

A Hildesheim Student's Guide: From Visa to Campus Life

Welcome to the University of Hildesheim. This handbook is a personal guide to navigating your new life as a student in Germany. It is a resource designed to help you prepare for your journey, settle into your new home, and thrive academically and socially. As a student and not an official organization, I can only list down possibilities and share tips and insights to help make your transition as smooth as possible. Please remember that this is not an official or absolute guide and always refer to official university and governmental websites for the most current and definitive regulations. ¹

Hi, I am Adi (Aaditya Chaturvedi) and I am currently studying MSc Data Analytics in University of Hildesheim, I hail from India (no one uses that word now a days). I have had immense Luck and Friends around me that helped my journey to be smooth here in Hildesheim. A special thanks to International Office of University of Hildesheim for their love and support. I believe in giving forward the kindness that I have received and what better way to build a project that will help generations of international students! Please feel free to reach out to me as I am always happy to talk to you regarding Campus Compass or basically anything, I am quite chatty myself .

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Part I: Before You Arrive - The Journey and Paperwork

This section outlines the essential steps to take before you travel to Hildesheim, from securing your visa to planning your arrival.

1.1. Planning Your Journey to Hildesheim

Hildesheim is well-connected and easily accessible by train from major German airports, such as Hanover (HAJ) and Frankfurt (FRA).² From Hanover Airport, you can take a regional train or the S-Bahn to Hanover's main train station (Hannover Hauptbahnhof) and then take a direct train to Hildesheim Hauptbahnhof.¹ The journey from Hanover Airport to Hildesheim Hauptbahnhof takes approximately 1 hour and 12 minutes with one change and costs from around 11.70 if booked in advance.³

A significant advantage for students at the University of Hildesheim is the Deutschlandsemesterticket, which from the Winter Semester 2024/2025 onwards, will replace the previous statewide ticket.⁴ This new digital ticket allows for free travel on all local and regional public transportation throughout Germany.⁵ Since the Deutschlandsemesterticket is automatically included in your semester fees, you can use it for travel from any regional airport in Germany to Hildesheim once you have completed enrollment and downloaded the ticket.⁵

1.2. Navigating Visas and Residence Permits

For non-EU/EEA citizens, a student visa is a mandatory first step and must be applied for at the German embassy or consulate in your home country well in advance of your arrival.¹ The visa is a temporary entry permit, and upon arrival, you must then apply for a student residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) at the local Foreigners' Office (Ausländerbehörde) to legitimize your stay for the full duration of your studies.⁷ (Source: <https://www.germany-visa.org/student-visa/student-visa-visum-zu-studienzwecken/>)

The visa application process requires several key documents, including an official letter of acceptance from a German higher education institution and proof of sufficient financial means.⁹ The required amount for a blocked bank account (Sperrkonto) is at least 11,904 Euro

for the year 2025, which translates to a minimum of 1,091 Euro per month to cover living costs.⁹ Other forms of financial proof, such as a scholarship or a formal obligation letter (Verpflichtungserklärung) from a sponsor in Germany, may also be accepted.⁹ Additionally, many programs require a certain level of German language proficiency, typically at least a B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).⁹ (Source: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa-residence/types/studying>)

1.3. Securing Health Insurance

Health insurance is a legal requirement for all students in Germany, and proof of valid insurance is mandatory for both university enrollment and for applying for the residence permit.¹ (Source: <https://www.cbs.de/en/blog/student-health-insurance-germany>)

The type of health insurance you need depends on your age. For students under 30, public health insurance (gesetzliche Krankenversicherung) is required unless you apply for a special exemption. These public insurance providers offer a reduced student rate, typically around 110 to 130 Euro per month. This type of insurance provides comprehensive coverage for in-patient hospital care, out-patient care, medication, and basic dental services. For students aged 30 and above, a private health insurance plan is often a more cost-effective option. When enrolling, your health insurance provider can often submit the confirmation directly to the university electronically, which simplifies this step. (Source: <https://www.daad.de/en/studying-in-germany/living-in-germany/health-insurance/>)

