

# Age Limit

**Meaning:** If training/higher education is not begun until the student has reached his/her 30th or 35th birthday, then the student will be entitled to BAföG financial support regardless of economic circumstances only if special requirements are fulfilled.

**Policy:** Financial educational support is only provided if the 30th or 35th year of the student's life has not been reached at the beginning of the stage of training/education. The higher age limit only applies to master's programmes that follow a bachelor's degree. Neither age limit is detrimental to the entitlement to financial support if there are special reasons for exceeding them.


A stage of education is understood as the time that is spent at a specific type of educational institution (e.g. university) until the degree is achieved. Thus after a bachelor's degree a new stage of education begins with the start of a master programme. The time of the beginning is the start of the month in which the lessons or lectures take place for the first time (e.g. 1.10 for the winter semester at the university). The 30th year of one's life ends on the day before the 30th birthday. There is no negative effect if the age limit is reached during the subsequent course of the education.

**Exceptions:** the age limit does not apply if


1. an enrollment took place without a university entrance qualification based on one's own professional qualification (e.g. master craftsman certificate),
2. the admission requirements for the education to be financially supported in a technical college, the attendance of which requires completed vocational training at an evening secondary school, a vocational school, an evening grammar school, a college or by completing a non-school exam or by taking an entrance examination to a higher education institution.
3. studies for a second degree are undertaken either for the legally required addition to the degree for the desired profession or for further professional training, after the admission was given after the preceding degree,
4. due to personal or family reasons there was a hindrance to begin the stage of education on time, especially if upon reaching the age limit and continuously until the start of the studies a child of under 10 years of age was raised without pursuing employment at the same time for more than 30 hours a week,
5. due to a drastic change of one's personal circumstances a need has resulted and no training as yet has been completed with professional qualification which can be financially supported according to BAföG (German Training Assistance Act).

## Any questions?


### PERSONAL ADVICE

 Tue 9.00–12.00  
Thurs 1.00–3.00  
During the personal advice sessions we would ask you to refrain from calling us by telephone. We thank you for your understanding.

### TELEPHONE ADVICE

 Mon and Wed 10.00–12.00

### ZENTRALER INFO-POINT

Phone 0251 837-95 09  
 Mon to Thurs 9.00–12.00  
and 1.30–4.00  
Fri 9.00–12.00  
and 1.30–2.00

Except in the case of No. 1 above, the education must be started immediately after achieving the admission requirements, and after the reasons for the hindrance or the occurrence of a need as a result of drastic changes of one's personal circumstances have lapsed.

Personal or family reasons that are recognized are in addition to raising children, e.g. a pregnancy, an illness, a disability, non-admission to the chosen training due to a selection process, or the care of disabled children or children in need of care for other reasons. Personal reasons are also accepted if trainees are refugees, displaced persons, emigrants, late repatriates, persons entitled to asylum or foreign spouses/life partners of Germans or of gainfully employed EU citizens and require a complementary or further education in Germany for the recognition of their vocational qualification attained in their country of emigration or country of origin.

The assessment of the question whether the training could have been started at an earlier date does not begin by the age of 30 or 35, but rather with the graduation from a general school. The only exceptions are the child rearing periods which must have begun at the latest upon reaching the age limit and must have continued uninterrupted until the beginning of the education. Basically it is assumed that there was no hindrance to starting a study if it was possible to pursue full-time employment. This does not apply if this was done to avoid receiving support through social benefits.

A drastic change of one's personal circumstances includes e.g. a divorce or the death of a spouse or a life partner. A need arises only if the assets to be used are not at the person's disposal and the monthly income does not exceed the valid limit for the obtainment of social benefits.

**Procedure:** When the application is submitted the education/training to be supported and the date of birth are to be noted in form 1. This makes it possible to ascertain whether the age limit has been exceeded. In order to be able to assess the entitlement in accordance with No. 3 to 5, an additional statement is required, which is to be drafted informally. Before submitting the application it is recommended to take advantage of personal consultation. It is also possible to make a binding decision up to one year in advance about the question of entitlement for taking up studies after reaching the age of 30 or 35.

#### **Legal reference**

§ 10 section 3 BAföG