

Putting the appendices together

Does my application need any appendices? What appendices are required? What can I leave out? Normally, you always enclose certificates in an application – unless you are explicitly requested to submit a short application without appendices or just a CV. Appendices are important – especially in Germany, because they serve as confirmation of your qualifications, experience and skills.

Compiling the correct documents

First, check whether you can find out what documents are required. If there are specific requirements, it is easy – you just have to provide what they want. Some online application forms have specific upload fields that you need to comply with. If, for instance, the job description states that you should only submit 'relevant certificates', you can limit things to the most important appendices (see tips for selection below). If you read a request for 'a full set of documents', please enclose the following documents.

If you are just starting your career, collect these documents

- **Studies / degree:** Degree certificate and/or current grades/performance overview
- **Vocational training:** Certificate from your apprenticeship company and the responsible chamber, e.g. IHK, HWK
- **Professional experience, work placements, internships, relevant work's student activities:** Certificates from the latest or former employers
- **School-leaving qualifications:** Certificate of highest qualification (still usual for career starters, no more for persons with several years of professional experience)
- **Voluntary year / service, work or study abroad:** Certificate
- **Continuing education, further training specified in the job description:** Certificates
- **Part-time jobs, extracurricular activities (e.g. as a tutor, mentor) or voluntary work:** Certificates or papers relating to your work
- **Scholarships, prizes, awards and honours:** Provide certificates, if they are also mentioned in your CV

Add other documents, depending on relevance, currency and requirements

- Certificates for any courses about languages, IT and soft skills, methodical knowledge you have attended: Enclose all certificates about relevant courses!
- References and letters of recommendation
- Work samples / portfolio (especially from designers, architects)

You can and should omit the following:

- School certificates from before your highest qualification and school work placements
- Certificates for courses on the topic of “How to apply”

- Attestations, unless expressly requested like e.g. recognitions of foreign qualifications (In Germany attestations were used in former times when certificates were copied and submitted as a printed document.)
- Employment contracts for current or past jobs
- For hard copy applications: never place original certificates in your application folder! You might not get it back.

Do not attach too many appendices – stay focused

Depending on your CV, there may be many pages. Many HR decision-makers do not want to browse through long appendices. These tips can help you sort things:

- **Approx. 15 pages is usually sufficient** for your application, including cover letter, CV and, if necessary, a cover sheet and a list of appendices.
- Always enclose **study degree or vocational training** certificates in your application dossier.
- Certificates verifying relevant **professional and practical experience** are also important. If you have worked in your job for several years, you can skip documents about jobs from long ago.
- Check a document's **content-related relevance for a job** and the **time** how long ago something occurred. Always place the focus on what you have done within the **past 5 to maximum 10 years** and verify that you have the required skills.
- You can always offer to submit **documents** about less relevant stations or stations that lie well in the past **later**.
- If you have any relevant additional skills, e.g. required language skills, you only need to submit a certificate that verifies the **highest level**.

Make it easy for readers

Scanned documents should be clean and legible, without the need of a rotation. The resolution should be as low as possible and as high as necessary. If the resolution is too high, this usually means that the file is very large, whilst a file with a low resolution hinders legibility.

Order the appendices in the same sequence as your CV. An overview of your appendices can help the reader assign the documents. This is where you can also add additional information, e.g. if a company name has changed or it is a translated certificate from overseas. Moreover, you can include a note offering to submit more documents.

If important appendices are missing

Questions will come up, if important appendices are missing. If you notice that you are missing any certificates, simply ask e.g. former employers if you can get them now. Always remember to ask for a certificate or reference when you complete an internship, a (part-time, side) job or volunteer work. Is it not possible for you to obtain a missing certificate? Consider how you can respond to any questions about it. Is it easy to explain because of a company insolvency? Add a note about this, e.g. in your list of appendices.