1.4. Finding a Place to Live

Arranging accommodation is one of the most critical tasks to complete before arriving in Hildesheim. The city, like many university towns, faces high demand for student housing, so it's highly recommended to start this search as early as possible.¹ (Source:

<https://stw-on.de/en/hildesheim/housing>)

- **Student Dormitories (Studierendenwerk):** This is often the most affordable option, with rooms averaging around 300 Euro per month (though this may be subject to change). These dorms are operated by the Studierendenwerk OstNiedersachsen, which requires a separate online application. Since demand is high, it's important to be aware that on some waitlists, you may need to confirm your interest every two weeks or risk being automatically removed from the list.¹² (Source: <https://stw-on.de/wohnen/bewerbung>)

- **Shared Flats (Wohngemeinschaft or WG):** Websites like WG-Gesucht.de are the primary platforms for finding these rooms.¹ When applying, a personalized message is key. Beyond stating your need for a room, it's a good idea to introduce yourself, mention your hobbies, and explain what you're looking for in a flatshare to show you're a good fit. Some ads even include a specific question to see if you've read the entire description. (Source:((https://www.uni-mannheim.de/media/Einrichtungen/AAA/Dokumente/IN-AT/Tips_for_Finding_a_Shared_Apartment_EN.pdf)))

1.5. Financial Planning and Living Costs

The cost of living in Hildesheim is generally more affordable than in larger cities like Hanover or Freiburg, which can help students on a budget.¹⁴ Rent is a significant portion of a student's budget, with dormitory rooms for exchange students costing approximately €290-300 a month. Other costs to factor in include health insurance, semester fees, food, and social activities. The city offers a variety of supermarkets like REWE, Edeka, and Aldi for affordable grocery shopping.¹ A critical tip for new arrivals is to remember that most stores are closed on Sundays, so planning your grocery trips accordingly is essential.¹ (Source: <https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/germany/cities/hildesheim/>)

Part II: Your First Two Weeks in Hildesheim - Critical Administrative Steps

This section details the most time-sensitive administrative and bureaucratic tasks you must complete immediately after your arrival.

2.1. The International Welcome Week

The University of Hildesheim's International Office organizes a Welcome Week for new international students before the start of each semester, starting on October 6, 2025, for the winter semester.¹ This is an invaluable opportunity for orientation, offering both social and administrative support.¹ Events typically include a welcome meeting, campus and city tours, and practical workshops on crucial topics like university enrollment, visa matters, health insurance, and course registration.² (Source: <https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/io/events/>)

2.2. First Official Business: Enrollment and City Registration (Anmeldung)

Within the first two weeks of arrival, international students must complete two essential, interconnected steps: city registration and university enrollment. (Source: <https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/germany/arrival/residence-permit/>)

- **City Registration (Anmeldung):** This is a mandatory process for anyone moving to Germany. A new resident must register their address at the city's Citizen's Office (Bürgerbüro) or Resident's Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt).¹ In Hildesheim, this office is located at Markt 2.¹⁹ It is important to know that you often need to book an appointment online in advance.¹⁹ Necessary documents include your passport or visa and a specific, legally mandated confirmation from your landlord, known as the Wohnungsgeberbestätigung. The registration confirmation (Meldebestätigung) you receive is a vital document that will be needed for your residence permit and bank account applications.⁸ You can find a form for the Wohnungsgeberbestätigung on the city's website. (Source: <https://www.stadt-hildesheim.de/buergerservice/dienstleistungen/hauptwohnsitz-anmeldung-900000034-0.html?myMedium=1>)

- **University Enrollment:** To become an officially matriculated student, you must submit all required documents to the Registrar's Office (Studierendensekretariat).¹ The University of Hildesheim also offers a digital enrollment process through the PLUS portal. The International Office will usually send you the login details by mail to access this portal, where you can then retrieve your credentials and complete the enrollment process online.⁴⁰ These documents typically include your admission letter, passport, and proof of health insurance.¹ Proof of health insurance can often be submitted digitally by the insurance provider directly to the university, simplifying this step. The university will send you your student ID card and an enrollment certificate once this process is complete, which are necessary for other official steps.²¹ (Source: <https://www.uni-assist.de/en/tools/uni-assist-universities/detail/hochschule/106/>)

