

What does an official certification look like?

An official certification can be provided by any public body or government agency that has an official seal or stamp (Dienstsiegel). Examples include registration offices (Bürgerbüros) or the local registration offices of the State Residents' Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt), as well as embassies and consulates if foreign academic records are to be certified. German notaries are, of course, also authorized to perform certifications. The institution (school, higher education institution) that originally issued the record in question can also certify a copy of that record as well as sworn translators.

Certifications issued by attorneys, certified auditors, associations, health insurance companies, as well as the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit), the Church, from DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) or from AStA (Allgemeiner Studierenden Ausschuss) **are not recognized**.

Every official certification must include at least

1. the certification notice (this is a notice stating that the copy is in accordance with the original),
2. the signature of the party certifying the document, and
3. the official seal or stamp. (An official seal or stamp generally includes an emblem. A simple inked text stamp is not sufficient.)

If the copy consists of several pages, proof must be provided showing that each page comes from the same document. It is sufficient if only one page bears the certification notice and signature as long as all pages are stacked up, stapled together, and stamped or sealed in such a way that part of the official seal or stamp appears on each page (see depiction in the upper left-hand corner of the sample).

You are also welcome to have every page certified separately, but if you do so, please ensure that your name appears on every page of the original.

Photocopies of officially certified copies will not be accepted.

Sample certification:

