The FHNW University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland consists of the following schools:
- FHNW School of Applied Psychology
- FHNW School of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geomatics
- FHNW Academy of Art and Design
- FHNW School of Business
- FHNW School of Education
- FHNW School of Engineering
- FHNW School of Life Sciences
- FHNW Academy of Music
- FHNW School of Social Work

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The universities of applied sciences and arts within Switzerland’s dual education system

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher Education
- Federal Diploma of Higher Education
  - Federal examination

UNIVERSITIES

- Master’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- Master’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree

- PhD/doctorate
- Master’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree

TRANSITIONAL OPTIONS

- Federal Certificate of Vocational Education and Training
  - Host companies, vocational schools, branch courses

- Federal Diploma of Vocational Education and Training
  - Host companies, vocational schools, branch courses

- Specialised School Certificate
  - Specialised schools

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Federal Vocational Baccalaureate
- Specialised Baccalaureate
- Baccalaureate

GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOL

- Universities
- Federal Institutes of Technology

- Baccalaureate schools

COMPULSORY EDUCATION

- Usual pathway
- Possible pathway
Switzerland’s education system is closely aligned to the needs of both society and the economy. Consisting of a combination of practical vocational education and sound academic education, the system is characterised by high permeability.

Switzerland is a full member of the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process), which guarantees comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications. A key feature of universities of applied sciences is the applied nature of their research and the practical orientation of their education. In addition, their graduates are able to complete doctorates in collaboration with academic universities.

Another unique feature compared to other countries is the fact that Swiss music and art colleges are deemed equal to universities although, formally speaking, they are part of the universities of applied sciences.

Switzerland consistently ranks top in terms of innovativeness and its ability to attract talent from the international employment market. One of the key reasons for this is the country’s education system.
FHNW University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland

Nine schools, four modern campuses, over 12 500 students: the FHNW is one of Switzerland’s leading universities of applied sciences and arts, acknowledged for the excellence of its teaching and research.
A central feature across all mandated areas is practical orientation. With its broad range of degree programmes, vocational relevance, innovative research and its global network of nearly 400 international partnerships, the FHNW is a sought-after educational institution, employer and partner.

Interdisciplinary, innovative, international
The nine schools of the FHNW cover a broad spectrum of subject areas and facilitate a diverse and interdisciplinary approach to research and teaching. The skills of its lecturers and researchers, the quality of its infrastructure and its regional, national and international networks provide an optimal basis for addressing current issues in the fields of science, business, politics, culture and society.

The FHNW is home to students and teaching staff from more than 60 countries. This diversity provides an enriching environment for preparing students to confront the challenges of globalised economies, societies and cultures. Indicative of the FHNW’s international engagement are partnerships with foreign universities and institutions, involvement in European research programmes and its portfolio of trinational and multilingual degree programmes.
Studying at the FHNW

The portfolio of 29 bachelor’s and 18 master’s degree programmes offered by the FHNW gives students a wide range of opportunities to undertake practical tertiary education and training designed to facilitate successful career pathways. With numerous opportunities for international experience, such as international degree programmes, summer schools and international projects, the FHNW prepares its students for the challenges of the modern working world in an international environment.

Graduates of Swiss universities of applied sciences and arts benefit from above-average success when it comes to securing employment, and are assimilated quickly into the labour market, a fact verified by the Swiss Federal Education Report.

The FHNW’s excellent reputation for its applied teaching extends far beyond Switzerland’s borders and attracts numerous foreign students and lecturers. The schools of the FHNW impart practical knowledge and skills, and instil in their students the motivation and ability to work in multidisciplinary teams to meet social, commercial and cultural challenges. By facilitating critical reflection and fostering entrepreneurial, innovative and ethical attitudes, the FHNW offers its students the best possible prospects in terms of preparing them for the demands of an international and increasingly complex world of work.

Many of the FHNW’s degree programmes can be completed on a full-time, part-time or combined basis, offering students the chance to tailor their studies to their individual needs and circumstances.
Discover new horizons

The FHNW takes a practical approach to preparing its students for a globalized working world. Mobility has high priority. Students can study in multinational degree programmes, spend one or two semesters of their studies abroad, participate in summer schools or in an international student project in the ASEAN regions, China, India or the USA.