2.3. Opening a German Bank Account

Opening a local bank account is an essential step for managing your finances, including paying rent, semester fees, and daily expenses.¹ Most major German banks, such as Sparkasse or Deutsche Bank, offer free or low-cost current accounts (Girokonto) for students. Many of these banks, like Sparkasse, have local branches in Hildesheim. (Source: <https://www.studying-in-germany.org/how-to-open-a-german-bank-account/>)

To open an account, you will typically need your passport, your university admission or enrollment certificate, and your city registration confirmation (Meldebestätigung).²¹ This means you need to complete your city registration before you can open a local bank account. Some banks may also require your German Tax Identification Number, which is sent to your registered address a few weeks after your Anmeldung.²⁰ The process can be completed in-person at a bank branch, and many banks also offer online registration with a video call or PostIdent identity verification. (Source: <https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/germany/arrival/bank-account/>)

Part III: Your First Semester – University Systems and Student Life

This section covers how to navigate your studies and get involved in the student community.

3.1. University IT Services

Upon enrollment, every student receives a personal university account, which is the key to accessing a range of digital services. This account, which includes a unique access ID and password, provides access to the university's Wi-Fi network (eduroam), a VPN (UNI-VPN), online library resources, and the student portal (Stud.IP). You are automatically issued a UNI-Account when you register for the university. (Source:

<https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/rz/uni-account/>)

Stud.IP is the central learning management system for course registration and academic organization. It is where you register for courses each semester, access important documents and lecture notes, and stay informed about schedule changes or announcements.¹ It is crucial to monitor this platform closely, as course registration is a time-sensitive process that occurs over a two-week period and can be easily missed.¹ In addition to Stud.IP, it is mandatory to check your university email account, which is also linked to your student account, as it is the primary channel for official communication from the university and faculty. (Source: <https://www.hs-schmalkalden.de/en/university/faculties/faculty-of-mechanical-engineering/studying/studip>)

3.2. Your Student Semesterticket

As of the Winter Semester 2024/2025, the previous Semesterticket has been replaced by the digital Deutschlandsemesterticket as a solidarity model. The ticket costs a subsidized €29.40 per month (€176.40 per semester) and is automatically paid for with your semester fee. It allows for free public transportation across all of Germany on local and regional trains (RE, IRE, erixx, NordWestBahn, U-Bahn, Stadtbahn, S-Bahn, tram, bus, Üstra, etc.), but not on long-distance trains like ICE or IC. The ticket is digital-only and must be downloaded from a university portal and stored on a smartphone. You will need to show a valid photo ID along with the digital ticket during a check. (Source:

<https://asta-hildesheim.de/de/service/semesterticket/>)

3.3. Student Life and Community

The University of Hildesheim fosters a small but vibrant student community, with numerous opportunities to get involved and meet people with similar interests.¹ The student body is represented by the General Students' Committee (AStA), which advocates for student interests in various areas, including mobility, digitalization, and international affairs. (Source: <https://asta-hildesheim.de/de/>)

A key point of contact for new students is the Erasmus Student Network (ESN).²³ ESN is a volunteer organization run by students who specifically support international students, organizing cultural evenings, excursions, and other social events to help them connect with German and international peers. Another important group to know are the Fachschaften. These are student representative bodies for a specific field of study. They serve as a first point of contact for academic problems and organize social events like first-semester weeks and parties, making them an excellent resource for navigating your degree program and finding community within your faculty. (Source: <https://asta-hildesheim.de/de/fachschaftsvertretungen/>)

