

FAU – Official certification of documents

Every **public authority which bears an official seal** is authorized to issue officially certified copies of original documents. Public authorities in Germany are, for example, courts, the city council, the district administration, public notaries and church institutions. Please observe that not every German city council/district administration will be prepared to officially certify copies of documents which are issued in a foreign language.

Please observe: Chinese certificates must be officially certified by a Chinese public notary.

The following persons are **not authorized** to issue officially certified copies: Lawyers, accountants, tax consultants, clubs/associations and translators/interpreters (Translators/interpreters may only certify the validation of translations. However, they are not entitled to certify the validation of original documents).

Official certifications **must** at least contain:



1. **an attestation clause** confirming that the copy/photocopy is a true copy of the original (The attestation clause must be in German, English or French)
2. **the signature** of the certifying person/authority
3. the **official stamp** of the certifying authority

The official stamp generally includes an emblem, a simple text stamp is not sufficient.

If the copy is made up of several separate sheets, you have to prove that each sheet belongs to the same original document. It is sufficient if only one sheet bears the attestation clause and the signature provided that all sheets have been put on top of each other (e. g. in a fan-like manner) and have been stapled so that a part of the official stamp appears on each sheet.

Each sheet may also be certified separately. Please observe that your name must be indicated on each sheet of the original document. If this is not the case, your name as well as reference to the type of original document must be included in the attestation clause.

If both sides of a copy contain relevant information, the attestation clause has to refer to both sides (front /reverse side) for example by indicating. "It is hereby certified that this copy (front and reverse side) is a true copy of the original document. If this is not done, the front and reverse side have to be certified separately.

If the original document contains an embossing seal, this seal is normally not visible on the copy. Therefore, the attestation clause on the copy has to additionally state that the original document contained the embossing seal of the issuer of the document.

If the certification of documents does not fulfil the above mentioned requirements, the certified copy will not be accepted!

Official certification of documents abroad

The following persons/authorities abroad are authorized to issue official certifications:

-German embassies and consulates

-The school or university which have issued the original certificates. They are authorized to issue officially certified copies of these original certificates. In this case, the headmaster of the school or the dean/vice chancellor of the university have to issue officially certified copies of the original document by using the official seal. The official seal generally contains an emblem. A simple text stamp is not sufficient. The secretariat is not authorized to issue officially certified copies.

-A notary who provides copies with the seal of the apostille

Translations of certificates must be made directly from the original.

Please observe: Please exclusively send us officially certified copies of your original certificates and officially certified copies of original translations. Please do **NOT** send us your original certificates and the original translations! The Central University Administration, Department L 4, will not assume liability for lost documents.

As of 16th May 2011

University of Erlangen-Nürnberg

Department L4

Master Office