



# **Studying in Germany** A Practical Guide for International Students

3rd Edition



**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



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## **A Practical Guide for International Students**

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# Studying in Germany? A Good Idea!

So, you're interested in studying in Germany?  
That's fantastic! We're happy for you!

Studying abroad – especially in a country very different from your own – is an exciting challenge. You will be influenced by the surge of new impressions and points of view you encounter here. Studying in Germany – in the heart of Europe – will certainly have a long-lasting impact on your life.

There are diverse opportunities in Germany for learning and researching. German universities have an outstanding reputation throughout the world. Each year they produce significant, internationally recognised advances and innovations. Here you will find ideal conditions for gaining a successful university education. By the way, you are one of many talented, young individuals who wish to study in Germany. At present, there are almost 250,000 young people from around the world studying and researching at German universities. They comprise 12.4 percent of all students in Germany. In fact, there are very few countries that can boast a higher percentage of foreign students. And you are not alone as you travel to Germany. This brochure will help you prepare for your studies here. Inside, we

will tell you who to contact if you have questions or problems. There are numerous advisers and counsellors here who are happy to support you in planning your future.

We wish you success and a wonderful, unforgettable stay in Germany!

## Who are we?

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is a joint organisation of German institutions of higher education and student bodies. Our task is to support academic cooperation around the world, especially by promoting the exchange of students and academics.

You can find more information about studying and living in Germany in our info brochures and on our website **[www.daad.de](http://www.daad.de)**. We invite you to visit our English-language website where our virtual adviser Dany can help you with your questions.





# 1.

## Preparing for your study visit

This chapter tells you how to plan a successful study visit and what you should take care of before you leave home.

Studying abroad is like turning a new page in an unknown world. There are many things to consider, plan and organise. The following timeline will give you an overview of each step you will take on your way to Germany.

On the following pages you will find detailed information about each step on the timeline.

## Timeline

### ► About a year before your planned trip to Germany

- Start gathering information about study opportunities in Germany (see pp. 10–18).
- Find out whether you fulfil the requirements for studying in Germany (see pp. 20–23).
  - Is your school-leaving certificate sufficient?
  - Will you have to take a language test?
- Determine how you will finance your study visit in Germany (see pp. 24–30).

### ► Six months before your trip

- Decide on a degree programme and university (see pp. 10–18).
- Contact the International Office at the university of your choice (see pp. 16–17).

### ► About four to five months before your studies begin

- Submit your application of admission (see pp. 31–34). Note the submission deadlines!

### ► When you receive your notification of acceptance

- Would you like to live in a student hall of residence? Then apply for a room now (see p. 40).
- Do you need a visa? If so, then apply for one now (see pp. 36–38).
- Do you have a health insurance policy which is recognised in Germany? Then request a statement confirming your coverage from your provider now. For more information on health insurance, see p. 27.

### ► One to two weeks before your trip

- Make sure you have collected all the necessary documents (see p. 42).
- Plan where you will spend your first nights in Germany (see p. 49).
- If possible, arrange appointments by e-mail to view accommodations (see pp. 49–50).

### ► Your trip to Germany!

## 1.1

# Selecting your degree programme and university

This section provides you with an overview of the German university system and the degree programmes you can choose from.

The more choices you have, the harder it is to choose. This especially applies to your situation, as there are so many opportunities to study in Germany.

There are 355 officially recognised institutions of higher education in 165 towns and cities throughout Germany. The map on page 18 shows the location of these institutions. In total, German universities and colleges offer more than 13,500 degree programmes. And from all of these, you will have to choose one. In the following, we've put together some information to help ease the agony of making such a difficult decision.

### Search the CD database

At the back of this brochure, you'll find a CD-ROM containing a list of study opportunities in Germany, as well as addresses of all the universities and their International Offices (your most important contact partner – see pp. 16–17).

### What kind of colleges and universities are there?

Deciding on a college or university is somewhat easier as there are only three types to choose from in Germany:

- Universities
- Universities of applied sciences
- Colleges of art, film and music

Studying at a **university** is a good idea if you are interested in a scientifically-oriented education. Universities offer a broad range of courses and subjects. Some schools specialise in certain disciplines, such as advanced technology, medicine and education. If you would like to enter a doctoral programme in Germany, then a university is the perfect place for you.

