parliaments, but also of their governments – with the exception of the Federal Councillors, who are elected by the national Parliament. Moreover, important questions are put to popular vote. This happens in the case of amendments to the Constitution and as a result of a popular initiative or referendum, two political instruments through which Swiss citizens can directly influence legislation. In Switzerland, Members of Parliament are not professionals; they fulfil their local or federal mandates alongside other jobs.

## **THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SWITZERLAND**

Switzerland's education system reflects the country's political structure. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, the communes, the cantons and the Confederation work together in their respective areas of responsibility to ensure high quality in the education system. The education system is strongly anchored in local areas, cantons and linguistic regions. The main responsibility for education lies with the cantons, who are responsible for the education system wherever the Federal Constitution does not stipulate that the Confederation is responsible. Each canton has its own legal regulations for education. Important key parameters are regulated uniformly, either at the federal level or on an inter-cantonal basis. There is no ministry of education at the federal level. The Confederation's tasks with regard to education are performed by the Federal Department for Home Affairs via the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER) and by the Federal Department for Economics via the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET).

Education has always been a top priority in Switzerland, a fact that is evidenced by the outstanding level of resources allocated to Swiss schools and different types of universities. The Swiss education and training system is characterised by a dual scheme that combines on-the-job practical training with theoretical courses. This combination of practice and theory provides for a uniquely broad range of educational options.

Pre-school education (kindergarten) and compulsory schooling (primary and lower secondary levels) are provided by the communes. The Confederation ensures that primary education satisfies certain standards of quality, and guarantees compliance with the principle of free education. At the upper secondary level, the Confederation is responsible for vocational training. Recognition of the relevant certificates – the Federal Certificate of Competence and the Professional Maturity Certificate (Professional Baccalaureate) – is a federal matter as well. General education at the upper secondary level, particularly in the gymnasia, is the responsibility of the cantons, who regulate the school-leaving examinations marking completion of these academically oriented secondary-school studies. The Confederation recognises the maturity certificates issued to graduates as long as they comply with the relevant standards. Maturity certificates attest that their holders have the required general knowledge and aptitudes to take university-level studies.

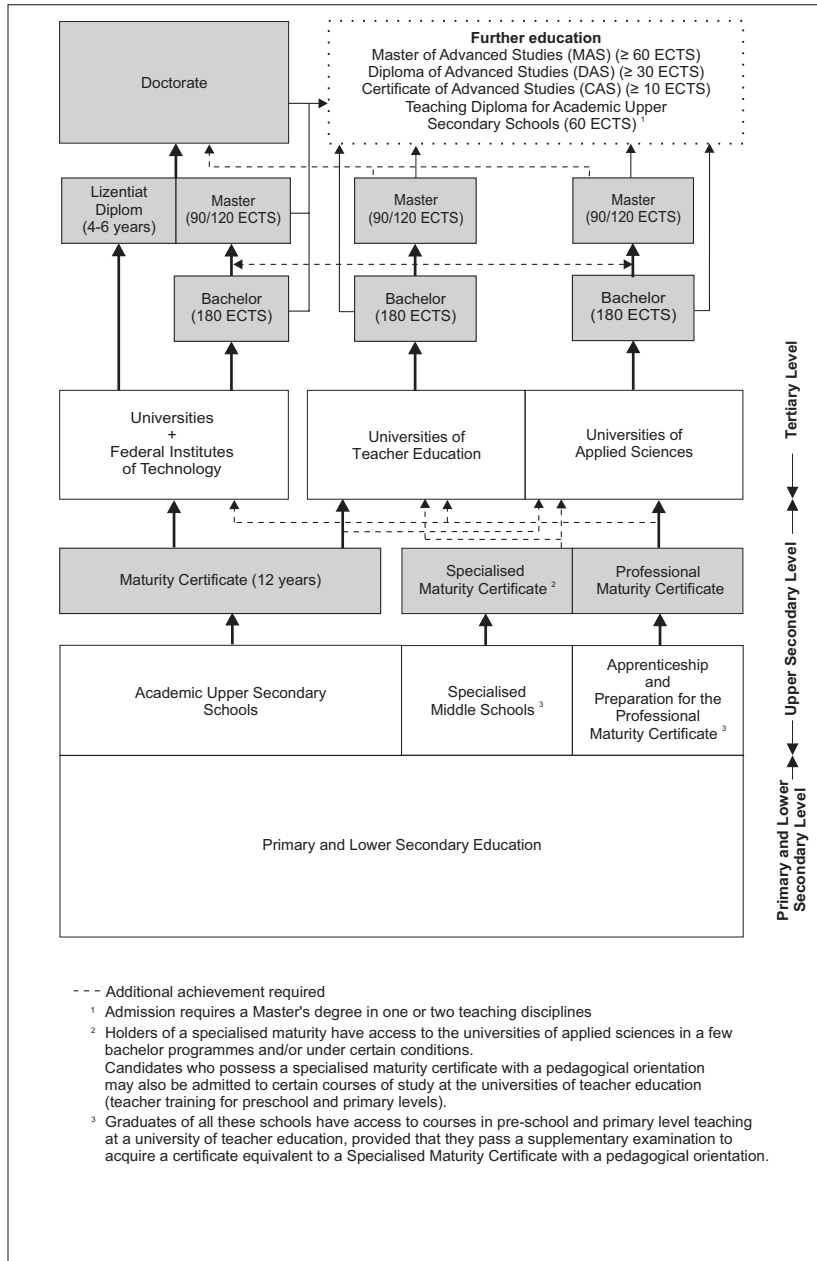
Higher education in Switzerland fits into the general dual system. The range from academic to applied studies is covered by three types of institutions with different training tasks. Twelve doctoral/research universities (ten cantonal universities and two federal institutes of technology) offer theoretically-oriented, scientific bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes. Professionally-oriented studies are offered at the nine universities of applied sciences («Fachhochschulen» / «Hautes écoles spécialisées» / «Scuole Universitarie Professionali») and at the fourteen universities of teacher education («Pädagogische Hochschulen» / «Hautes écoles pédagogiques» / «Alte scuole pedagogiche»). All three types of universities have implemented the Bologna declaration.

Holders of a maturity certificate (maturity quota 2009: 19.4%) have access to doctoral/research universities and universities of teacher education. They also have the possibility to enrol in a university of applied sciences, provided that they have completed a one-year internship or work placement. Holders of a professional maturity certificate (professional maturity quota 2009: 12%) are entitled to study at a university of applied sciences or, after passing a supplementary examination, at a doctoral/research university or a university of teacher education. Holders of a specialised maturity certificate have access to the universities of applied sciences in a few bachelor programmes related to their orientation and/or under certain conditions. Candidates who possess a specialised maturity certificate with a pedagogical orientation may also be admitted to certain courses of study at the universities of teacher education (teacher training for preschool and primary levels).

The modern, diversified but coherent system of Swiss higher education is perfectly suited to the needs of students, the scientific community, modern society, and the economy, and it is directly compatible with other European educational systems.

A perfect example for the coherence of the Swiss higher education system is the harmonisation of semesters: Switzerland is the first and only country in Europe where all institutions of higher education start their courses in the same weeks every year. The autumn semester always begins in week 38 and the spring semester in week 8. Today, other European countries are discussing how they could follow Swiss example.

*The Swiss Higher Education System*



## DOCTORAL / RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

Ten cantonal universities and two federal institutes of technology are labelled **swiss**university.ch. They are currently the only research universities in Switzerland that are allowed to confer doctoral degrees. The ten cantonal universities are in Basel, Berne, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Lucerne, Lugano, Neuchâtel, St. Gallen, and Zurich. Most of them have evolved over several centuries, in step with societal and economic needs and always in pursuit of humanist ideals.