3.4. University Sports (Hochschulsport)

The university sports program offers a diverse range of sports, from badminton and basketball to climbing and team sports.²³ Students must first book a digital Semesterkarte to access the basic sports offers, which are included in this fee. Additional or specialized courses may be subject to extra fees. For specific fitness activities or access to the university gym, separate cards like the FitCard or CAMPUSFitCard are available for purchase.²⁶ (Source: <https://www.hochschulsport-hannover.de/en/sports-programs>)

Part IV: Daily Life and Practical Matters

4.1. Student Employment

If you plan to work while studying, there are important rules and regulations to be aware of.²⁷ International students from non-EU/EEA countries can work a maximum of 140 full days or 280 half-days per year without needing a separate work permit. It is important to adhere to this rule, as working beyond this limit can lead to serious consequences, including the loss of your residence permit.²⁸ (Source:

<https://www.lmu.de/en/workspace-for-students/international-student-guide/working-in-germany/>)

Common student job types in Germany include the Minijob (earning up to 538 euros per month), Midijob (earnings between 520 and 2000 euros per month), and a Werkstudent position, which is a part-time job related to your field of study. Self-employment for non-EU students requires approval from the foreigners' authority and is generally not permitted. You can find various job postings on sites like [kleinanzeigen.de](https://www.kleinanzeigen.de), with a variety of roles from tutoring to hospitality. (Source:

<https://www.cbs.de/en/blog/working-as-a-student-in-germany>)

4.2. Daily Bureaucracy: The Ausländerbehörde and Rundfunkbeitrag

The student visa issued in your home country is only valid for a limited period, typically three to six months.⁷ A mandatory step after your arrival is to apply for a student residence permit at the Ausländerbehörde (Foreigners' Office) in Hildesheim.¹ The residence permit allows you to legally live and study in Germany for up to two years, after which it can be extended.⁷ The application for the residence permit requires a personal appointment, and it's important to apply for this permit at least eight weeks before your visa expires.²² (Source:

<https://www.stadt-hildesheim.de/buergerservice/dienstleistungen/aufenthaltserlaubnis-zum-zwecke-des-studiums-beantragen-900000337-0.html?myMedium=1>)

Every household in Germany is legally obligated to pay a public broadcasting fee (Rundfunkbeitrag).¹ The fee is currently 18.36 Euro per month, and it is a per-dwelling charge, meaning that even if you live in a shared flat, only one person per household needs to register

and pay the fee. You will receive a letter from the ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio Beitragsservice shortly after you complete your Anmeldung.¹ Students can apply for an exemption from this fee if they receive a government-funded student grant, such as BAföG. (Source: https://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/welcome/englisch/students_and_apprentices/index_ger.html)

4.3. Getting Around and Exploring the City

Hildesheim has a reliable bus network, and your Deutschlandsemesterticket provides free access to all local public transport within the city and the entire region. This makes navigating the city and its surrounding areas convenient and cost-effective.¹ A bike is also a popular mode of transportation for students, as Hildesheim is very bike-friendly.¹⁵ The city itself boasts a variety of student-friendly venues for culture, leisure, and nightlife.³¹ (Source: <https://www.hawk.de/en/university/faculties/hildesheim-campus>)

4.4. German Cultural Tips

Germany has a strong culture of waste separation. It is a mandatory part of daily life. The main categories are Restmüll (residual waste) in the gray/black bin, Altpapier (paper) in the blue bin, Leichtverpackungen (light packaging from plastics and metals) in the yellow bin, and Biotonne (organic waste) in the green/brown bin. Glass bottles are to be sorted by color and placed in separate containers located around the city. You can often find a waste management calendar for your area online that shows the pickup dates for each bin. (Source: <https://www.bellandvision.com/en/information-services/waste-separation-matters>)

Another key aspect of German culture is punctuality and directness.³² It's generally expected to be on time or even slightly early for meetings.³² When speaking, people are often direct and may not "beat around the bush," which is not intended to be rude.³² (Source: https://www.reddit.com/r/AskAGerman/comments/1jwlbo2/advice_on_living_in_germany_as_an_international/)