**Universities of applied sciences** are ideal if you are looking for a more praxis-oriented education. These institutions provide students with a scientifically based education, tailored to the demands of professional life. The degree programmes generally include internships (see p. 65) and a



## I've chosen ...

*a university of applied sciences because that's where I can put new knowledge and practical skills to use. There's also a friendly atmosphere at a small university like in Offenburg. The staff and professors are very helpful and always available to answer any academic or personal questions you have.*

**Angela Patricia Mojica Quiroz** comes from Colombia and is working towards her master's degree in Energy Conversion and Management at the University of Applied Sciences in Offenburg.

practical module. This enables students to apply their knowledge on the job at companies and businesses.

If you wish to study an artistic or design-oriented subject, you may be the perfect candidate for a **college of art, film or music**. There you will find courses in the Fine Arts, Industrial and Fashion Design, Graphic Arts, Instrumental Music, Voice, etc. Colleges of modern media train students to become directors, camera operators, screenwriters, technicians and producers for film and television. Potential candidates must possess a high degree of artistic talent which they are asked to demonstrate in an aptitude test. Therefore, you can expect special admission requirements if you wish to apply to a college of art, film or music.

## Facts and figures

A total of 1.97 million students were enrolled at 355 officially recognised universities and colleges in the winter semester 2008/2009.

- 1,364,285 students at 109 universities
- 577,348 students at 191 universities of applied sciences
- 32,127 students at 55 colleges of art, film and music

Source: German Rectors' Conference, winter semester 2008/2009

### What is the difference between public and private universities?

Most universities and colleges in Germany are public, i. e., they receive funding from the federal government. Some are also financed by the Protestant or Catholic Church. In addition to these subsidised institutions, there are now more than 80 private universities and colleges which confer officially recognised degrees. A majority of these are universities of applied sciences.

Most students in Germany are enrolled at public universities. Only three percent of all students attend a private institution, perhaps due to the fact that private colleges and universities tend to charge high tuition fees (see p. 24). The quality of instruction at both types of universities, however, is comparably high.

### What kind of degree programmes are there?

Each course prepares you for a particular university degree. When you choose a degree programme, you're not only choosing a subject, but also the degree you wish to ultimately attain.

German universities offer a wide range of degree programmes to suit your needs and educational level.

- You can attend university in Germany as a beginner (undergraduate studies).
- You can gain foreign experience at a German university for a couple semesters to supplement your degree programme at home.
- You can enter a postgraduate programme in Germany if you have already completed your undergraduate studies.
- You can study as a doctoral candidate.

### Degrees conferred by German universities

You can attain the following degrees at German universities:

**Bachelor's degree** (B.A., B.Sc., Bachelor of Engineering, etc.): This is the first-level academic degree recognised on the international job market. Bachelor's degree programmes teach students the fundamentals of their subject of study in six to eight semesters. Once you have received your bachelor's, you can enter professional life or continue studying for the second-level academic qualification – the master's degree.

#### Did you know ...

University education in Germany is not centrally coordinated. Each of the 16 states (see p. 18) has its own higher education laws and guidelines. German universities are largely self-regulatory, which means that not all rules apply to every university. Therefore, always enquire about the particular regulations at the university of your choice.

**Master's degree** (M.A., M.Sc., Master of Engineering, etc.): This is the second-level academic qualification you can receive from a German university. If you wish to enter a master's degree programme, you are required to have a bachelor's degree (or equivalent academic qualification). Master's degree programmes last two to four semesters and allow you to deepen and expand your knowledge in a certain subject. After you receive your master's degree, you can enter professional life or continue studying for the next academic qualification – the doctoral degree.

**State examination:** The state examination is not an academic degree, but rather a state qualification. This means that the examination regulations are stipulated by the German states, not by the university. Another difference is that the examinations are administered by state invigilators. Those who wish to work as a doctor, lawyer, pharmacist or teacher in Germany have to pass a state examination. Students are permitted to take the first state examination after successfully completing their studies in Medicine, Law, Pharmaceuticals or Teacher Education. Afterwards, they can begin a professionally oriented, practical training phase to prepare themselves for the second state examination and /or enter a doctoral programme. Passing the state examination, however, does not guarantee the candidate a job. If you wish to attain this qualification, you should enquire whether the German state examination is recognised in your home country.

**Doctoral degree:** A doctoral programme, which involves the completion of a research paper (dissertation), concludes with the conferral of a doctoral degree. The duration of doctoral programmes depends on the candidate's particular area of research. However, most programmes generally take two to five years to complete (see p. 14).

