

Education System

The Swiss education system is outstanding in that it allows for continued personal advancement. Vocational training is highly valued. It is the basis for further training and for higher education.

Structure / Authorities

In Switzerland there are three consecutive levels of education:

- Compulsory education (Volksschule: Kindergarten, Primarschule und Sekundarstufe I)
- Vocational education and training, or middle school (Sekundarstufe II)
- Universities of applied sciences / universities, and professional education and training (Tertiärstufe).

The state is responsible for all three levels and responsibilities are shared by the federation, cantons, and communities. For this reason schools and school systems may vary according to canton.

Compulsory Education

There is 11 years of compulsory education. It begins when the child is 4 years old. Parents can be fined if their children are absent from school without notification or reason. Young people under the age of 16 who are new residents have a right to attend compulsory school. Young people who arrive later can get information about other options at the Integration Information Center INFI.

Education Following Compulsory Education

The far majority of young people continue their studies following compulsory education. Vocational education and training (apprenticeship, Berufslehre) is the most frequent choice. This allows future access to professional education and training. Persons who receive a vocational diploma (Berufmaturität) are later able to attend universities of applied sciences. Approximately 20 percent of young people attend university preparatory school (gymnasiale Maturität) granting them direct access to universities.

Scholarships

Scholarships (Stipendien) allow persons with little means to go to school or to obtain professional training. Scholarships provide financial support for education following compulsory education. Foreign residents of Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden might also be eligible for scholarships depending on the student's or parents' citizenship and type of permit. Further information is provided by the Department of Education and Study Grants of the cantonal administration.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-ar.ch/en/school-and-education/education-system