Since the mid-19th century, the Confederation has played an active role in science policy. In 1855 it founded the first federal research institution, a polytechnic in Zurich. Today, the Confederation runs six institutions, comprising the two federal institutes of technology in Lausanne (EPFL) and in Zurich (ETHZ; this is the former polytechnic mentioned above), as well as four research institutes, namely the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI), the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research (WSL), the Empa – Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Testing and Research, and the Eawag – Aquatic Research. The two federal institutes of technology (ETHZ and EPFL) are known worldwide and have brought forth many Nobel Prize laureates.

Switzerland's cantonal universities also have excellent reputations on account of their high-quality research. In recent years at least five Swiss universities have consistently ranked among the 150 best universities of the world. Together, Switzerland's universities offer potential students the unique possibility of choosing among high-quality courses in different universities across the different cultural regions of Switzerland, yet within a reachable distance.

Although each of the universities has its own characteristics, they all have the same basic structure combining research and education – a prerequisite for all students who intend to continue their studies up to doctorate level. All of the twelve Swiss universities are divided into faculties or departments according to subjects, including theology, law, economic and social sciences, arts, natural sciences, and medicine (although Fribourg and Neuchâtel offer only basic medical courses). St. Gallen is renowned for economics, social sciences, and law especially in German-speaking Europe, but also in the US and Asia. Lucerne, the most recent to qualify as a Swiss university, has been offering courses in Catholic theology / religious studies, humanities, and law since 2004. The second-youngest Swiss university, the Università della Svizzera italiana (USI) in Lugano, in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland, is not only famous for its courses in architecture with Prof. Mario Botta, but also offers study programmes in economics, communication sciences, and informatics. The two federal institutes of technology are well-known for producing highly qualified engineers, architects, and scientists; in study areas such as the human sciences they collaborate closely with their cantonal counterparts, the University of Zurich and the University of Lausanne, respectively.

In addition to the twelve doctoral/research universities there are some smaller institutions that offer a limited curriculum and confer their degrees in association with one of the doctoral/research universities. The following are considered as public institutions



of higher education: the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies (Institut de hautes études internationales et du développement, IHEID) in Geneva and the Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (Institut de hautes études en administration publique, IDHEAP) in Lausanne. For more information see [www.swissuniversity.ch](http://www.swissuniversity.ch), [www.crus.ch](http://www.crus.ch), and [www.proff.ch](http://www.proff.ch). Specific information for doctoral candidates and researchers is available on: [www.euraxess.ch](http://www.euraxess.ch).

## UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES



As of 1997 Switzerland has seven public-funded universities of applied sciences and two private universities of applied sciences that are recognised by the Swiss authorities. All of them offer practice-oriented university-level education.

The universities of applied sciences (UAS) are organised regionally and all have several campuses.

Universities of applied sciences in the German-speaking part of Switzerland:

- Bern University of Applied Sciences (BFH, Berner Fachhochschule) with campuses in Berne, Burgdorf, Biel, Zollikofen, and Magglingen
- University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW, Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz) with campuses in Brugg/Windisch, Olten, Basel, and Muttenz
- University of Applied Sciences of Eastern Switzerland (FHO, Fachhochschule Ostschweiz) with main campuses in St. Gallen, Rapperswil, Buchs, and Chur
- Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU, Hochschule Luzern) with campuses in Lucerne and Horw
- University of Applied Sciences of Zurich (ZFH, Zürcher Fachhochschule) with campuses in Zurich, Winterthur, Wädenswil, and Dübendorf
- Kalaidos University of Applied Sciences Switzerland (FH KAL) with campuses in Basel, Berne, St. Gallen, Zurich, and Aarau

University of applied sciences in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland:

- University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI, Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana) with campuses in Lugano, Manno, Canobbio, Verscio, Locarno, Brig, and Landquart

Universities of applied sciences in the French-speaking part of Switzerland:

- University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland (HES-SO, Haute Ecole Spécialisée de la Suisse Occidentale) with main campuses in Geneva, Lausanne, Sion\*/ Sierre\* Leukerbad\*, Fribourg\*, Yverdon-les-Bains, Changins, Neuchâtel, and La Chaux-de-Fonds. (\*offering certain degree programmes in German)
- Les Roches Gruyère University of Applied Sciences (LRG) with campuses in Bluche, Bulle, and Glion

The universities of applied sciences cover the following areas of knowledge and research:

- Engineering and Information Technology (all UAS except FH KAL and LRG)

- Architecture, Building Engineering and Planning (all UAS except FH KAL and LRG)
- Agriculture and Forestry (BFH and HES-SO only)
- Chemistry and Life Sciences (all UAS except FHO, SUPSI, HSLU, FH KAL, and LRG)
- Design (all UAS except FHO, FH KAL, and LRG)
- Social Work (all UAS except FH KAL and LRG)
- Health (all UAS except HSLU, FHNW, FH KAL, and LRG)
- Business, Management and Services (all UAS)
- Applied Psychology (ZFH and FHNW only)
- Applied Linguistics (ZFH only)
- Sports (BFH only)
- Teacher Education (ZFH, FHNW, and SUPSI)

A distinctive feature of Swiss universities of applied sciences is that they comprise study programmes in the following creative disciplines:

- Theatre Arts (ZFH, BFH, HES-SO and SUPSI only)
- Music (all UAS except FHO, FH KAL, and LRG)
- Fine Arts (all UAS except FHO, FH KAL, and LRG).

Universities of applied sciences provide a practice-oriented education, accommodating the needs of both students and the job market. They offer an excellent learning environment: small campuses, an intimate atmosphere, a good learning infrastructure, well-equipped laboratories, a low student/faculty ratio, small study groups, student-oriented classes, and highly qualified teachers who are often involved in research and/or professional practice.

In addition to their bachelor's and master's programmes, the UAS offer a wide range of federally recognised courses in continuing education (Master of Advanced Studies or MAS and Executive Master of Business Administration or EMBA) to facilitate lifelong learning among graduates. A flexible organisational design allows UAS to respond quickly to the needs of both students and the professional environment.

All departments of the UAS also conduct distinguished research aimed at solving problems related to their respective professional fields. This makes the UAS an important link in the innovation chain. Research at the UAS is also closely combined with instruction, enabling students to gain research expertise in their respective professional fields. In the creative disciplines, the main emphasis is on the development of students' artistic identity.

The fact that the education they receive is practice-oriented grants students graduating from UAS very good prospects on the job market. Recent studies have shown that 96% of all UAS students find employment in their professional field within twelve months of graduating. This confirms that the education supplied by the UAS meets the demands of the job market. A UAS degree also serves as an entry qualification to further studies at universities both in Switzerland and abroad. All UAS are accredited by the federal government of Switzerland.

For more information see [www.kfh.ch](http://www.kfh.ch) (website of the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences).

## UNIVERSITIES OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The universities of teacher education were created in 2001, incorporating or replacing various previous forms of teacher training institutions in Switzerland. Based on the same principles as the universities of applied sciences in that they offer a practice-oriented education, most of the universities of teacher education are nonetheless independent institutions.

The vast majority of teachers at the different levels of the school system (initial and continuing education) are trained at the universities of teacher education, which are financed by the cantons. In some cases teachers are also trained at research/doctoral universities or other tertiary-level institutions.