In recent years the academic programmes at German universities have undergone major reform as mandated by the Bologna Process. Meanwhile, the new bachelor's and master's degree programmes have all but replaced the traditional German *Diplom* and *Magister Artium* programmes at most universities.

As you look into more universities and their programmes, you may still encounter these types of degrees. A **Diplom** is generally conferred to students who study the Natural Sciences, Engineering, Economics and Social Sciences, while students in the humanities are awarded the **Magister Artium (M.A.)** degree.



### Doctoral degrees

There are many opportunities for you to attain a doctorate from a German university.

Basically, you can take two routes – either research independently and write a dissertation under professorial supervision, or enter a doctoral programme that provides a fixed structure.

**Option 1:** You first have to find a university professor (*Doktorvater* or *Doktormutter*) to supervise your dissertation. Since instructors are not obliged to take on every candidate, your research idea must be compelling. Find out in advance which university and professor would be best suited for your research concentration. The CD-ROM that accompanies this brochure includes information to help with your search. For more information, visit the HRK website [www.higher-education-compass.de](http://www.higher-education-compass.de) and the DAAD's Research Explorer at [www.daad.de/research-explorer](http://www.daad.de/research-explorer).

**Option 2:** You can enter a structured doctoral degree programme in Germany. The most significant of these include:

- Research training groups
- Graduate schools
- International doctoral programmes

**Research training groups** are university programmes that promote young scientists and researchers. Such training groups allow doctoral candidates to embed their dissertation in a comprehensive research programme. These programmes are generally interdisciplinary and are supervised by several scientists. Visit the webpage of the German Research Foundation (DFG) for a list of the research training groups which it is currently funding: [www.dfg.de/gk](http://www.dfg.de/gk).

Some states in Germany have set up **graduate schools** where most of the courses are taught in English. In contrast to research training groups, graduate schools are permanent fixtures at their universities. This is where young, highly qualified researchers can receive intensive and individual advising.

There are also a wide range of **international doctoral programmes** (see p. 15). To learn more about these structured doctoral programmes, visit [www.daad.de/international-programmes](http://www.daad.de/international-programmes).

Please note: The information in this brochure – especially pertaining to the admission requirements and the structure of the academic programmes – primarily applies to the bachelor's and master's degree programmes. If you are interested in entering a doctoral programme, you can find more relevant information at [www.daad.de/promotion](http://www.daad.de/promotion).



## International degree programmes

German universities currently offer more than 800 internationally-oriented degree programmes. These well-structured, high-level **“International Bachelor, Master and Doctoral Programmes”** feature intensive student counselling and academic advising. Most courses are taught in English, though German courses often supplement the programmes. Approximately half of those enrolled in these degree programmes are international students.

### More information?

► [www.daad.de/international-programmes](http://www.daad.de/international-programmes)

**Double degree programmes** have an international or bilateral orientation. They are usually offered by a German university in cooperation with one or more partner universities abroad. Students who participate in such integrated degree

programmes usually study at the partner university for several semesters. Students receive full credit for completing pre-approved courses from their university at home. Some of these degree programmes require students to spend approximately half their time at the partner university. When completed, students receive a double degree – one from each university.

There are also a number of programmes especially tailored to the needs of international doctoral candidates. The most prominent of these include the **Graduate Schools in the Excellence Initiative**, the **International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS)** and the **binational doctoral programmes funded through PhD-Net**. They offer especially talented German and international students the opportunity to pursue their doctoral degree at some of the most excellent scientific centres in Germany. In addition to intensive expert advising, most of these programmes feature English-language courses and, in many cases, special funding opportunities.

## Self-assessment tests

If you're having problems choosing a subject, you can take advantage of one of several self-assessment tests, the links for which are listed on [www.inobis.de](http://www.inobis.de).

If you're interested in technical subjects, the consultation service **“SelfAssessment international”** is right for you. Visit the service at [www.self-assessment.tu9.de](http://www.self-assessment.tu9.de).

If you'd like to find out whether you can meet the demands at German universities, the TestAS will help assess your ability (see p.22).

### More information?

► [www.daad.de/phd-net](http://www.daad.de/phd-net)  
 ► [www.exzellenz-initiative.de](http://www.exzellenz-initiative.de)  
 ► [www.mpg.de](http://www.mpg.de)

### What is the right degree programme for me?

Now that you have an idea of the opportunities awaiting you at German universities, it's up to you to find out which degree programme best suits your needs.