Students who sign up for the trinational BSc International Business Management are in for a truly multicultural experience. Studying in France, Germany and Switzerland, taking classes in English, French and German, doing internships in any country worldwide, and working with students from all around the world is both logistically challenging and enriching.

Add to that the opportunity to go on an exchange semester and you have a unique international experience. Aline Pabst is a truly international student. The course of her studies took her from Switzerland to France, Germany and China.

When it came to deciding on a degree, I was looking for a new challenge. Students live and breathe trinationality in the International Business Management bachelor’s programme: we study and live in all three regions and share classes with fellow students from France, Germany and Switzerland. What clinched it for me was the variety and the practical orientation: every summer, and in the seventh semester, we do placements. The course fosters intercultural understanding and an acceptance of different views and ways of working. We always have to be ready for, and adapt to, new experiences. This engenders flexibility and a sense of serenity – qualities that are useful in the world of work.

Like many of my fellow students, I also wanted to spend time studying in a fourth country. Since I had been there before my studies, I opted for China. This helped me improve my technical language skills and get to know many things from a new angle.

Going forward, I’d like to continue working in an international context. My previous experience is sure to help me integrate quickly in foreign countries and cultures and engage with different ways of working and thinking.”

Aline Pabst, FHNW School of Business
“Why the FHNW Academy of Art and Design? The determining factor for me was the institution’s reputation and Basel’s geographical location, which makes it a hub for international exchange.”

Laurent Hermann Progin, graduate of the FHNW Academy of Art and Design

“Every semester, we work on a practical project with an industrial partner. That’s more motivating than pure theory, plus it means we meet potential employers.”

Stephan Maurer, student at the FHNW School of Engineering

“The International Business Management programme finds us studying in three different countries, which means we acquire practical experience at an international level. This teaches us how to be flexible and think outside the box.”

Julian Widtmann, student at the FHNW School of Business

“I find it great that you can tailor your studies and combine them flexibly with your day job. It means that my studies benefit from my professional experience and that I can apply what I've learnt at uni directly to my job.”

Susanna Wittler, student at the FHNW School of Education
Continuing and executive education

In today’s globalised world of work, the demands presented by numerous professional fields are becoming ever more complex and fast-changing. Lifelong learning and continuing education have become the buzzwords of modern business.

The FHNW provides a solid, diverse and flexible range of continuing education programmes at both national and international level, designed to meet the individual requirements of a wide range of career paths – whether broadening individual professional profiles, preparing individuals for working in an international environment, or providing employees of an organisation with higher qualifications and skills.

Master's degree, diploma and certificate-level programmes as well as numerous seminars and courses provide education and training across nine disciplines; by combining academic theory with practice, they cater for a wide range of needs.

Thanks to its practical relevance, national and international partnerships and cutting-edge forms of teaching and learning, the continuing education offered by the FHNW affords optimal chances for further professional development.

“Our lecturers come from the real world. The course contents are based on the latest research findings and target concrete situations. This combination of theoretical and practical continuing education helps me develop my company in an informed way.”

Vivian Demartin, entrepreneur and continuing education graduate from the FHNW School of Engineering

“My contact with the lecturers and course participants from other organisations and sectors helped me build up a useful network, which could result in interesting opportunities.”

Anna Bernard-Martels, continuing education graduate from the FHNW School of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geomatics

“As a result of my part-time MBA, I feel I am well equipped for the fast-changing, demanding nature of my profession. My stay abroad has also strengthened my understanding of working in a different cultural context.”

Dominique Meyer-Schott, continuing education graduate from the FHNW School of Business.
Applied R&D

Research and innovation know no national borders. The applied research carried out at the FHNW is aligned to international developments and conducted in close cooperation with regional, national and international research and industry partners.

The FHNW's R&D focuses on identifying answers to specific questions in the fields of business, politics, culture and society, and on transferring knowledge and technology to industry.