Today, Switzerland has fourteen universities of teacher education. Eleven of them are independent establishments (Berne, Brig/St-Maurice, Chur, Fribourg, Kreuzlingen, Lausanne, Lucerne/Schwyz/Zug, Porrentruy/Bienne/La Chaux-de-Fonds, Schaffhausen, St.Gallen, and Zurich<sup>1</sup>); the other three form part of universities of applied sciences (in Basel/Brugg/Solothurn, Locarno, and Zurich). In some cantons, teachers are trained at the cantonal universities: the University of Geneva trains pre-school- and primary-level teachers and lower- and upper-secondary-level teachers (Institut Universitaire de Formation des Enseignants, IUFE), and the University of Fribourg offers training for lower- and upper-secondary-level teachers. In Zurich, training of teachers for the upper secondary level is provided by an institute that is run jointly by the University of Zurich, the Federal Institute of Technology Zurich and the Zurich University of Teacher Education.

The Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) is responsible for the training and advanced training of teachers in vocational education and also offers a master's programme in vocational education and training. The Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen (SFISM) provides training in both practice and teaching of sports and physical activity.

The universities of teacher education award diplomas, bachelor's or master's degrees in the following domains: pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education, special needs education, speech and language therapy, psychomotor therapy, vocational training, and sport. In addition, they offer Master of Advanced Studies (MAS), Diploma of Advanced Studies (DAS) and Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) programmes. The universities of teacher education are responsible for training and advanced training of teachers, as well as applied research, development, and evaluation; they also provide other services such as counselling, introductions to the teaching profession and mobility support.

## RELATIONS BETWEEN DOCTORAL/RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES, UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES, AND UNIVERSITIES OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Cooperation and permeability between the different types of institutions of higher education are essential. Switzerland's institutions of higher education are striving for a perfect balance between cooperation and division of tasks. Therefore, the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS), the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (KFH), and the Swiss Conference of Rectors of Universities of Teacher Education (COHEP) encourage exchange programmes and work together readily.

An example of successful cooperation between the three rectors' conferences is a joint agreement concerning permeability between the different types of universities. This agreement enables students of one type of university to continue their studies at another type of university under certain defined conditions. A second example is the *nqf.ch*-HS<sup>1</sup> qualifications framework, which defines and describes levels of education and qualifications earned in Swiss higher education with a view to enhancing national and international comparability.

## INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

Since 2011 Switzerland has been participating in the European programmes «Lifelong Learning» and «Youth in Action» as an associated country. Swiss citizens are thereby entitled to the same rights as EU citizens within all the activities of these programmes. Furthermore Swiss institutions are eligible to propose and coordinate projects. Switzerland can also help defining the strategic direction of these programmes in the responsible bodies. Recently the *ch* Foundation in Solothurn has become the responsible body for the implementation of the official participation in the education and youth programmes of the EU ([www.ch-go.ch](http://www.ch-go.ch))<sup>2</sup>.

The Erasmus office at CRUS currently only deals with matters of the previous indirect participation (exchange years 2009/10 and 2010/11).

Swiss institutions of higher education have introduced the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which aims to foster student mobility by ensuring the recognition of credits obtained elsewhere. Since the entry into force of the bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU, Swiss scientists have access to the various EU programmes promoting mobility for researchers.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.crus.ch>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sbf.admin.ch>

## RESEARCH IN SWITZERLAND <sup>1</sup>

Switzerland's superior qualities and skills in education, science, and technology enjoy broad international recognition. The competitiveness of the Swiss economy is due to considerable investment into research. The percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) that Switzerland spends on research and development is one of the highest worldwide. More than two-thirds of these resources come from the private sector, with the major interest coming from the chemical, pharmaceutical, electronics, and metallurgical industries.

The federal legislation puts the onus of promoting scientific research on the Confederation, which in turn has created various instruments to carry out this task, including, in particular, the Swiss National Science Foundation<sup>2</sup> and the the Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI<sup>3</sup>.

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) is the Confederation's most important instrument for promoting research and the development of new generations of scientists. Set up in 1952, the SNSF supports scientific research at Swiss institutions of higher education and at independent research institutes. The main thrust of the foundation's activity is the financial backing of high-quality individual projects of basic research in all disciplines. Young scientific talent is promoted through grants for junior and advanced researchers and through exchange programmes with various partner countries. The SNSF is also responsible for the so-called National Research Programmes (NRP) and National Centres of Competence in Research (NCCR). Moreover, through a special programme called DORE, the SNSF promotes research in the fields of the social sciences, the health sciences, school education, music, and the fine arts.

The Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI is the Confederation's instrument to foster applied research and the development of economic interest. It promotes the development and application of new technologies and methodologies by bringing together dynamic companies and institutions and researchers at all types of universities and supporting their cooperation in applied research and development. CTI services range from action programmes in different fields of the economy, the public services, and cultural life to support for the establishment of new firms and services. The tools of the CTI are also available to small and medium-sized enterprises or other institutions in need of new knowledge.

Basic research in Switzerland is carried out mainly by the cantonal universities and the federal institutes of technology, whereas the universities of applied sciences concentrate on applied research and development and seek to establish and maintain close contacts between their research units and those in the private sector, especially in small and medium enterprises and the creative economy. Research is also conducted at the universities of teacher education, mainly in the context of subject-specific didactics and the master's programmes.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <http://www.sbf.admin.ch>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.snf.ch>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.kti.admin.ch/>

Efforts to integrate Swiss research activities into international research began in the early 1950s; since then these efforts have been consistently reinforced through Swiss membership in the most important international research organisations and Swiss participation in major international research programmes (see below).

## KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Cooperation and synergies on the cantonal, national, and international levels make Switzerland an ideal place for identifying ways to develop products to market maturity. Switzerland has a large number of institutions and tools to support and further research and promote exchanges between doctoral/research universities, universities of applied sciences, and businesses.

The cantonal universities, the federal institutes of technology and the four federal research institutes have either created technology transfer departments or designated officers responsible for relations with industry. The universities of applied sciences serve as a link between research and industry. All of them have a technology transfer service in place, and cooperation between the UAS and the private sector has developed rapidly over the past ten years.

In addition to the activities of the CTI, the so-called European Union Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development are also an important instrument for creating synergies between the public and private sectors. These programmes encourage cooperation at the European level between universities and firms, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises. Switzerland's participation in these programmes is one of the most important priorities of Swiss international science policy.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Internationality begins on campus, among students. The percentages of international students at Swiss doctoral/research universities and universities of applied sciences are among the highest in the world: in 2009 they amounted to 18% and 14%, respectively, at the bachelor level, and 30% and 30%, respectively, at the master level; as many as 48% of all doctoral candidates came from abroad in 2009. Most of these international students come from other European countries.

Internationality means promoting student and researcher mobility, and hence depends on cooperation. Swiss institutions of higher education are reliable partners in European exchange and research programmes. Bilateral agreements ensure and facilitate cooperation between Swiss institutions and partner institutions in the European Union. Furthermore, from 2009 to 2016, CRUS is implementing a scientific exchange programme with the new member states of the EU (see [www.sciex.ch](http://www.sciex.ch)).

The individual institutions of higher education have numerous bilateral agreements with partner institutions around the world. The universities' international relations are generally managed by the rectorates and their international officers or by individual faculties, depending on the type of cooperation. In Switzerland's border regions, where thousands of people cross the border every morning to reach their workplaces, cooperation is particularly evident. In 1989, five universities located in the Swiss-French-German tri-border region founded EUCOR, the cross-border European Confederation of Upper Rhine Universities. Today, a joint EUCOR student card grants full mobility and access to all member universities. Joint programmes and courses, as well as joint research initiatives and staff exchanges have made internationality a matter of everyday life at the EUCOR universities. A similar programme has also been established among the universities of applied sciences of north-western Switzerland and homologous institutions of higher education in the bordering regions of France and Germany.

At the level of the three Swiss rectors' conferences, Switzerland takes active part in international activities through membership in organisations such as the European University Association (EUA), the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), and the Network of the Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS NET), as well as platforms such as the European Association for International Education (EAIE) and the Association Of International Educators (NAFSA), an organisation promoting international education and providing professional development opportunities to the field in the USA. These activities ensure Switzerland's integration in joint international efforts to promote the visibility and the quality of higher education.