The CD-ROM at the back of this brochure contains information about the study opportunities available to you at the officially recognised universities in Germany. This information was provided by the German Rectors' Conference database which you can access yourself at [www.hochschulkompass.de](http://www.hochschulkompass.de).

We also recommend visiting [www.universityranking.de](http://www.universityranking.de). This site evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of degree programmes at 290 German universities in 35 popular subjects.

For more on international bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes, see [www.daad.de/international-programmes](http://www.daad.de/international-programmes).

For more info about universities and degree programmes, visit [www.study-in.de](http://www.study-in.de) and [www.inobis.de](http://www.inobis.de).

### Where can I get academic advice?

Get as much advice as you can! There are also academic consulting and advising services in your home country to help you plan your study visit in Germany. If you need advice, please contact the following people or agencies:

- The **DAAD Information Centres (ICs)** and the **DAAD branch offices** (for addresses, see pp.76–81)
- DAAD-affiliated **instructors** and **lecturers** at foreign universities
- **Goethe-Institut** or **Goethe-Zentrum**
- The **German diplomatic missions** – i.e., embassies and consulates

Your most important contact in Germany is the **International Office** at the university of your choice (all the addresses are included on the CD-ROM). The International Office provides information about study opportunities in specific disciplines

### The academic year in Germany

The academic year is divided into two semesters at German universities – winter and summer semester.

There is a semester break between each semester. The semester schedule varies depending on the type of university you attend. Therefore, enquire about the exact dates at the university of your choice.

The following dates generally apply:

#### Universities

Winter semester: October to March

Summer semester: April to September

#### Universities of applied sciences

Winter semester: September to February

Summer semester: March to August

Important: Some degree programmes only begin in the winter semester!



## *You are leaving ...*

*a familiar place in order to build a foundation for your professional future at a German university. The International Offices will help you on your way as you prepare to leave home and after you've arrived in Germany. You are courageous – and you are not alone. You are about to enter an international community of students who have already started their career at a German university with success. At the University of Leipzig you can look forward to joining approximately 2,500 foreign students like yourself from 134 countries worldwide.*

**Dr. Svend Poller**, Director of the International Centre at the University of Leipzig

and degree programmes, admission requirements, study preparation, languages tests, internships, financial aid and assistance with planning your studies.

And, of course, our staff at the **DAAD head office** in Bonn are happy to answer your questions regarding your study visit in Germany (for contact info, see p.76).

Remember, you are not alone. We're here to help you!

## Universities in Germany



**You've got questions about  
studying in Germany?**



**Ask Dany, your virtual advisor.**  
**[www.daad.de/dany](http://www.daad.de/dany)**

## 1.2

# Meeting the admission requirements

In this section we outline the requirements you must fulfil before you can be admitted to a German university. In particular, these requirements concern your school-leaving certificate, your prior knowledge of the subject you intend to study and your German language skills.

Those who wish to study at a German university require a *Hochschulzugangsberechtigung* or “higher education entrance qualification”. Although the term is daunting, the idea behind it is simple – it is a school-leaving certificate confirming that you are qualified to begin your university studies. In Germany, after students graduate from secondary school, they receive a general university entrance qualification (*Abitur*) or qualification for a university of applied sciences.

### Will they recognise my higher education entrance qualification?

How can you determine whether your higher education entrance qualification will be recognised in Germany? A good place to start is the DAAD online admission database at [www.daad.de/zulassung](http://www.daad.de/zulassung). Simply enter the country where you received your school-leaving certificate.

The database will then inform you whether your certificate:

- is recognised as a qualification for direct university admission,
- is only recognised as a qualification for subject-restricted study (i.e., only for admission to a certain range of subjects),
- is only recognised in combination with proof you have successfully completed one or two academic years in your home country, or
- is not recognised as a higher education entrance qualification.

If you happen to come from an EU country, Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway or Switzerland, and your school-leaving certificate is recognised as a university entrance qualification there, it will also be recognised in Germany. This also applies to those who have received their *Abitur* from any of the 133 German Schools abroad.

The DAAD online admission database only provides a general overview. The database at **www.anabin.de** can give you detailed information with a more extensive list of countries and school-leaving certificates (select “Land wählen” – “Zeugnisbewertung”, German only).