The FHNW maintains an extensive network at home and abroad and participates in research projects in Switzerland and further afield. Researchers from the university's nine schools adopt a multidisciplinary approach in their collaboration with organisations, other universities and institutions in Europe and beyond. Much of this collaborative work is performed within the context of European research programmes, some of which are headed by the FHNW.

The research results published by the FHNW contribute to the innovativeness and strengthening of the economy and of society. At the same time, the findings flow back into the university's degree and continuing education programmes, thereby ensuring that the education provided is academically sound, up to date and practically relevant.

The FHNW's portfolio of services helps organisations and institutions develop tailored solutions for a wide range of issues arising out of their day-to-day activities.

PROLIFIC – sustainable technologies to transform and valorise waste from food production

Sustainability is a major aspect of many research projects at the FHNW. The objective of PROLIFIC is to apply new, innovative, technological and industrial solutions to transform waste from the agro-food industry into food products, packaging materials, animal feeds and cosmetics.

A agro-industrial biomass deriving from food production generates a large amount of co-products and wastes. Those residues are still a rich source of carbohydrates, proteins, lipids and polyphenols. Innovative and sustainable biorefinery concepts could exploit this potential and contribute to meeting the projected global demand for food proteins, which is expected to grow by 76% by 2050.

The PROLIFIC project has taken on the resource challenge by developing sustainable extraction technologies and treatment processes to recover proteins, fibres and bioactive compounds from processing residues of legumes, fungi and coffee. They will be valorised in a wide range of products, such as breakfast cereals, bread, vegetarian meat surrogates, animal feed, cosmetic creams and toothpaste, or bioactive and biodegradable packaging, such as e.g. coffee capsules.

The PROLIFIC consortium consists of 17 partners from eight European countries, coordinated by Prof. Dr. Philippe Corvini of the FHNW School of Life Sciences.

Facts & Figures
Project: PROLIFIC – Integrated cascades of processes for the extraction and valorisation of proteins and bio-active molecules from Legumes, Fungi and Coffee agro-industrial side streams
Project duration: Sept 2018 – Aug 2022
Project budget: CHF 5.6 million
Project funding: CHF 4.9 million
Programme: Horizon 2020 (EU)
Beyond borders

Diverse people – diverse skills

The FHNW, as a multisectoral institution, views this as an outstanding opportunity. It deploys its interdisciplinary competencies in a focused manner in order to address the opportunities and risks of global trends: its education and continuing education programmes hone students’ skills for dealing with the challenges of a globalised economy and society. And through its applied research activities, which involve collaboration with national and international partners, it develops concrete solutions to some of the key issues of our time.

In doing so, the FHNW generates long-term economic and social benefits for the region and far beyond.

Learning, perception and innovation presuppose openness – vis-à-vis other people, other cultures and other worlds. In promoting this openness, the FHNW considers the diversity of its students and staff to be of value – and a resource of importance to the development of the university.

Diversity competence and diversity awareness are essential in a diverse, internationally oriented university if students, staff and partners are to develop to their full potential – regardless of age, gender, disability, background, world view or sexual orientation.

The FHNW views the varying and contrasting abilities, experience and biographies of its students and staff as potential that can be leveraged for its development as an organisation and as a resource for innovation.

It promotes equality of opportunity, especially with regard to gender equality, women in leadership roles, and combining studies with work and family life.

Also thanks to its diversity, the FHNW is a sought-after partner for national and international companies and organisations with a business, cultural and social orientation.

The disciplines and topics covered by the FHNW are as diverse as people themselves. Its nine schools provide an all-encompassing framework, offering an excellent specialist and a strong interdisciplinary approach to teaching.

The major challenges of our time demand cross-boundary collaboration as a means of securing sustainable solutions. Complex subject areas such as ageing demographics, sustainable energy and digital transformation call for holistic approaches.