In view of the growing importance of international exchange in the realm of science, the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER) has placed particular emphasis on promoting Switzerland as a university and research location. Cooperation schemes conducive to the mobility of students, teaching staff, and researchers are sought not only with partners in Europe: increasing efforts are also made towards collaboration with suitable non-European partner countries and regions, most importantly with China, India, Russia, and South Africa.

Moreover, institutions of higher education cooperate closely with the science advisors at the Swiss embassies abroad and at the outposts of the Swiss Knowledge Network «swissnex».

### **Recognition of Diplomas**

In neighbouring countries...

In addition to these multilateral relations, Switzerland also attaches great importance to bilateral agreements, in particular with neighbouring countries, in order to ensure student mobility and mutual recognition of programmes and degrees. It has concluded bilateral agreements with Austria, Germany, Italy and France that regulate the recognition of degrees as a basis for further studies.

...and elsewhere

Switzerland acceded to the university conventions of the Council of Europe and UNESCO in 1991 and ratified the Lisbon Convention in 1998. Among other measures, this Convention provides for a so-called «Diploma Supplement», which is a description of the qualification to be attached to each diploma or degree awarded by a university, university of applied sciences or university of teacher education. Both the Lisbon Convention and the Bologna Declaration recommend the introduction of the Diploma Supplement.

## REFORMS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Internationalisation, above all the implementation of the Bologna Declaration, is the major determinant of reforms in Switzerland. The implementation of quality assurance and accreditation procedures on the basis of international criteria and standards are some of the most important elements within the Bologna implementation process.

A structural reorganisation of the Swiss higher education system is being prepared for the period after 2012. Plans foresee the introduction of a framework law regulating the doctoral/research universities, universities of applied sciences, and universities of teacher education and defining uniform funding principles for all three types of institutions. Responsibility at the federal level will be concentrated in a single department, and newly created joint bodies shall be entrusted with the overall steering of the higher education system.

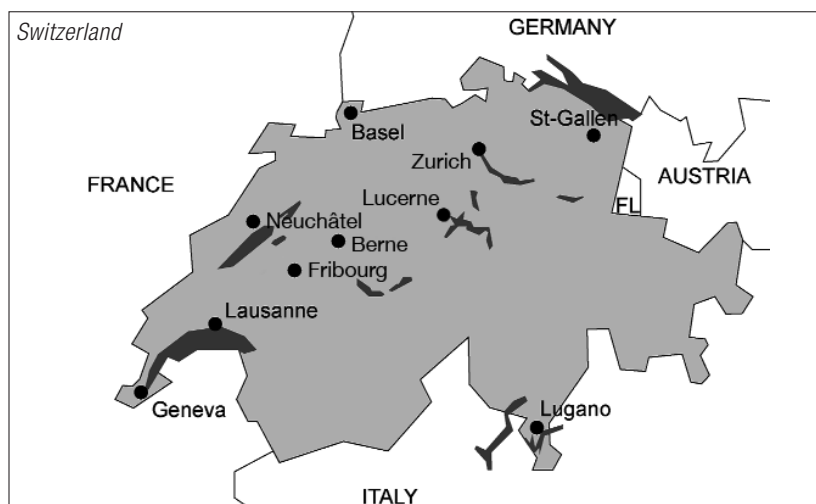


# STUDYING AT DOCTORAL / RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

By Leander Amherd, lic. phil., Information and Documentation Centre, Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, March 2011

## GENERAL INFORMATION

There are 12 doctorate degree awarding universities in Switzerland (10 cantonal universities and 2 federal institutes of technology).



The universities of Basel, Berne, Lucerne, St Gallen, Zurich and the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich are located in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. The universities of Geneva, Lausanne and Neuchâtel, as well as the Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne are in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. The University of Fribourg is situated in a bilingual canton. Therefore the teaching language is French and /or German. The Università della Svizzera italiana is located in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland.

## ACADEMIC DEGREES

Since winter semester 2001/2002, the universities in Switzerland have been instituting reforms in degree programmes in accordance with the Bologna Declaration. This is a two-cycle (undergraduate / postgraduate) system and qualifications structure: (1) Bachelor's degree (180 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits or three years of full-

time study), and (2) Master's degree (90–120 ECTS credits or 1.5–2 years of full-time study beyond the Bachelor's degree). Access to a Master's degree programme requires the successful completion of the Bachelor's degree. Access to doctoral level studies requires successful completion of a Master's degree with good grades.

The universities also offer an additional post-graduate degree called Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) (minimum 60 ECTS credits or one year of full-time study). The MAS does not give access to doctoral level programmes.

As the implementation of the Bologna reforms is not yet complete in Switzerland, academic degrees following the older system are still being awarded. In the older system, students are awarded the Licentiate or Diploma after completion of 4–5 years of full-time studies. Completion of a Licentiate/Diploma with good grades gives the holder access to doctoral level studies.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The number of university graduates continues to rise each year in Switzerland. Nevertheless, all study programmes have remained open to students having a valid maturity certificate or other certificate qualifying for university entrance. The only exceptions are study programmes in medicine (human medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine) and chiropractic. There may be entrance examinations to these study programmes depending on the number of applicants for admission in any given year. The limited number of openings is the reason why international students, apart from some special cases, are not admitted to these study programmes.

### **a) Admission to a Bachelor's Programme**

For access to Swiss universities a valid Swiss maturity certificate or an equivalent foreign upper secondary school-leaving certificate qualifying for university entrance is required. Each of the universities makes its own decisions as to what certificates and qualifications it recognizes. Detailed information on general and country-specific access and admission requirements can be found at the CRUS / Swiss ENIC Web site ([www.enic.ch](http://www.enic.ch) → Zulassung → Zulassung in der Schweiz). There are special regulations for study programmes in medicine and chiropractic.

### **b) Admission to a Master's Programme**

The prerequisite for access to a Master's programme is a successfully completed Bachelor's level programme. Graduates of Bachelor's programmes have access to certain Master's programmes, as listed in the data base available at [www.uni-programme.ch](http://www.uni-programme.ch). Each of the universities makes its own decisions as to whether a foreign Bachelor's degree gives the holder access to Master's programmes without entrance examinations, or access under certain conditions, or access with further requirements, or does not give access to Master's programmes.

### **c) Language Requirements**

The universities require good knowledge of the language of instruction. At the Master's level especially, the universities are offering an increasing number of study programmes in English. For students that do not hold fully recognized certificates qualifying for university entrance, the admission requirements also include a university entrance examination.

## **UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMINATION**

### **a) Central Entrance Examination**

Students that do not hold fully recognized certificates qualifying for university entrance must pass a university entrance examination. This applies mainly to students with foreign educational qualifications. The central entrance examination for students with foreign educational qualifications is conducted twice a year (June and August / September) in Fribourg by VKHS.

VKHS (Vorbereitungskurse auf das Hochschulstudium)

Rue de Rome 1

CH-1700 Fribourg

Phone +41 (0)26 347 16 16

Fax +41 (0)26 347 16 17

E-mail: [info@vkhs.ch](mailto:info@vkhs.ch)

<http://www.vkhs.ch>

### **b) University of St. Gallen**

As the only Swiss university to do so, the University of St. Gallen requires foreign national students to take its own entrance examination. The reason is that the university restricts the total percentage of foreign national students to 25 %. Foreign nationals who hold a recognized Swiss maturity certificate are exempt from this examination requirement.

### **c) Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology**

The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich ETHZ) and Lausanne (Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne EPFL) offer the opportunity to take entrance examinations to applicants, both foreign nationals and Swiss, who do not hold a fully recognized upper secondary school-leaving certificate qualifying for university entrance.

