

## What is the TestDaF?

The TestDaF is a language test for foreign learners of German who plan to study in Germany or who require recognised certification of their language skills.

The TestDaF examination is centrally developed and rated by the TestDaF Institute based in Hagen, Germany. The test can be taken at licensed Test Centres in about 80 different countries. All examination candidates receive the same tasks and the examinations are graded by trained raters.

The examination results are assigned to one of three levels:

- TestDaF-Niveaustufe 5 (TDN 5 – TestDaF level 5)
- TestDaF-Niveaustufe 4 (TDN 4 – TestDaF level 4)
- TestDaF-Niveaustufe 3 (TDN 3 – TestDaF level 3)

These are equivalent to levels B2.1 to C1.2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

### Which TestDaF level do I need for admission to university?

Should you reach at least TDN 4 in each subtest, nothing stands in the way of your studies in Germany as far as language is concerned (naturally the remaining academic and legal requirements must also be met). A score of TDN 5 shows that you have a very good knowledge of German, above that required at the beginning of your studies.

Since every university in Germany has its own admissions policy, it is at the discretion of individual universities to admit applicants whose scores are below TDN 4 to courses of study. Please find out which TestDaF results are required by the university and/or in the subject of your choice prior to making your application. Some universities include such information on their websites. You can find further information on studying in Germany and the postal addresses of universities on the following websites:

<http://www.daad.de/>

<http://www.hochschulkompass.hrk.de/>

<http://www.uni-assist.de/>

<http://www.deutsch-uni.com>

<http://www.sprachnachweis.de>

<http://www.deutsche-kultur-international.de/home/index.html>

<http://www.campus-germany.de/>

## Who can take the TestDaF?

- ❑ Intermediate to advanced learners of German who wish to obtain a differentiated assessment of their language skills.
- ❑ Applicants for a place at a German university.
- ❑ People requiring internationally recognised evidence of their knowledge of German for their further academic or professional career at home or abroad.

If you have started learning German only recently, it is advisable to wait until you have reached an intermediate level before registering for the examination. You can do an online placement test on the TestDaF Institute website to find out if you are already Fit for the TestDaF. It only takes ten minutes to complete and will give you a rough idea of your level.

## What are the TestDaF's advantages?

- ❑ All German universities recognise the TestDaF certificate. With a score of TDN 4 in all four subtests you will be able to get admission to an academic degree course, provided that the university of your choice accepts the other elements of your application. Admission for candidates whose scores are below TDN 4 is at the discretion of individual universities, depending on factors such as the course subject, type of degree awarded and course duration.
- ❑ The TestDaF assesses the language skills necessary for study in Germany. The content and tasks of TestDaF are all related to academic, scientific and study-relevant topics.
- ❑ The TestDaF assesses the four language skills separately (Reading Comprehension, Listening Comprehension, Written Production, Oral Production). The certificate shows four separate results, giving you a clear picture of your strengths and weaknesses in each skill.
- ❑ You can sit the TestDaF in your home country and your certificate is sent directly to you. You no longer have to travel to Germany to sit a language test. This allows you to gather all the documents you need for your university application before travelling to Germany, saving you time and money.
- ❑ The TestDaF allows you to focus on specific preparation. To get to know the structure of the test you can work on the model tests, which you can find on our websites (Modellsätze), and on the sample tests authorised by the TestDaF Institute (Musterprüfungen). Moreover, the subtests are always at the same level of difficulty, regardless of when you sit the examination.
- ❑ The TestDaF Institute operates a world-wide network of licensed Test Centres whose staff will be glad to provide you with further information and advice on the test. DAAD lecturers, Goethe Institutes, language centres and university departments of German studies or German embassies and consulates can also provide you with information.
- ❑ The TestDaF certificate is valid for an unlimited period of time.
- ❑ You can resit the examination as often as you wish if you are not satisfied with your result.

## How can I prepare for the TestDaF examination?

You can prepare for the examination in a number of different ways: on your own, with online support from <http://www.deutsch-uni.com/>, in language courses, or with an eTandem partner. Please see our website under Preparing for the TestDaF for further details.

## Where and when can I take the TestDaF?

You can take the TestDaF at a licensed Test Centre in your home country or at one of over 170 Test Centres in Germany. Examinations are held several times a year. You can find the exact dates on the TestDaF website. Alternatively, contact your nearest Test Centre.

## How much does it cost?

An examination fee is due when registering for the TestDaF. Please enquire at your nearest Test Centre as the fee differs from country to country.

## How and when do I have to register for the TestDaF?

You can register for the TestDaF via the internet: [www.testdaf.de](http://www.testdaf.de). There you choose the country, the city and the Test Centre where you would like to take the test. The period of registration begins about eight weeks before the examination date and lasts four weeks. During this period you can also withdraw from the test. In this case up to 15% of the examination fee will be retained for administrative expenses. Should you withdraw after the closing date for registration the examination fee will not be refunded.

## How and when do I get my result?

Your Test Centre will send you a certificate with your results six to eight weeks after the examination. On the reverse of the certificate, you will find a description of the performance features for each subtest, giving you a detailed assessment of your language skills (can-do statements).

## What does the TestDaF look like?

All the topics and tasks in the test are situated within the general context of higher education. They are intended for applicants of all academic disciplines.

The TestDaF comprises four subtests:

| Subtest   | Tasks   |
|---|---|
| Reading Comprehension<br>    | 3 reading texts with 30 items<br>Duration: 60 minutes           |
| Listening Comprehension<br> | 3 listening texts with 25 items<br>Duration: approx. 40 minutes |
| Written Production<br>     | 1 writing task<br>Duration: 60 minutes                          |
| Oral Production<br>        | 7 speaking tasks<br>Duration: approx. 30 minutes                |
| Overall examination duration (without breaks) : 3 hours 10 minutes  |   |

## Reading Comprehension

You are asked to prove your ability to understand written texts related thematically and linguistically to the field of higher education. You are asked to treat a set of tasks which require comprehension of context and detail as well as implicit information. There are three texts at variable levels of difficulty. The text types and task types also vary. (Short texts on everyday life at university, newspaper / magazine articles and articles from academic journals).

## Listening Comprehension

You are asked to prove your ability to understand spoken texts related thematically and linguistically to the field of higher education. There are three listening texts at variable levels of difficulty: a dialogue typical of everyday life at university, a radio interview with three or four speakers, and a short lecture or an interview with an expert. The text types and tasks also vary. The tasks require comprehension of context and detail as well as implicit information.

## Written Production

You are asked to prove your ability to write a clearly structured and coherent text dealing with a specific topic. In the first section, you are asked to describe statistical data presented in a graph or a table. The second section asks you to state your opinion on a specific question for discussion.

## Oral Production

You are asked to prove your ability to speak German in different situations related to the field of higher education. The subtest consists of seven tasks at variable levels of difficulty. You are asked to respond in various university situations: e.g. take part in a discussion with fellow students, describe a diagram during a tutorial, state your opinion on a particular topic, form hypotheses.

The tasks in the subtest Oral Production are CD- or cassette-based. You can follow them simultaneously in your examination booklet. Your responses are recorded on a second CD or cassette.

## Hints and tips for tackling the examination tasks

You can find detailed information on preparing for the test on our homepage ([Hints and Tips/Hinweise und Tipps](#)). There you will find descriptions of the individual subtests and suggestions for practice and preparation. Now you know the essential information about the TestDaF. You can find more information and training material at your nearest Test Centre, in bookshops or on the TestDaF Institute website (Preparing for TestDaF/Vorbereitung auf den TestDaF). The TestDaF Institute wishes you good luck with your preparation and examination. We hope that your aim of studying in Germany will be realised soon.