In doing so, the FHNW generates long-term economic and social benefits for the region and far beyond.
Diversity times nine

The schools of the FHNW

For a high-quality, sustainably built environment: the FHNW School of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geomatics

From surveying and planning to the construction of buildings, urban centres and roads – the FHNW School of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geomatics teaches and researches for the built environment of tomorrow. Incorporating five institutes, the school is located in a dynamic setting on the newest of the FHNW’s campuses, Muttenz. Throughout its degree and continuing education programmes and applied research, it pays particular attention to the impact of digitisation on the occupational profiles of professions in the construction sector.

Further information & contact: www.fhnw.ch/habg

Vibrant seismograph of social developments: the FHNW Academy of Art and Design

The FHNW Academy of Art and Design positions itself as a multifaceted learning, teaching and research community that addresses, defines and drives socially relevant discourses in theory and practice. It confronts the challenges of the present with professional and scientific psychology for the benefit of society, the wider economy and the world of work. The school ranks amongst the leading centres of excellence for occupational, organisational and business psychology in German-speaking Europe.

Further information & contact: www.fhnw.ch/aps

At the intersection of nature, technology, medicine and the environment: the FHNW School of Life Sciences

Domiciled on the Muttenz campus, the FHNW School of Life Sciences is part of Europe’s largest life sciences cluster. Its teaching and research is devoted to developing new preventive and therapeutic products and services, improving people’s quality of life and promoting a sustainable attitude to the environment. The school leverages its network with industry to develop its degree programmes and offer its students comprehensive insights into real-life practice during their studies.

Further information & contact: www.fhnw.ch/hls

From early music to contemporary composition: the FHNW Academy of Music

Music connects people and cultures, fosters their development, evokes emotions and is a source of meaningful activity for all ages. The FHNW Academy of Music trains both prospective professional musicians and music educators. As seismographs of the present, they have a hand in shaping current musical practice and pass on the valuable cultural heritage of music to future generations. In so doing, they play an essential role in the cohesion and future of society.

Further information & contact: www.fhnw.ch/hsm

Shaping the work and products of the future: the FHNW School of Applied Psychology

Future-oriented working arrangements, innovative products, optimal use of technology in business and civil society – the FHNW School of Applied Psychology shapes the interplay of people, technology and organisation. Its key objective is to make use of a broad range of creative scope and professional perspectives. In keeping with its social mandate, the FHNW Academy of Art and Design trains the next generation of artists and designers and stimulates their independence of thought and action.

Further information & contact: www.fhnw.ch/hgk
For the northwestern Switzerland educational area: the FHNW School of Education

The degree programmes offered by the FHNW School of Education cover the full gamut of teacher training opportunities, ranging from pre-primary through to all types of secondary education, as well as adult and continuing education. It also offers training in special-needs education and psychology, plus continuing education and counselling at all levels, as well as applied research and development. Partnerships with practising teachers and partner schools ensure a close link between studies and the professional field and assist students with their professional integration.

Further information & contact:
www.fhnw.ch/ph

Understanding society, supporting people: the FHNW School of Social Work

The FHNW School of Social Work ranks amongst the largest social work educational institutions in Switzerland. The school’s Social Innovation specialism develops innovative solutions for social problems and societal challenges through a variety of collaborations with the social work sector. Degree and continuing education students benefit from the latest findings culled from the school’s applied research and service projects.

Further information & contact:
www.fhnw.ch/hsa

Training and research partner for industry and business: the FHNW School of Engineering

As a training centre for engineering, computer sciences and optometry, the FHNW School of Engineering offers degree and continuing education programmes with a practical bias. In doing so, it updates its offerings on an ongoing basis and responds proactively to the latest technical and social advances, e.g. with its innovative Data Science programme. The school works closely with domestic and international research partners and collaborates with numerous companies and institutions in their innovation projects.

Further information & contact:
www.fhnw.ch/ht
Innovative and responsible leaders for a connected, dynamic world: the FHNW School of Business

The FHNW School of Business positions itself as a centre of training excellence for future leaders in business and society. Benefiting from a strong domestic and international network, it maintains partnerships around the globe and offers students and clients an applied learning experience in preparation for professional activities in Switzerland and further afield. As an educational and research institution, it also promotes a culture of responsibility and a skills-based approach to change, diversity and sustainability.

Further information & contact:
www.fhnw.ch/hsw