ETH Zurich  
 Admissions Office  
 Rämistrasse 101  
 HG F 21.3  
 CH-8092 Zurich  
 Phone +41 (0)44 632 56 53 / 54 10  
[http://www.rektorat.ethz.ch/students/admission/bachelor/foreign\\_qual/](http://www.rektorat.ethz.ch/students/admission/bachelor/foreign_qual/)

Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale (EPFL)  
 AA-EBM CMS, Station 4  
 CH-1015 Lausanne  
 Phone +41 (0)21 693 22 95  
<http://cms.epfl.ch>

## COSTS

### TUITION FEES PER YEAR IN CHF

	EPFL	ETHZ	Uni BS	Uni BE	Uni FR	Uni GE	Uni LA	Uni LU	Uni NE	Uni SG	Uni ZH	USI
For Swiss students	1266	1288	1400	1310	1310	1000	1160	1570	1030	2040	1378	4000
Additional fees for foreign students					300				550	300	200	4000
For foreign students	1266	1288	1400	1310	1610	1000	1160	1570	1580	2340	1578	8000

Source: websites of the Swiss universities (as of: March 2011)

Living expenses: between CHF 19,000.– and 29,000.– per year  
 (depending on the location of the university and personal demands)

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### Governmental Scholarships

The Swiss Government offers scholarships to foreign students and artists on the basis of reciprocity or within the framework of a scholarship pool to several countries. Scholarships are granted to postgraduate candidates or researchers from both industrial and developing countries.

Candidates should, in the first instance, find out from their own country's authorities whether they are entitled to a governmental scholarship or should approach the Swiss embassy or consulate ([www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/rebs.html](http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/rebs.html)) in their home country. A list of the relevant countries and further information on the governmental scholarships, such as application requirements, duration of scholarship, scholarship amount, application procedure etc. are available at [www.sbf.admin.ch/eskas-e.html](http://www.sbf.admin.ch/eskas-e.html).

Candidates must be under 35 of age and proficient in English, German, French or Italian. Before applying for Research Fellowships candidates should get in touch with a professor ([www.proff.ch](http://www.proff.ch)) or with the responsible service of the programme at the chosen Swiss higher education institution in order to get a written confirmation of acceptance. For Master programmes a copy of the correspondence with the Master director/coordinator is only requested. The Master applicants do not have to be admitted in the programme at this stage of their application procedure.

### **University Scholarships**

To find out whether Swiss universities offer scholarships to foreign students, candidates are advised to check with the mobility centers of the Swiss universities at [www.erasmus-online.ch/international-offices.html](http://www.erasmus-online.ch/international-offices.html).

## **HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

All persons living in Switzerland for more than three months, including also international students, must have basic health insurance coverage. Students from countries that provide international mutual health coverage may be exempted from the compulsory health insurance. Other students may be exempted if they have equivalent health insurance coverage in their home country.

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The academic year is divided into two semesters. Classes are held starting in the fall from week 38 to week 51 and in the spring from week 8 to week 22.

## **REQUIRED STEPS IF YOU WANT TO STUDY IN SWITZERLAND**

If you fulfil the requirements listed in the section "Admission Requirements" above, proceed as follows:

### **a) Apply for Admission**

Contact the university of your choice prior to the admission deadline. Most of the universities also accept online applications. The main documents that you will have to send to the

university are your upper secondary school-leaving certificate (the original or a notarized copy) and an up-to-date passport photograph.

**b) Entry / Visa and Residence Permit**

Within 14 days of entering Switzerland, EU / EFTA citizens must register with the local authority (*Einwohnerkontrolle*, Residents' Registration Office) at the place of residence and apply for a residence permit. You will need to present the following documents:

- Personal application for residence permit
- Valid passport or identity card
- Proof of registration at the university
- Evidence of sufficient funds (bank certificate or certified document)
- Proof of address at place of residence
- 2 passport photographs

Other foreign national students must contact the Swiss embassy or consulate in their own country ([www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/rebs.html](http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/rebs.html)) and apply for a visa. If the responsible immigration or police authorities approve the application, the requirements for entry into Switzerland and for residence for the purpose of study are met.

Foreign nationals who are not EU/EFTA citizens and who do not require a visa should consult the Swiss embassy or consulate in their country for the current entry and residence requirements and formalities.

## INFORMATION SERVICE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS)

Information and Documentation

Sennweg 2, CH-3012 Berne, Switzerland

Phone: +41 (0)31 306 60 44 (Mo–Fr 8.30–11.30), Fax: +41 (0)31 306 60 20

E-mail: [iud@crus.ch](mailto:iud@crus.ch), website: [www.studying-in-switzerland.ch](http://www.studying-in-switzerland.ch)

# STUDY PROGRAMMES OFFERED AT THE SWISS UNIVERSITIES

By Leander Amherd and Tiziana Tafani, Information and Documentation Centre, Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, March 2011

The following table comprises the study programmes (B, M, SM) which have been published by the universities on the website [www.uni-programme.ch](http://www.uni-programme.ch) (as of: March 2011). Specialisations are not listed separately. For more up-to-date information or details on each subject, please check the websites of the universities.

Source: [www.uni-programme.ch](http://www.uni-programme.ch)

## ABBREVIATIONS OF THE UNIVERSITIES IN SWITZERLAND

### Universities in the German-speaking Part:

BE	Universität Bern
BS	Universität Basel
LU	Universität Luzern
SG	Universität St. Gallen
ZH	Universität Zürich
ETHZ	Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich

### University in the Italian-speaking Part:

USI	Università della Svizzera italiana
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### Universities in the French-speaking Part:

GE	Université de Genève
LA	Université de Lausanne
EPFL	Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne
NE	Université de Neuchâtel

### University Where Courses Are Taught in French and/or German:

FR	Universität Freiburg / Université de Fribourg
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### Key to the Study Programmes:

B	Bachelor's degree
M	Master's degree
SM	Specialized Master's degree
MAS	Master's of Advanced Studies degree
1	only the first year of studies
2	only the first 2 years of studies

**1. THEOLOGY, SCIENCE OF RELIGION**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Science of Religion	B/M/SM	B/M		B/M	B/M		B/M/SM			B/M	B/M	B/M	
Theology	B/M	B/M		B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M

**2. LAW, CRIMINOLOGY**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Forensic Sciences												B/M	
Law	B/M	B/M/SM		B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M/SM			B/M	B/M/SM	B/M	B/M

**3. ECONOMICS, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION / MANAGEMENT, POLITICAL SCIENCE**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Business Administration	B/M/SM	B/M/SM	M	B/M		B/M/SM	B/M/SM	M	SM	B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Business Informatics				B/M			B/M			B/M	B	M	B/M
Economics	B/M/SM	B/M/SM	SM	B/M	B	B/M/SM	B/M/SM	B/M		B/M	B/M	M	B/M
Finance			SM	M		SM	B/M/SM	M		M	M	M	
Political Science	B/M/SM	SM	SM	M	B	B/M	B/M	M		M	B/M	B/M	
Professional Officer (of the Swiss Armed Forces)			B										

**4. MEDICINE, PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES, HEALTH**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Biomedical Engineering	SM		SM										
Dentistry	B/M	B		2			B/M			2	B/M	2	
Human Medicine	B/M	B/M/SM		B			B/M			B	B/M	B/M	
Nursing Sciences		B/M										SM	
Pharmaceutical Sciences	2	B/M	B/M	2						2	B/M	1	1
Veterinary Medicine	B/M						B/M						



