



## Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program: School FAQs

### If I am a senior in high school, can I still apply for CBYX?

Yes. As long as you meet our age eligibility requirements (you will be no older than 18 and 6 months by August 1st of a given program year) you are more than welcome to apply. Several students participate each year as “gap year” students, meaning they have graduated from high school and have deferred their college acceptance for one year.

### What kinds of classes will I take in Germany?

You can expect to take subjects similar to our core subjects here in the U.S. A typical German class schedule will include German, English, History, Foreign Language (French, Spanish, Latin and/or Russian), Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, and Geography. Students may also be able to take a combination of Art, Music, Gym, Religion, Ethics or Political Science. German schools do not offer as many electives as U.S. high schools, and all students in one grade generally follow a similar schedule.

### What grade will I be placed in in Germany?

Grade placement will depend upon a student’s German language proficiency, as well as the space available in a given grade at the German placement school. Many students with a lower language ability will start in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, which is the last year before German students begin focusing heavily on their preparation for the *Abitur*, or final comprehensive exams required for graduation.

### Can I transfer credits from my German school to my American high school?

While CIEE facilitates the exchange to Germany, students are responsible for arranging the transfer of school credits/classes between Germany and the U.S. While most students receive credit for their work in Germany, CIEE unfortunately cannot guarantee specific classes or credits.

There are many differences between the German and American school systems and it is important to think ahead about transferring grades and credit from German placement schools and American high schools. Consider the following steps as you prepare your academic record for your year abroad:

- 1.) Speak to your guidance counselor as soon as possible at your American high school. Ensure that he or she will remain your counselor while you are abroad and upon your return back to the U.S.
- 2.) Find out what your school’s policies are regarding transfer of credits, graduation requirements, and proof of study abroad requirements. Keep in mind that your grades in Germany may not directly translate into grades used by schools in the U.S. Many students are able to freeze their GPAs while abroad. Classes in Germany often translate as elective or pass/fail courses that count toward graduation, meaning you would only need to complete your core requirements upon your return. Most schools will also grant credit for English and foreign language classes taken while abroad.



- 3.) Ask your American high school to put the arrangements you have agreed upon in writing. In the event that your guidance counselor is no longer at the school when you return from Germany, you will have documentation to present to your high school.
- 4.) Establish contact with your school director in Germany when you arrive. German high schools typically do not have a guidance counselor like American schools. Your German school administration will often appoint a member of the school faculty or staff to you to ensure that you are receiving the support you need at the school.
- 5.) Soon after your arrival, speak to your German school contact about any documentation you would like to obtain at the end of the year. Come to an agreement on how you will be evaluated – will you take the same tests and be graded just like your German peers, or will teachers evaluate you on your effort and class participation alone? German schools can often issue a written evaluation of the work you do and can provide a description of the courses you take and the amount of hours you spend in those classes. Please keep in mind that it is your responsibility to obtain this documentation prior to your return to the U.S., and that CIEE cannot guarantee the issuance of an official transcript.
- 6.) Maintain contact with your guidance counselor in the U.S. throughout your CBYX year. The more familiar they are with your time abroad, the easier it will be to transition back to your American high school upon your return.

### **Can I take online classes to fulfil graduation requirements while on the CBYX Program?**

It is possible to take online classes while on the CBYX Program. However, we strongly urge students to complete all necessary online classes prior to or after the program. If students must take online classes while in Germany, we encourage students to limit themselves to one online class so as to not interfere with German language immersion, German school coursework and spending time with host families.

### **Can I take the SATs or AP Exams while in Germany?**

Yes, however, we highly advise you to complete all testing before or after your CBYX year to eliminate interruptions to your immersion process and time with your host family. Keep in mind that, after many months of speaking, hearing and thinking German, your English may begin to suffer as well. That said, taking the AP German Exam at the end of the CBYX year while still in Germany can actually be advantageous as the language will still be fresh in your mind.

If you must take a standardized test while in Germany, we advise you to wait until you have settled into your host community before researching how and where to take the test. International schools and US military bases often offer testing dates throughout the year. Students wishing to take an exam while in Germany should call a school directly to register for an exam. You can consult the College Board website at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for more information.

Please remember that, while CIEE and Experiment e.V. can work with you to process travel requests to and from test sites, neither organization accepts responsibility for facilitating test registration. Any cost incurred to take a standardized test will be your responsibility.