New requirements to receive an Approbation in Germany

Please note that this information is subject to change! (status: February 20th 2013)

Saudi physicians planning to do a traineeship in Germany for more than two years you have to prove that your academic medical education is equal to the German medical education since April 1st 2012. Until now, physicians received a work permit for up to 7 years, now the work permit will generally be issued for two years at most. After that you have to apply for an Approbation which German doctors hold as well. It is timely unlimited and enables you to choose the place of your work all over Germany.

There are two main reasons for this new law: It shall guarantee a certain standard of skills and knowledge for any physician who will be entitled to treat patients in Germany and it shall give foreign doctors the same rights to practice as German doctors.

To get an Approbation you either have to pass an exam or an expert has to confirm that you have the same skills and knowledge like a German resident. The latter only makes sense if you have at least 2-5 years of work experience to compensate lacks of your studies because medical academic studies from third-party-countries are regarded as not equal compared to the German medical studies. The exam will be conducted in German and can be attempted three times which means that you can fail twice. We recommend visiting a preparation course; for registration please contact Mr. Ronald Kaduk: rkaduk@de.mohe.gov.sa.

Some officials issue a work permit for the complete two years. However, we advise to register for the exam with the application for the working permit and do the first trial within a year; if you do the exam late and you fail you cannot get an extension of the working permit, your residence permit turns invalid and you have to go back to Saudi-Arabia. To apply for a new visa with the German embassy in Riad will be complicated and time-consuming and it probably will be difficult to prepare for the next exam in Saudi-Arabia.

Because of the German federal system rules differ from federal state to federal state. Please find in the following information on the different regulations:

1. North Rhine-Westphalia: Cologne, Düsseldorf, Detmold and Münster

The officials issue a work permit for 18 months as preparation for the exam. You have to spend 6 months of this time in a department for internal medicine, another 6 months in surgery. You can decide when you would like to do the exam during this year but they have long waiting lists and you cannot apply before you have not finished your language courses. If you fail they will give you an extension of your work permit until the next exam if you have time left with your work permit. Doctors who applied for a work permit before April 1st 2012 receive a work permit until the end of their traineeship.

The exam is an oral exam and will take place with the “Landesprüfungsamt für Medizin, Psychotherapie und Pharmazie”.

Arnsberg (Dortmund, Bochum, Hamm u.a.)

Münster (Münster, Recklinghausen u.a.)

Köln (Köln, Aachen, Bonn u.a.)
http://www.bezregkoeln.nrw.de/brk_internet/organisation/abteilung02/dezernat_24/approbationen/index.html

Detmold (Bielefeld, Detmold, Paderborn u.a.)

Düsseldorf (Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Essen u.a.)
http://www.bezreg-duesseldorf.nrw.de/gesundheit_soziales/medizinische_angelegenheiten/index.jsp

2. Berlin

The work permit is granted for a total of 2 years and the time can be spent in the specialty being sought. The work permit will be issued for one year and can be extended for another
year. During this time, the exam has to be passed. Exams will be conducted in two time periods: April – June, October – December and consist of a practical and a theoretical part. There are different exams for physicians and for dentists.


Exceptions are made for those doctors who applied for the working permit before April 1st 2012. They can finish their traineeship with the working permit.

3. **Hessen**

The work permit is granted for a total of six months. After that the exam has to be passed which takes one hour and which does not require contact with patients. It consists of three parts: internal medicine, surgery and a third subject that can be chosen by the examinee.

**Doctors:** [http://www.hessen.de/irj/RPGIE_Internet?cid=18a71aebe75fd57b12f18a0b0f6e3bc9](http://www.hessen.de/irj/RPGIE_Internet?cid=18a71aebe75fd57b12f18a0b0f6e3bc9)

**Dentists:** [http://www.hessen.de/irj/RPGIE_Internet?cid=8d531b9c9bd7ef2d1c450dca8ca25](http://www.hessen.de/irj/RPGIE_Internet?cid=8d531b9c9bd7ef2d1c450dca8ca25)

[http://www.rp-giessen.hessen.de/irj/RPGIE_Internet?rid=HMdI_15/RPGIE_Internet/sub/595/59509392-b3a8-b112-6684-144e9169fccc,2222222-2222-2222-2222-222222222222.htm](http://www.rp-giessen.hessen.de/irj/RPGIE_Internet?rid=HMdI_15/RPGIE_Internet/sub/595/59509392-b3a8-b112-6684-144e9169fccc,2222222-2222-2222-2222-222222222222.htm)

4. **Sachsen-Anhalt**

The work permit is granted for 2 years. If you start your traineeship with a work permit in a different state and you would like to change to Sachsen-Anhalt you get a work permit for one year so that you have the time to apply for the Approbation. The exam bases on the German medical examinations for physicians and dentists. You will receive information about the exam with the work permit. If you start your traineeship with a work permit in a different state and you would like to change to Sachsen-Anhalt you get a work permit for one year so that you have the time to apply for the Approbation.