**5. SOCIAL SCIENCES, SOCIAL WORK**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Education	B/M	M		B/M/ SM			B/M			B/M/ SM	B/M		B/M/ SM
Geography	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Psychology	B/M	B/M		B/M/ SM			B/M/ SM			B/M/ SM	B/M	B/M	B/M
Social and Cultural Anthropology	B/M	B/M		B/M	B/M		B/M/ SM			B/M	B/M	B	B/M
Social Work and Politics				B/M						B/M			M
Sociology	B/M	B/M/ SM		B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Special Education				B/M			B/M			B/M	M		B/SM

**6. LINGUISTICS + LITERARY STUDIES, COMMUNICATION**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
African Studies		SM											
Ancient Near Eastern Studies		M									B/M		
Central Asian Studies	B/M										SM	B	
Classical Philology	B/M	B/M/ SM		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Communication and Media Studies	B	B/M/ SM		B/M	B/M		B/M	B/M			B/M		B/SM
Comparative Literature				M			B/M			M	B/M		
East Asian Studies							B/M				B/M/ SM		
English Languages and Literatures	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
French Language and Literature	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
German Language and Literature	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Ibero-Romance Languages and Literatures	M	M		B/M			M			B/M	B/M	B	B/M
Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies	B/M	B/M					B/M				B/M		
Interpretation / Translation											M		
Italian Language and Literature	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M	M		B/M	B/M	B/M	
Linguistics	B/M	SM		M/SM			B/M/ SM			M/SM	B/M	B/M	B/M
Modern Greek Language and Literature											B/M		

**6. LINGUISTICS + LITERARY STUDIES, COMMUNICATION (CONT.)**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Nordic Languages and Literatures		B/M					B/M						
Rhaeto-Romanic Language and Literature				B			M			B			
Slavonic Languages and Literatures	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	
South Asian Studies / Indian Studies							B/M				SM	B/M	

**7. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SCIENCES**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
African Studies		SM											
Ancient Near Eastern Studies		M									B/M		
Archeology	B/M	B/M/SM		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Art History	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M/SM			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M/SM
Central Asian Studies	B/M										SM	B	
Classical Philology	B/M	B/M/SM		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
East Asian Studies							B/M				B/M/SM		
Egyptology		M									B/M		
History	B/M	B/M/SM	SM	B/M	B/M		B/M/SM			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
History and Philosophy of Science	B/M		SM										
Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies	B/M	B/M					B/M				B/M		
Musicology	B/M	B		B/M	M		B/M			B/M	B/M		
Philosophy	B/M	B/M		B/M/SM	B/M		B/M			B/M/SM	B/M	B/M	B/M
Theatre, Dance and Film Studies	B/M						SM				B/M	B/M	
South Asian Studies / Indian Studies							B/M				SM	B/M	

### 9. SCIENCES, MATHEMATICS

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Agricultural Science			B/M										
Applied Biosciences	SM		SM				SM		M				
Archeology	B/M	B/M/SM		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Biochemistry	B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M			B/M/SM			B/M	B/M		
Biology	B/M	B/M/SM	B/M/SM	B/M			B/M/SM			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Chemical Engineering			B/M						M				M
Chemistry	B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M			B/M		B/M	B/M	B/M	M	
Earth Sciences	B/M/SM	B/M	B/M/SM	B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M/SM
Environmental Sciences	SM		B/M/SM				SM				M	B/M	
Food Science			B/M										
Forensic Sciences													B/M
Geography	B/M	B/M		B/M			B/M			B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M
Life Sciences and Technologies									B/M				
Materials Science and Engineering			B/M						B/M				
Mathematics	B/M	B/M/SM	B/M/SM	B/M			B/M/SM		B/M	B/M	B/M		B/M
Physics	B/M	B/M	B/M/SM	B/M			B/M		B/M	B/M	B/M		B/M

### 10. COMPUTER SCIENCE

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Applied Biosciences	SM		SM				SM		M				
Business Informatics				B/M			B/M			B/M	B	M	B/M
Communication Systems								M	B/M				
Computational Science and Engineering		B	B/M						SM				
Computer Science	B/M	B/M	B/M/SM	B/M			B/M/SM	B/M	B/M/SM	B/M	B/M	M	B/M
Electrical Engineering			B/M/SM						B/M/SM				

**11. ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Agricultural Science			B/M										
Applied Biosciences	SM		SM				SM		M				
Architecture			B/M					B/M	B/M				
Chemical Engineering			B/M						M			M	
Civil Engineering			B/M						B/M				
Computational Science and Engineering		B	B/M						SM				
Electrical Engineering			B/M/SM						B/M/SM				
Environmental and Geomatics Engineering			B/M/SM						B/M			M	
Food Science			B/M										
Life Sciences and Technologies									B/M				
Materials Science and Engineering			B/M						B/M				
Mechanical Engineering			B/M/SM						B/M				
Micro Engineering		M	SM						B/M				B/M

**12. HUMAN MOVEMENT AND SPORTS SCIENCES**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Human Movement and Sports Sciences	B/M	B/M	B/M	B/M						B/M	B/M	B/M	B

**13. TEACHER EDUCATION, SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDIES, EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE**

	German							Ital.	French				
	BE	BS	ETHZ	FR	LU	SG	ZH		USI	EPFL	FR	GE	LA
Academic Upper Secondary School Teacher				MAS			MAS			MAS	M		
Education	B/M	M		B/M/SM			B/M			B/M/SM	B/M		B/M/SM
Secondary School Teacher				M						M	SM		
Special Education				B/M			B/M			B/M	M		B/SM

**STUDY PROGRAMMES TAUGHT ENTIRELY IN ENGLISH AT THE SWISS UNIVERSITIES**

A list of programmes, especially at master level, taught in English can be downloaded at: [www.studying-in-switzerland.ch/study-offers/study-programmes-in-english.html](http://www.studying-in-switzerland.ch/study-offers/study-programmes-in-english.html)

# RECOGNITION QUESTIONS IN SWITZERLAND

By Christine Gehrig, lic. phil., Recognition Information Centre / Swiss ENIC,  
Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, March 2011

## ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

In Switzerland, like in many other western European countries, the competence over academic recognition lies within the universities or academic institutions themselves. In Switzerland this competence is based on the individual cantonal university legislation and the legislation on the Federal Institutes of Technology. This competence includes:

- admission requirements
- recognition of study periods and exams
- admission to postgraduate studies and doctoral studies
- the conferment of academic degrees and titles.

Since each university is entitled to decide autonomously, decisions may vary considerably among the different institutions.

## PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

The question of professional recognition is much more complicated. One has to distinguish between regulated and non-regulated professions.

Whereas the question of pursuing a career in a regulated profession (such as physician, dentist, lawyer, pharmacist, nurse, midwife or (in certain cases) architect) is regulated on a national level in some countries, in Switzerland federal and cantonal regulations exist side by side; sometimes the competence to lay down rules has been delegated to professional associations such as the Swiss Medical Association, the Swiss Red Cross or the Swiss Registers of Architects, Engineers and Technicians REG.

Basically one can state that whoever or whatever body is authorised to organise and supervise a certain education may also be entitled to recognise foreign diplomas in the same field.

The situation in the field of non-regulated professions is much easier (e.g. biologist, economist, historian ect.). It is up to the employer to recognise a foreign education or qualification. The question of professional recognition is superfluous for self-employed persons practising a non-regulated profession. He/she has to compete within the limits of the free market.

The Swiss ENIC has set up a list of addresses of the various Swiss authorities which are responsible for the recognition of qualifications earned abroad. It can be found in the internet ([www.enic.ch](http://www.enic.ch)).

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS, AGREEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH REGULATE QUESTIONS OF RECOGNITION

Today educational authorities and universities have various instruments when dealing with questions of recognition: multilateral and bilateral agreements.