In some cases, especially gifted applicants may be admitted into artistic degree programmes without a higher education entrance qualification. Depending on the university, candidates must either submit a work portfolio or pass an aptitude test.

Ultimately, the university you apply to always has the final say concerning your admission. Therefore, before applying, you should enquire at the International Office about the admission requirements at the university of your choice.

► **If your school-leaving certificate is sufficient, continue reading on p. 22.**

► **If your school-leaving certificate is not sufficient, please read on ...**

## What if my school-leaving certificate is not sufficient?

If your school-leaving certificate is not sufficient for university admission, you will have to take a qualification assessment examination in Germany, called a **Feststellungsprüfung**.

You can prepare for this examination in a **foundation course** (*Studienkolleg*) in Germany. These are special programmes offered at universities and universities of applied sciences. They include modules with a focus on certain subjects.

The examination assesses a student's proficiency in several subjects that are crucial to the degree programme. One component of the qualification assessment examination is a language test. However, students must have some basic German language skills to even participate in a foundation course – approximately the B1 level based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Subject-specific foundation courses usually take two semesters to complete. Students who demonstrate above-average achievement may be permitted to take the qualification assessment examination after only one semester. Foundation courses provide about 32 hours of instruction per week.

Almost all universities offer this preparatory instruction free of charge. However, like normal students, foundation course participants are also required to pay the **semester contribution** (see p. 25).

### More information?

► **www.studienkollegs.de**

## Prerequisite: Internship

For some degree programmes – primarily at universities of applied sciences – internships are a prerequisite for university admission. Sometimes applicants must prove they have completed an internship of a longer duration (up to several months long). Therefore, enquire at the university of your choice whether an internship is obligatory for admission to your degree programme.

### How demanding is university study?

You might fulfil the formal prerequisites for admission, but can you meet the demands of university study in Germany? If this is something you are concerned about, there is help available – the Test for Academic Studies and / or propaedeutic courses.

With the **Test for Academic Studies (TestAS)**, you can assess your ability to cope with the demands that German universities place on their students. The result could also help you narrow down your choices for a degree programme. After taking the test, you will be able to more realistically assess the likelihood of completing a degree programme at a German university. Furthermore, passing the TestAS significantly increases your chances of gaining admission to the university of your choice. The test is administered twice a year (fee: 100 euro) at over 100 test centres around the world.

#### More information?

► [www.testas.de](http://www.testas.de)

**Propaedeutic courses** are another way to prepare for the demands of university study. These university preparatory courses are offered to international applicants by some universities. They provide students the language and academic skills they require for studying in Germany. They often include an introduction to the German university system and scientific working methods.

These courses are usually aimed at applicants who have a recognised higher education entrance qualification, but wish to prepare themselves for the degree programme. A preparatory semester can help them complete their degree programme in a successful and timely manner. The International Office at the university of your choice can tell you whether such propaedeutic courses are available.

### How good does my German have to be?

For most degree programmes, the language of instruction at German universities is German. Therefore, you will have to prove you have adequate knowledge of German to be admitted to the university.

The exception to the rule applies to students who participate in international degree programmes (see p. 15) and special post-graduate programmes.

Some universities do not require applicants to prove their German language skills if they only intend to study there for one or two semesters. However, this rule does not apply everywhere. Therefore, enquire about the specific admission requirement regarding language ability at the university of your choice.

The language proficiency required for university admission can be certified by two different tests – the “German Language Test for the Admission of Foreign Study Applicants” (DSH) and the “German as a Foreign Language Test” (TestDaF).



You are not required to take **either of these tests** if one of the following cases applies to you:

- You have received an *Abitur* from a German-language school.
- You have passed the Minor or Major Goethe-Institut German Language Certificate or the Central Advanced Language Test.
- You have received the German Language Diploma (Level II) from the German Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Culture.

By passing the **German as a Foreign Language Test (TestDaF)** in your home country, you can prove that you meet the language proficiency requirement for studying in Germany.

The test is administered in Germany and 80 other countries around the world six times a year, and in the People's Republic of China, three times a year. Visit **www.testdaf.de** for information about testing centres, dates, fees, application procedures and much more.

The **German Language Test for the Admission of Foreign Study Applicants (DSH)** can only be taken in Germany. Many universities offer this examination. Enquire at the International Office at your university for the upcoming testing dates.

