Last updated: October 2026

CHECKLIST: Language Course Visa - SWITZERLAND (CANTON OF ZURICH)

Important: This checklist provides general guidance for an intensive German language course in the Canton of Zurich. The exact procedure depends on nationality and individual circumstances. For stays of more than 90 days, non-EU/EFTA nationals generally need authorization for residence for education/training purposes and, if subject to a visa requirement, a national visa (Type D) before entering Switzerland. The final decision is made exclusively by the competent Swiss authorities. Always check the requirements of the responsible Swiss representation and the Migration Office of the Canton of Zurich before applying.

Required documents

☐ **Valid passport**

☐ **Application for authorization to enter / residence for education or training** Complete the forms required by the responsible Swiss representation and the Canton of Zurich. Visa-required third-country nationals must submit the entry application personally to the competent Swiss representation abroad; the documents are then forwarded to the Migration Office of the Canton of Zurich.

☐ **Passport photographs** Provide current photographs in the format requested by the responsible Swiss representation.

☐ **Language course confirmation / detailed study programme** The documentation should state the exact duration and scope of the intended language course. For the Zurich language-course route, the course must be a full-time in-person programme. speakeasy Zurich's visa Super-Intensive Course provides 20 in-person teaching units per week.

☐ **Invoice for the language course** Submit the invoice and proof that the booked course has been paid, where required.

☐ **Proof of sufficient financial means** For a 12-month stay, the Canton of Zurich currently considers CHF 21,000 sufficient for living expenses. The canton states that the confirmation must be issued by a bank licensed in Switzerland.

☐ **Proof of suitable accommodation in Switzerland**

☐ **Proof of adequate health insurance in Switzerland**

☐ **Detailed motivation letter** Explain the purpose of the language course, the educational goal, why Zurich was chosen as the place of study and how the course fits into your previous education and/or professional plans. Applicants over 30 must provide sufficient justification for undertaking the education/training in Zurich.

☐ **CV**

☐ **Proof of previous education and professional qualifications** Submit relevant school, university, vocational and/or professional records.

☐ **Proof of previous language knowledge** The applicant must demonstrate the language skills required for the intended education (e.g. A2).

☐ **Written declaration / evidence confirming the intention to leave Switzerland after completion of the course** The Canton of Zurich requires the applicant's departure after completion of the education/training to be secured.

☐ Additional documents requested by the Swiss representation or the Migration Office of the Canton of Zurich

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Course purpose

This route is intended for a genuine full-time German intensive course in the Canton of Zurich. Students admitted for a German intensive course generally receive a short-term residence permit for six months, which may be extended once for a maximum of a further six months. The course and educational objective must be plausible and the applicant must meet the linguistic and educational requirements.

Important: language course and subsequent university studies

The Canton of Zurich generally does not permit different education programmes to be chained together. In particular, a language course followed by general or vocational education, or a language course required to fulfil conditions for university admission, is normally considered an impermissible chaining of programmes. A narrowly defined situation may apply where a student already has unconditional admission to ETH Zurich or the University of Zurich and only the required German examination remains before the start of studies. This should always be clarified individually with the Migration Office of the Canton of Zurich or the responsible Swiss representation before booking.

EU/EFTA and non-EU/EFTA

EU/EFTA citizens: An entry visa is generally not required. For a stay exceeding 90 days, registration with the municipality of residence and the appropriate residence procedure are required.

Non-EU/EFTA citizens: For stays exceeding 90 days for education/training, the required authorization must be obtained. Visa-required applicants must submit the entry application to the competent Swiss representation abroad before entering Switzerland. Entering without the required visa for school attendance or studies can prevent the residence permit from being issued.

Employment

Third-country nationals admitted for education or training may not generally take up employment automatically. Any employment requires the necessary authorization before work begins. The rules for students at Swiss universities do not automatically apply to participants in a private language course.

After arrival in the Canton of Zurich

☐ **Register with your municipality** within the applicable deadline.

☐ **Complete the residence-permit procedure** Follow the instructions of the municipality and the Migration Office of the Canton of Zurich, including biometric registration where applicable.

☐ **Attend the course regularly** The residence authorization is linked to the declared education/training purpose.

Please note

- The competent authorities may request additional documents or further information.
- Course enrolment and fulfilment of the course requirements do not guarantee that a visa or residence permit will be granted.

- The authorities assess the applicant's educational objective, previous education, language ability, financial means and secured departure individually.
- The requirements can vary depending on nationality and personal circumstances.
- Always verify the current requirements with the responsible Swiss representation and the Migration Office of the Canton of Zurich before submitting the application.