

Degrees

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The traditional "Diploma"

The classical "Diploma" course of studies - including the thesis - can be completed in eight semesters. From 2010 onwards, the plan is for all German universities to offer only the Bachelor and Master degree courses. The German "Diploma" and "Magister" courses will no longer be available. Diploma degree certificates already obtained will, of course, retain their validity.

Bachelor (6-8 semesters)

A Bachelor degree is the initial academic title which can be obtained after 6-8 semesters of studying (about 3-4 years). The Bachelor is the first degree in the three stage study system (Bachelor, Master, PhD) which is being introduced in European universities as a result of the 1999 Bologna Process. The aim of this course of studies is to provide Bachelor students with an **occupational and job-related qualification ("Employability")** for a variety of activities and in a number of areas. Bachelor degree courses are not currently available at FH Schmalkalden, but the university is designing new concepts in this field. With a Bachelor degree you would be able either to go directly into a job or could continue your studies with a higher level Master course.

Master (2-4 semesters)

A Master degree course can be started after completing a Bachelor degree. The Master degree in one or two subjects goes into greater depth in these subjects and/or increases the students' knowledge and skills. It prepares them for both academic jobs at a university or research institute (perhaps leading on to a PhD) and for a number of jobs which require a more detailed scientific background. A Master degree is the **formal prerequisite for registering a PhD**, the first step in an academic career.