5. **Hamburg**

Physicians who already received a work permit before April 1st 2012 will get an extension of their work permit until the end of their traineeship. They do not need to apply for the Approbation. The new physicians who apply for a working permit after April 1st can get a work permit for up to two years. During this time they have to do the exam to get an Approbation.

[http://www.hamburg.de/behoerdenfinder/hamburg/11313820/#ze](http://www.hamburg.de/behoerdenfinder/hamburg/11313820/#ze)

6. **Rheinland-Pfalz**

Physicians who already received a work permit before April 1st 2012 will get an extension of their work permit until the end of their traineeship. They do not need to apply for the Approbation. The new physicians who apply for a work permit after April 1st can get a work permit for up to two years. During this time they have to do the exam to get an Approbation.


7. **Sachsen**

Working permits are no longer issued at all anymore. After finishing the language courses one has to apply for the Approbation. Then, the equivalency will be tested automatically. In case the education is not equivalent one has to do the exam. For traineeships up to two years one can get a working permit.

[http://www.lds.sachsen.de/lpa/](http://www.lds.sachsen.de/lpa/)

8. **Niedersachsen**
The working permit will be issued for two years at first and then will be extended because of an exceptional rule based on the fact that Saudi doctors will return to their home countries. Physicians from Saudi-Arabia do not have to apply for an Approbation.
https://www.aekn.de/arztspezial/niedersaechsischer-zweckverband-zur-approbationserteilung-nizza/

9. Baden-Württemberg
The work permit is granted for a total of six months, for dentists there is a tolerance of up to 12 months. They stress that this is only for the preparation for the exam and that this period does not count for the traineeship.

Dentists: http://www.rp-stuttgart.de/servlet/PB/menu/1071600/index.html

10. Bavaria
At the moment physicians can do their traineeships with a work permit; they do not have to apply for the Approbation. However, please note that they might adjust to the other federal states sooner or later!

Oberbayern (München, Ingolstadt u.a.)
http://www.regierung.oberbayern.bayern.de/aufgaben/umwelt/approbation/
Mittelfranken (Nürnberg, Erlangen u.a.)
http://www.regierung.mittelfranken.bayern.de/lauf_abt/abt6/abt5303.htm
Oberpfalz (Regensburg u.a.)
http://www.regierung.oberpfalz.bayern.de/download/gesundh/index.htm
Unterfranken (Würzburg u.a.)
http://www.regierung.unterfranken.bayern.de/unsere_aufgaben/7/uebersicht.html
Oberfranken (Bayreuth, Bamberg u.a.)

11. Bremen
The work permit will be issued for the duration of two years at most. The exam should be done during this period to receive an Approbation.

12. Thüringen
They issue a work permit until March 31st 2014. Until then you have to apply for an Approbation and do the exam.

13. Schleswig-Holstein
As with Bavaria we still do not know how and when they will implement the new regulations. At the moment physicians can finish their traineeship with a work permit and do not have to apply for an Approbation.
http://www.schleswigholstein.de/LASD/DE/Gesundheitsberufe/MSGFGesundheitsberufe/Gesundheitsberufe_node.html

14. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
The work permit is granted for two years at most. During this time doctors have to pass the Approbation exam to be able to continue their traineeships.
http://www.lagus.mv-regierung.de/cms2/LAGuS_prod/LAGuS/de/ges/Landespruefungsamt_fuer_Heilberufe_%28LPH%29/Berufserlaubnis%2c_Approbation%2c_Zertifikat/Berufserlaubnis/index.jsp

15. Brandenburg
The work permit is granted for one year at most. During this time doctors have to pass the Approbation exam to be able to continue their traineeships.
http://www.mugv.brandenburg.de/cms/media.php/bb1.a.2815.de/g1_2.pdf

16. Saarland
The work permit is granted for one year at most. During this time doctors have to pass the Approbation exam to be able to continue their traineeships. [http://www.saarland.de/gesundheitsberufe.htm](http://www.saarland.de/gesundheitsberufe.htm)

**Concluding Remarks**

The new law means that Saudi physicians who want to be trained like German doctors have to fulfill the same requirements as German doctors. In case you fail the exam you will get detailed information on how to improve so that you will get a fair chance to pass next time.

The great advantage of passing this exam is that it provides you with the same qualification and rights than any German resident. The old working permit put many Saudi physicians in a dependent position to the supervising professor which was often the reason why our scholarship holders would not get the same challenging tasks as German doctors.

The second advantage is that after passing the exam you can work as a physician in any German city and hospital without applying for a new work permit.

Here you will find a general list with contact information concerning the work permit and “Approbation”: [http://www.bundesaerztekammer.de/downloads/Approbationsbehoerden20110713.pdf](http://www.bundesaerztekammer.de/downloads/Approbationsbehoerden20110713.pdf)