

Legal position of translating an academic title

- Legal Position -

In accordance with § 36 (4) of the State Higher Education Act (hereafter LHG - Landeshochschulgesetz), German or foreign-language degrees may only be awarded by a state-approved institution of higher education in compliance with the examination rules adopted by the president in Ulm, Germany. In accordance with § 36 (5) of the LHG, degrees may only be presented in a form corresponding to that of the original degree certificate or in an otherwise specified form.

§ 37 (1) of the LHG applies to those holding foreign degrees. It permits the holding and use of a foreign degree in Baden-Württemberg on the provision that the degree has been legitimately awarded by a state-approved institution of higher education in the country of origin on completion of the prescribed course of graduate study and examinations. The translation of a foreign degree is not permissible, nor, generally speaking, is a conversion.

To determine the validity of the degree, the Internet database "anabin" of the Central Office for Foreign Education (Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen - ZAB) contains a list of all universities that are state-approved in the country of origin
<http://anabin.kmk.org/anabindatenbank>.

The term "awarded form" refers to the fact that the degree must conform to the original form in which the degree certificate is awarded and cite the name of the awarding institution of higher education. The certified German translation does not replace the actual degree awarded. If the original form of the degree is not in Latin, it may be transcribed into Latin (transliteration). A literal translation may also be added to the awarded form in parentheses. The translation may only be used in connection with the original degree title and not on its own.

§ 37 (4) of the LHG must also be taken into account. Academic degrees awarded in member states of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA), as well as academic degrees awarded by the European University Institute in Florence or Pontifical universities can be used in their original form without the need to cite the awarding institution of higher education.

We refer to: <http://www.kmk.org/wissenschaft-hochschule/internationale-hochschulangelegenheiten/fuehrung-auslaendischer-hochschulgrade.html>

As these are regulations established by the German Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, it is safe to assume that the 16 German Länder have also adopted these regulations.

Please note:

As defined in § 37 of the LHG, holders of an academic degree/academic title are now personally responsible for ensuring both compliance with the statutory regulations and that their academic degree/academic title is held in the permissible form.