The TestDaF and DSH assess several levels of language proficiency. Whoever passes all the sections of the tests at the intermediate level (TDN 4 for the TestDaF, or the DSH-2 for the DSH) is eligible for unrestricted admission to university. Depending on the specific regulations at your university, a lower mark in one of the sections will not necessarily disqualify you from regular admission.

You are required to pay an examination fee if you wish to take the DSH or TestDaF. The cost of the fee depends on the administering authority and the country in which you take the test.

Of course, learning German is not only important for gaining admission to university. Keep in mind that your German language skills will significantly determine how comfortable you feel in Germany and how easily you make German friends (see pp. 66–69).

# 1.3

## Financing your studies

In this section we outline the expenses you can expect during your study visit and the funding possibilities that are available to you.

Your financial resources are an important aspect of your plans. Before you leave your home country, you must secure sufficient funds to finance your stay.

### What expenses will I have?

Be prepared to pay for the following expenses during your stay in Germany:

- Semester contribution
- Basic living expenses (rent, food, clothing, books, telephone, etc.)
- Health insurance coverage
- Tuition fees (if applicable)

- Some states charge all students a general tuition fee of up to 500 euro per semester.
- Other states only require students to pay fees if they have studied for an especially long time (long-term students) or are pursuing a second degree.
- There are some states that charge no tuition fees altogether.

Several states are currently discussing the possibility of introducing tuition fees. Visit [www.studis-online.de/StudInfo/Gebuehren/tuition\\_fees.php](http://www.studis-online.de/StudInfo/Gebuehren/tuition_fees.php) for the latest updates.

### Tuition fees

German universities are funded in large part by the federal government, and as a result, they charge relatively low tuition fees. The cost of tuition generally runs at about 500 euro per semester. Each of the 16 states in Germany decides whether its universities should charge tuition fees. Not surprisingly, the rules widely vary from state to state:

The tuition fees at private universities are almost always higher than at public universities. However, these fees can vary significantly and be as high as 20,000 euro a year.

## Where do you pay tuition fees?



- General tuition fees**
- Fees for long-term study or second degree programme**
- No tuition fees**

Valid as of April 2009

## Semester contribution

All university students are required to pay a so-called “semester contribution”, the amount of which can vary depending on the services it includes.

## Example: Semester contribution at the University of Cologne

### Winter semester 2008 / 2009

Social fees	60.25 €
Student union contribution	10.30 €
Semester ticket	126.30 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>196.85 €</b>

One part of the semester contribution covers social services. This helps finance, for example, the student dining halls, student halls of residence, athletic facilities and administrative services. You should estimate paying around 100 euro per semester to cover the cost of this social contribution.

In some states students are charged an extra administrative fee which can range from 50 to 75 euro a semester.

The semester contribution at many universities also includes the cost of a public transportation ticket. This “semester ticket” allows you to use public transportation in and around your university town for six months free of charge. Depending on the city and the range of the ticket, you can expect to pay between 25 and 150 euro per semester for the ticket.

Living expenses

Compared to other European countries, Germany is not overly expensive. The price of food, accommodation, clothing, cultural activities, etc. is equivalent to the EU average. In fact, the cost of living is relatively low compared to Scandinavian countries.

How much does it cost?	
	average
1 loaf of bread	1.50–3.00 €
1 kg of apples	2.00 €
1 kg of potatoes	1.00 €
1 litre of milk	0.50–1.00 €
1 bottle of mineral water (0.75 litre)	0.30 €
1 cup of coffee at a café	2.50 €
1 glass of beer (0.3 litre) at a pub	2.00–3.00 €
1 pair of shoes	30.00–100.00 €
1 t-shirt	7.00–50.00 €
1 pair of trousers	30.00–100.00 €
1 cinema ticket (concessions price)	4.00–8.00 €
1 theatre ticket (concessions price)	6.00–30.00 €
1 ticket to the museum (concessions price)	2.00–8.00 €

It is difficult to say exactly how much money a student in Germany needs per month. The cost of living varies from city to city. Generally students can live on less money in smaller cities than in large cities. And, of course, the amount of money you will need greatly depends on how economically you live.

Students in Germany require an average of 770 euro per month to cover their living expenses. Those who have inexpensive accommodation and live modestly can probably get by on about 600 euro per month.