In 1997, the so called Lisbon Convention (# 165) – a joint effort of both the Council of Europe and UNESCO – was adopted. Switzerland ratified this convention in 1998. It replaces all previous conventions by both organisations for countries which have ratified it.

Many countries have also concluded bilateral agreements, which are more specific and which regulate the question of study periods and diplomas in a rather precise manner. The Swiss government concluded bilateral agreements with Austria (1993), Germany (1994) and Italy (2000). These agreements include the mutual recognition of study periods, intermediate exams and academic diplomas for students wishing to continue their studies in the other country.

With France simply an outline agreement between the respective rectors' conferences was concluded in spring 1994. This «outline agreement» includes those Swiss or French universities which are members of the CRUS (Switzerland) or of the CPU (France). It has been renewed in 2008 and includes now those Swiss or French higher education institutions which are members of the CRUS, the KFH and the COHEP (Switzerland) or of the CPU and the CDEFI (France).

It is important to point out that the question of professional recognition is excluded in all four bilateral agreements.

## REGLEMENTATIONS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION

It is often assumed that the European Union has standardised admission requirements and academic recognition for all its member countries. We would like to stress that this is not the case: Universities in all the member states still enjoy autonomy in such questions. The European Union has, however, assumed responsibility in the field of professional recognition in order to establish a large European internal market and to allow the free movement of persons. Thus, the European Union has created a number of directives (sectoral directives and three general directives) which standardise the recognition of academic and other professional diplomas. They are binding for all member countries of the EU and of the European Economic Area.

After having approved the bilateral agreements with the EU in May 2000, these directives are also binding for Switzerland.

## INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS FOR QUESTIONS OF RECOGNITION: ENIC, NARIC

By introducing the various conventions of the European Council and the UNESCO, both organisations started to create information centres in each member state in the 70ties, which have the task to provide information on questions of recognition and equivalency of qualifications. In 1994 both networks were merged into one called ENIC (European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Recognition and Mobility). In the 80ties a similar information network was founded by the EU (NARIC: National Academic Recognition Information Centres). Although both types of networks have similar responsibilities, their institutional structures, financial resources and competencies vary greatly.

### THE RECOGNITION INFORMATION CENTRE / SWISS ENIC

The Swiss ENIC is located at the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities CRUS. It can also be found in the internet: <http://www.enic.ch>

#### Functions:

- Information on recognition problems in Switzerland, e. g. on the recognition of higher education institutions or private universities
- Information on the general admission requirements of the Swiss universities for students with non-Swiss qualifications
- Information on the higher education system in Switzerland
- Information about the use and protection of academic titles
- Information about the multilateral conventions and the bilateral agreements
- Implementation of the Lisbon Convention Nr. 165
- Credential evaluation of qualifications obtained abroad (only non-regulated university qualifications; for all other qualifications the name and address of the responsible Swiss authority can be given)

#### Address:

Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities  
Recognition Information Centre / Swiss ENIC  
Sennweg 2, CH-3012 Berne, Switzerland

#### Phone numbers:

Christine Gehrig, head +41 (0)31 306 60 32  
Eva Grob, credential evaluator +41 (0)31 306 60 38  
Carole Bourret, secretariat +41 (0)31 306 60 42

**Fax:** +41 (0)31 306 60 20

**E-mail:** [family.name@crus.ch](mailto:family.name@crus.ch)

**Office hours:** 8.30 – 11.30; 14.00 – 16.30

# INTER-UNIVERSITY CO-OPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

By Gaetan Lager, State Secretariat for Education and Research, and Pascal Haltiner, Erasmus indirect participation, Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, February 2011

## THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECT OF THE SWISS HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Switzerland is not a member of the European Union, but the Swiss higher education system is highly internationalized. Swiss universities have signed numerous agreements for exchange and cooperation with universities around the world, and they participate in a number of bilateral and multilateral mobility and cooperation programmes.

If your institution is interested in signing a mobility agreement with an institution in Switzerland, or if you as an individual would like to study in Switzerland, we advise you to contact the institution directly (please see addresses, page 34). You will need to consider the language of instruction (German, French or Italian) before you decide on a specific institution (see pages 19/24ff).

## INTER-UNIVERSITY COOPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND THE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

### Introduction

There is a long tradition of academic exchange between Switzerland and its European neighbours. In the early 1990s, academic exchange increased due to Switzerland's temporary official participation in EU programmes for higher education. As this participation was not renewed after 1994, the State Secretariat for Education and Research SER funded indirect participation of Swiss institutions in selected activities of the EU education and training programmes. Thanks to these transitional measures, cooperation with European partners expanded significantly over the years.

The mutual aim of having Switzerland rejoin future EU education programmes was expressed several times, and thanks to the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement signed in February 2010, Swiss participants are finally eligible for all Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) activities as of 2011. The programme includes specific sub-programmes for all educational levels, namely, Erasmus for higher education, Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training, Comenius for schools and Grundtvig for adult education.

In addition, the EU supports a range of external programmes and policies focused in particular on higher education because of its importance in the development of modern societies and its key role in social, cultural and economic development. Switzerland is not associated with these programmes, but Swiss participants are usually accepted as a third-country partner, e.g. in Erasmus Mundus masters courses and doctoral programmes.



### **Funding**

LLP funds a wide variety of activities including exchanges, study visits and networking activities. Projects are intended not only for individual students and learners, but also for teachers, trainers and all others involved in education and training. For the better part of these exchange activities, known as 'decentralized actions', applications must be made through national agencies. The national agency in Switzerland designated for implementation of the LLP programmes is the ch Foundation in Solothurn; it is responsible for counselling at the national level and management of the decentralized actions. Applications for funding for 'centralized' actions, which include networking initiatives and other large-scale projects, are made to the EU's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. The administrative details, including application deadlines and eligibility criteria, can be found in the specific programme guides and the calls for proposals for projects issued yearly by the European Commission.

### **Potential Swiss partner institutions for international mobility**

In addition to Switzerland's 12 traditional universities, there are also 9 universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulen, Hautes écoles spécialisées*) and 14 universities of teacher education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen, Hautes écoles pédagogiques*) interested in international cooperation and exchange. Furthermore, a growing number of tertiary type-B institutions in fields not yet covered by the universities of applied sciences are willing to engage in LLP activities.

Higher education institutions interested in cooperating with Swiss institutions are asked to contact the institutions directly. Addresses of Swiss institutions eligible for Erasmus activities are provided by:

ch Foundation  
Dornacherstrasse 28A  
Postfach 246  
CH-4501 Solothurn  
Tel. +41 32 346 18 18  
Fax +41 32 346 18 02  
info@ch-go.ch  
<http://www.ch-go.ch>  
<http://www.chstiftung.ch>

Switzerland's previous indirect participation in Erasmus includes activities up to the end of the academic year 2010/2011 and is administered by the former Erasmus office at the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS).

