

Vocational Education and Training / Middle School

Following compulsory education most young people choose to attend vocational education and training. In general, persons wishing to study at a university must obtain a diploma from a middle school. This is also possible through vocational education and training.

Importance of Education

A good education and professional life are important. Performance during the years of compulsory education has an important influence on future options. Following compulsory education young people have various options to choose from to prepare themselves for professional life (Sekundarstufe II). Finding a good position without further education is difficult. Career, study, and vocational counseling provides free advice to young people and parents on education and training matters.

Vocational Education and Training

Following compulsory education most young people choose to attend vocational education and training (apprenticeship, Berufslehre). An apprenticeship involves young people acquiring the practical skills required for a profession through a work environment while also attending a professional school. There are more than 250 different professions to choose from. An apprenticeship requires between 2 and 4 years for completion. Young people must independently apply for an apprenticeship with a firm. They should begin searching for a position during the last two years of compulsory school. Schools help young people in this process, but parents' support is necessary. The counselling centre for education and career in Canton offers free support. Young people who complete an apprenticeship can obtain a vocational diploma (Berufsmaturität) during or following vocational education and training.

Middle School

Middle schools (Mittelschulen) offer a broad general education. These schools prepare students for an academic education at universities or universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen). There are middle schools through which students earn a university preparatory diploma and there are middle schools where students earn a specialized or vocational diploma. The university preparatory diploma grants direct access to universities. The specialized or vocational diploma grants direct access to universities of applied sciences. These are open to students with university preparatory diplomas as well. Specialized or vocational diploma students may attend universities by passing an exam. In some cases, additional conditions may apply.

Bridge Programmes

Young people who enter the canton after compulsory schooling can participate in a bridging program under certain conditions. The focus is on entering the job market. A bridging program helps young people find an internship or an apprenticeship. Interested individuals should contact the Vocational Education Center Herisau (Brücken AR) or career, study, and vocational counseling.

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

www.hallo-ar.ch/en/school-and-education/vocational-education-and-training-middle-school