Fact sheet – Marburg University

University profile

Founded in 1527, Philipps-Universität Marburg is a renowned public university boasting a rich history and a vibrant present. Offering over 180 degree programmes across 16 faculties and 14 specialised research centers in humanities, sciences, and professional fields, it attracts over 22,000 students seeking a diverse and stimulating academic experience.

The university is renowned for its commitment to research excellence. Its research groups tackle societal challenges like climate change and security, focusing on areas such as viruses, microorganisms, neurodegenerative diseases, and linguistics. Collaborative efforts like special research areas and graduate training groups further drive innovation.

International collaboration is at the heart of the university's research endeavours, establishing it as a global leader in knowledge creation. This focus on cutting-edge research prepares graduates for doctoral studies and diverse career paths.

Beyond academics, Marburg University fosters a multicultural and inclusive environment with a strong emphasis on student involvement. Through various structures like faculty councils and student initiatives, students actively shape their academic journey and contribute to the university community.

Combining tradition with innovation, affordability with excellence, and a focus on research and student engagement, Marburg University offers a unique and enriching educational experience for students from all walks of life.

University history

In 1527, Marburg University was founded by Landgrave Philipp of Hesse. It was the first ever protestant university, and as such, it played an important role in the educational revolution brought about by the Reformation.

Apart from law and medicine, students in Marburg had the opportunity to study theology according to the teachings of the Protestant Church as well as to attend general courses offered by the Department of Philosophy. Philipp promoted open-mindedness, which – despite a number of changes and upheavals in the nearly 500 years of the university's existence – is still one of its core features.

The subjects taught at Marburg University at the time of its foundation continue to be part of its broad range of degree programmes in the humanities and natural sciences. Thanks to the variety of

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disciplines represented at the university, students and researchers can broaden their horizons by branching out into other fields, which in turn facilitates interdisciplinary cooperation.

Higher education system of Germany

Germany's higher education system boasts diverse options. Two main types exist: universities (Universitäten) and universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen).

Universities offer a broader range of subjects, including theoretical and research-oriented programmes, leading to Bachelor's, Master's, and doctoral degrees.

Universities of applied sciences focus on practical skills and professions, offering Bachelor's and Master's degrees in specific fields.

Entry typically requires the "Abitur," a rigorous school-leaving exam, or equivalent qualifications. Public universities are dominant, known for low tuition fees, attracting over 90% of students. Private universities offer alternative options, often with higher fees. The system is decentralised, with each state having some control over its institutions. This fosters diversity in programme offerings and structures. Overall, German higher education is renowned for its affordability, quality, and diverse options, making it a popular choice for international students.

Faculties & Departments

16 Faculties

1. Law
2. Business Admin. + Economics
3. Social Sciences and Philosophy
4. Psychology
5. Protestant Theology
6. History and Cultural Studies
7. German Studies + History of Arts
8. Foreign Languages + Cultures
9. Mathematics + Computer Science
10. Physics
11. Chemistry
12. Pharmacy
13. Biology
14. Geography
15. Medicine
16. Education

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14 Research Centers

1. Center for Conflict Studies
2. Center for Gender Studies and Feminist Futurology
3. Center for Interdisciplinary Religious Research
4. Center for Mind, Brain and Behavior (CMBB)
5. Center For Near And Middle Eastern Studies (CNMS)
6. Center for Synthetic Microbiology (Synmikro)
7. Center for Teacher Education
8. Center for University Continuing Education
9. „Foto Marburg“ Picture Archive
10. Linguistic Atlas of Germany
11. Marburg Center for Digital Culture & Infrastructure
12. Marburg Center for the Ancient World (MCAW)
13. Materials Sciences Center (WZMW)
14. The International Research and Documentation Centre for War Crimes Trials (ICWC)

Student involvement at Marburg University

Marburg University encourages active student involvement through various structures:

Fachschaften (Student Councils): Each faculty has its own Fachschaft, representing student interests at the faculty level. Membership is automatic for all enrolled students. They advocate for student rights, organise events, and advise students on academic matters. Each Fachschaft typically has a board of directors with various representatives elected by the student body within the faculty. The exact number varies between faculties.

Fachschaftenkonferenz (Faculty Council Conference): Representatives from each Fachschaft gather to discuss university-wide student affairs and advocate for common interests before the university administration. Meetings are public and open to all students. The Fachschaftenkonferenz has two representatives from each Fachschaft.

Studierendenvertretung (Student Representation): This central body represents all students at the university level. Elected by students, they work on university-wide issues like student fees, housing, and academic policies. The Studierendenvertretung has a board of directors elected by the student body, and the number of representatives can change based on student participation in elections.

Studentische Initiativen (Student Initiatives): Numerous independent student groups exist, catering to diverse interests (e.g., sports, cultural activities, social justice). These initiatives offer opportunities for engagement, learning, and community building outside the classroom.

Overall, student involvement at Marburg University offers diverse opportunities for students to shape their academic experience, develop valuable skills, contribute to the university community and advocate for change.

Research focus & number research groups

Marburg University's excellent research is concentrated in seven research profile areas. The breadth of science is visible in these, from the humanities and social sciences to natural sciences research to life sciences and medicine. From basic research to future-oriented application, Marburg University is active in these areas.

Microbiology, Biodiversity, Climate: The principles of microbial life, the importance of microorganisms for global climate change, as well as robustness of ecological networks and ways to digitally capture ecosystem dynamics, are among the topics being explored at the interface of microbiology.

Mind, Brain, Behavior: What happens in the brain when it seeks to understand the environment around it and how everyday perceptual mechanisms adapt to change are being researched neuroscientifically, as is the development of affective and schizophrenic disorders and movement disorders, as well as their underlying mechanisms and possibilities for treatment.

Virology and Infection Biology: Viruses and bacteria are studies in Marburg, with special focus placed on emerging infectious diseases, infection-related lung diseases, and pathogenic RNA viruses, influenza, and coronaviruses. This research forms the foundation for developing vaccines and medications together with partner companies from the pharmaceutical industry.

Security, Order, Conflict: Global orders and concepts of order are researched interdisciplinarily and across epochs, for example in the MENA region, but also beyond. Historical security and conflict research and transitional justice are further focal points. The research contributes to the classification and analysis of global challenges.

Inflammation, Immunology, Tumor Biology: In order to understand interactions within the immune system, inflammatory processes, and carcinogenesis, research in Marburg targets mechanisms that regulate differentiation processes, inflammation, and immunological responses. The long-term goal is the development of innovative and personalised treatment methods.

Materials, Interfaces, Semiconductors: New materials can help counter the consequences of climate change. Researchers in Marburg are developing functional materials for the future that can be groundbreaking, for example, for energy supply. In particular, scientists from the fields of physics and chemistry are working together here.

Language Dynamics: Language is the basis of human culture and social action, yet it is enormously diverse and constantly changing. From neurolinguistics to the development within dialects and regional languages, researchers in Marburg work together interdisciplinarily.

More information

- Degree Programmes: https://www.uni-marburg.de/en/studying/degree-programs
- Course catalogue: https://marvin.uni-mar-burg.de/qisserver/pages/cm/exa/coursecatalog/showCourseCatalog.xhtml?_flowId=showCourseCatalog-flow&_flowExecutionKey=e5s1