# ADDRESSES

## SWISS UNIVERSITIES

### **BASEL**

#### **Universität Basel**

Studiensekretariat

Petersplatz 1

CH-4003 Basel

E-mail: [admission@unibas.ch](mailto:admission@unibas.ch)

Phone +41 (0)61 267 30 23

Fax +41 (0)61 267 30 35

<http://www.unibas.ch>

### **BERNE**

#### **Universität Bern**

Abteilung Zulassung, Immatrikulation, Beratung ZiB

Hochschulstrasse 4

CH-3012 Berne

E-mail: [info@imd.unibe.ch](mailto:info@imd.unibe.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 631 39 11

Fax +41 (0)31 631 80 08

<http://www.unibe.ch>

### **FRIBOURG**

#### **Université de Fribourg / Universität Freiburg**

Service d'admission

Miséricorde

CH-1700 Fribourg

E-mail: [admission@unifr.ch](mailto:admission@unifr.ch)

Phone +41 (0)26 300 70 20

Fax +41 (0)26 300 97 90

<http://www.unifr.ch>

### **GENEVA**

#### **Université de Genève**

Espace administratif des étudiants

Rue Général-Dufour 24

CH-1211 Genève 4

E-mail: [immat@unige.ch](mailto:immat@unige.ch)

Phone +41 (0)22 379 71 11

Fax +41 (0)22 379 79 34

<http://www.unige.ch>

### **LAUSANNE**

#### **Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne**

Délégation à la formation

Service académique

BP-1 233 (Bâtiment BP)

Station 16

CH-1015 Lausanne

E-mail: [sac@epfl.ch](mailto:sac@epfl.ch)

Phone +41 (0)21 693 43 45

Fax +41 (0)21 693 30 88

<http://www.epfl.ch>

### **Université de Lausanne**

Service des immatriculations et inscriptions

Unicentre

Phone +41 (0)21 692 21 00

CH-1015 Lausanne

Fax +41 (0)21 692 21 05

E-mail: [Immat@unil.ch](mailto:Immat@unil.ch)

<http://www.unil.ch>

### **LUGANO**

#### **Università della Svizzera italiana**

Segreteria generale

Via Lambertenghi 10A

Phone +41 (0)58 666 46 11

CH-6904 Lugano

Fax +41 (0)58 666 46 19

E-mail: [info@usi.ch](mailto:info@usi.ch)

<http://www.usi.ch>

### **LUCERNE**

#### **Universität Luzern**

Studiendienste / Zulassung

Postfach 7979

Phone +41 (0)41 228 73 80/55 10

CH-6000 Luzern 7

Fax +41 (0)41 228 55 05

E-mail: [zulassung@unilu.ch](mailto:zulassung@unilu.ch)

<http://www.unilu.ch>

### **NEUCHÂTEL**

#### **Université de Neuchâtel**

Service immatriculation et mobilité (SIM)

Bureau des immatriculations et des inscriptions

av. du 1<sup>er</sup>-Mars 26

Phone +41 (0)32 718 10 00

CH-2000 Neuchâtel

Fax +41 (0)32 718 10 01

E-mail: [bureau.immatriculation@unine.ch](mailto:bureau.immatriculation@unine.ch)

<http://www.unine.ch>

### **ST. GALLEN**

#### **Universität St. Gallen**

Zulassungs- und Anrechnungsstelle

Dufourstrasse 50

Phone +41 (0)71 224 21 11

CH-9000 St. Gallen

Fax +41 (0)71 224 21 16

E-mail: [zulassung@unisg.ch](mailto:zulassung@unisg.ch)

<http://www.unisg.ch>

### **ZURICH**

#### **Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich**

Zulassungsstelle

Phone +41 (0)44 632 56 53/54 10

HG F 21.3-4

(1st semester Bachelor)

Rämistrasse 101

Phone +41 (0)44 632 77 35/61 05/34 14

CH-8092 Zürich

(advanced semesters Bachelor and Master)

E-mail: [zulassungsstelle@ethz.ch](mailto:zulassungsstelle@ethz.ch)

Fax +41 (0)44 632 11 17

[master@ethz.ch](mailto:master@ethz.ch)

<http://www.ethz.ch>

**Universität Zürich**

Abteilung Studierende

Zulassungsstelle

Rämistrasse 71

CH-8006 Zürich

E-mail: [admission@uzh.ch](mailto:admission@uzh.ch)

Phone +41 (0)44 634 22 36

Fax +41 (0)44 634 49 01

<http://www.uzh.ch>

**EDUCATIONAL BODIES**

**State Secretariat for Education and Research SER**

Staatssekretariat für Bildung und Forschung SBF

Secrétariat d'Etat à l'éducation et à la recherche SER

Hallwylstrasse 4

CH-3003 Berne

E-mail: [info@sbf.admin.ch](mailto:info@sbf.admin.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 322 96 91

Fax +41 (0)31 322 78 54

<http://www.sbf.admin.ch>

**Swiss Science and Technology Council SSTC**

Schweizerischer Wissenschafts- und Technologierat SWTR

Conseil suisse de la science et de la technologie CSST

Schwanengasse 2

CH-3003 Berne

E-mail: [swtr@swtr.admin.ch](mailto:swtr@swtr.admin.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 323 00 48

Fax +41 (0)31 323 95 47

<http://www.swtr.ch>

**Swiss University Conference SUC**

Schweizerische Universitätskonferenz SUK

Conférence Universitaire Suisse CUS

Sennweg 2 – P.O. Box 576

CH-3000 Berne 9

E-mail: [cus@cus.ch](mailto:cus@cus.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 306 60 60

Fax +41 (0)31 306 60 70

<http://www.cus.ch>

**Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education EDK/CDIP**

Schweizerische Konferenz der kantonalen Erziehungsdirektoren EDK

Conférence suisse des directeurs cantonaux de l'instruction publique CDIP

Haus der Kantone

Speichergasse 6

Postfach 660

CH-3000 Berne 7

E-mail: [edk@edk.ch](mailto:edk@edk.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 309 51 11

Fax +41 (0)31 309 51 50

<http://www.edk.ch>

**Swiss National Science Foundation SNSF**

Schweizerischer Nationalfonds SNF

Fonds national suisse FNS

Wildhainweg 3

P.O. Box 8232

CH-3001 Berne

E-mail: [pri@snf.ch](mailto:pri@snf.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 308 22 22

Fax +41 (0)31 301 30 09

<http://www.snf.ch>

**Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities CRUS**

Rektorenkonferenz der Schweizer Universitäten CRUS

Conférence des Recteurs des Universités Suisses CRUS

Sennweg 2

Postfach 607

CH-3000 Berne 9

E-mail: [crus@crus.ch](mailto:crus@crus.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 306 60 36

Fax +41 (0)31 306 60 50

<http://www.crus.ch>

**Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences KFH**

Rektorenkonferenz der Fachhochschulen der Schweiz KFH

Conférence des Recteurs des Hautes Ecoles Spécialisées Suisses KFH

Falkenplatz 9

Postfach 710

CH-3000 Berne 9

E-mail: [thomas.bachofner@kfh.ch](mailto:thomas.bachofner@kfh.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 300 70 00

Fax +41 (0)31 300 70 19

<http://www.kfh.ch>

**Swiss Conference of Rectors of Universities of Teacher Education COHEP**

Schweizerische Konferenz der Rektorinnen und Rektoren

der Pädagogischen Hochschulen COHEP

Conférence suisse des rectrices et recteurs des hautes écoles pédagogiques COHEP

Thunstrasse 43a

3005 Berne

E-mail: [info@cohep.ch](mailto:info@cohep.ch)

Phone +41 (0)31 350 50 20

Fax +41 (0)31 350 50 21

<http://www.cohep.ch>

**Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education OAQ**

Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung der Schweizerischen Hochschulen OAQ

Organe d'accréditation et d'assurance qualité des hautes écoles suisses OAQ

Falkenplatz 9

P.O.Box

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Fax +41 (0)31 380 11 55

<http://www.oaq.ch>

# RECTORS' CONFERENCE OF THE SWISS UNIVERSITIES CRUS

The CRUS aims to provide a platform for the common interests and matters of concern of the Swiss Universities, to support the co-ordination and the co-operation of teaching, research and service, the exchange of information and the co-operation between all universities as well as between universities and public authorities, national bodies in science and research, international organisations, etc.

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## SERVICES

### Information and Documentation

University studies information service for international students:  
Phone +41 (0)31 306 60 44 (Monday – Friday, 8.30 – 11.30 am)  
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### Scholarships for outgoing Swiss students

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except Tuesday and Thursday afternoon)  
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**Recognition Information Center / Swiss ENIC**

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