Appendix: Essential Resources and Checklists

Essential University Websites

Website	Purpose	URL
PLUS Portal	The central online portal for enrollment, where you can submit documents, pay your semester fee, and check your health insurance status. ⁴⁰	https://plus.uni-hildesheim.de/
LSF Portal	The online campus management system for creating your timetable, registering for courses, and managing your study and exam performance. ⁴¹	https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/ecampus/l sf/
Learnweb	The learning platform where you can find teaching materials, download documents, and communicate with your lecturers. ⁴³	https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/learnweb/login/
Webmail	Your official university email account, which is the primary channel for communication from the university and faculty. ¹	https://webmail.uni-hildesheim.de
Mensa	The official website for the university canteen, where you can view menus and find information on meal options. ⁴⁴	https://stw-on.de/en/hildesheim/dining/mensas-and-cafeterias/mensa-uni

Key University and City Contacts

Office Name	Purpose	Location	Contact Information
International Office	All questions related to your stay, academic support, and student initiatives. ¹	Universitätsplatz 1, D-31141 Hildesheim. ³³	E-Mail: io@uni-hildesheim.de ³³
Studierendenwerk	Dormitories and general student services. ¹	stw-on.de/hildesheim ³⁴	E-Mail: wohnheim-hansering@df04stw-on.de
Registrar's Office (Studierendensekretariat)	University enrollment and academic administration. ¹	Marienburger Platz 22, D-31141 Hildesheim ³⁵	E-Mail: studienberatung@uni-hildesheim.de ³⁵
Citizen's Office (Bürgerbüro)	Mandatory address registration (Anmeldung). ¹	Markt 2, 31134 Hildesheim ¹⁹	Phone: +49 5121 301-2900, E-Mail: stadtbuero@stadt-hildesheim.de ¹⁹
Foreigners' Office (Ausländerbehörde)	For your residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis). ¹	Markt 2, 31134 Hildesheim ²⁹	E-Mail: ABH-allgemein@landkreishildesheim.de
AStA (General Students' Committee)	Student representation and services. ¹	HC.I.1.12-13 ³⁶	E-Mail: kontakt@asta-hildesheim.de ³⁶
IT Services (Rechenzentrum)	University account and IT support. ¹	Universitätsplatz 1, 31141 Hildesheim ³⁸	Phone: +49 5121 883-92888 ³⁸

Before You Go: Document Checklist

- Valid Passport and Visa (if applicable) ¹
- Proof of Financial Means (e.g., Blocked Account Confirmation or Scholarship Letter) ¹⁰
- University Admission Letter (Zulassungsbescheinigung) ¹⁰
- Proof of Health Insurance ¹
- University Entrance Qualification (Authenticated educational certificates) ¹⁰
- Passport-sized Photos ¹⁰

First Week: Administrative Checklist

- Book a city registration (Anmeldung) appointment at the Bürgerbüro.⁸
- Register for university enrollment at the Studierendensekretariat.¹
- Attend the International Welcome Week events to meet key contacts and get informed.¹
- Set up your university IT services, including your Stud.IP account and email.¹
- Book a residence permit appointment at the Ausländerbehörde.⁷

Common Student Job Types in Germany

Job Type	Key Features	Legal Regulations
Minijob	Earn up to €538 per month. Typically tax-free and exempt from social security contributions for students.	Non-EU students are still limited to 140 full or 280 half-days per year overall. ²⁸
Midijob	Earnings between €520 and €2000 per month. Requires contributions for health and unemployment insurance.	Can provide more stable income but may impact student status. ³⁹

Werkstudent	A job in your field of study. Offers valuable work experience and is considered a regular part-time employee with holiday leave.	Non-EU students are limited to 140 full or 280 half-days per year. ²⁸
Internship	Can be mandatory (required for your program) or voluntary.	Mandatory internships do not count toward the work day limits for non-EU students. Voluntary internships that last longer than three months are subject to minimum wage. ⁷
Self-employment	Running your own business or freelancing.	Requires explicit approval from the foreigners' authority and is generally not permitted for non-EU students. ²⁸

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