**Renting a flat** comprises the largest portion of one’s monthly expenditures. However, the rental prices in Germany vary greatly. Depending on the city in which you live, you will likely pay between 185 and 345 euro per month for accommodation. The rental prices in some large cities like Hamburg, Munich, Cologne or Frankfurt am Main are much higher in comparison. If you are looking to live cheaply, it might be a good idea to take a room in a student hall of residence or a shared flat (see pp. 40–41).

Students are eligible for numerous **price concessions**. With your student ID, you can receive concessions on tickets and entrance fees to theatres, opera houses, cinemas, museums, public swimming pools and other cultural venues.

## Health insurance

Health insurance coverage is mandatory for all students in Germany. Without proof of coverage, no German university will accept you.

It is quite possible that your insurance policy in your home country is also valid in Germany. This is the case for public health insurance providers in EU member states, as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Macedonia. Germany has signed social insurance agreements with these countries to ensure cross-border coverage. With your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), you are also insured in Germany.

In some circumstances, health insurance from private providers in other countries may also be recognised in Germany. Enquire at your health insurance provider for more information. If your private insurance policy is recognised, you will need confirmation that you are exempt from mandatory public health insurance coverage. Only with this letter of confirmation will you be permitted to enrol at university. Furthermore, you will not be able to switch to a public health insurance provider for the duration of your studies.

If your insurance policy in your home country is insufficient, you will have to take out a policy in Germany. Public health insurance coverage costs approximately 50 euro per month.

### Students' monthly expenses (not including tuition fees)

	average	Example: Rent and utilities
Rent and utilities	266.00 €	average
Food and drink	147.00 €	Room in a student hall of residence
Clothing	50.00 €	200.00 €
Learning materials	35.00 €	Room in a shared flat
Car and public transportation	82.00 €	245.00 €
Health insurance, medical costs, medicine	54.00 €	Flat by yourself
Telephone, Internet, TV	43.00 €	315.00 €
Recreation, culture, sports	62.00 €	
<b>Total</b>	<b>739.00 €</b>	

Source: Deutsches Studentenwerk,  
18th Social Survey



### *You will have to ...*

*provide proof of your financial resources, yet there is no standard regulation stipulating what suffices as proof. Therefore, it's important to find out exactly what you'll need before travelling to Germany. The best contact is the German embassy in your home country.*

**Dr. Svend Poller**, Director of the International Centre at the University of Leipzig

Whatever the case, be sure to clarify your health insurance situation before you travel to Germany. In order to enrol (see p. 51), you will have to provide proof of health insurance coverage to your university. Your health insurance provider in your home country and the International Office at the university of your choice will be happy to help you.

At many universities the Studentenwerk offers service packages for international students which include accommodation, meal vouchers and a health insurance policy (see p. 47).

### **How can I prove that I can pay for my studies?**

Before you begin your studies, you will have to show how you intend to finance your stay. You must provide what is called a **Finanzierungsnachweis** or “proof of financial resources”. In most cases, you are required to include this document with your visa application. At the latest, you will need it when you apply for a residence permit (see p. 53). At present, foreign students must prove they have at least 7,716 euro per year at their disposal (643 euro per month). This amount will likely increase by 5 euro per month, which means, in future, your financial resources should amount to at least 7,776 euro per year.

Proof of financial resources can be provided in various ways. The following forms are generally accepted:

- Your parents submit documents certifying their income and financial assets.
- A resident in Germany provides the Aliens' Registration Office a guarantee to cover your expenses.
- A security payment is deposited into a blocked account.
- You submit a bank guarantee.
- You receive a scholarship from a recognised scholarship provider.

Be sure to enquire at the German embassy in your country as to which form of financial proof is required.

Please note: International students are only allowed to work in Germany under certain conditions. A part-time job may supplement your budget, but it almost certainly won't be able to cover all your living expenses (see pp. 63–65).

### **What kind of funding can I apply for?**

You now have an idea of the costs you can expect. However, you may not have to pay for everything yourself. There are numerous scholarships and funding possibilities that can help students pay for their study visit in Germany.

## **Scholarships**

International students can apply for scholarships from numerous organisations, such as the DAAD, politically-affiliated foundations, religious institutions and business-related organisations. You should find out whether you are eligible for scholarships and financial aid from organisations in your home country, as well.

The DAAD offers an extensive scholarship programme for German and foreign students, academics and researchers. Please note: Neither the DAAD nor the majority of funding institutions offer scholarships for beginning undergraduates.

### **Scholarship Database**

With the DAAD Scholarship Database, it's easy to research various types of scholarships online. The database not only includes scholarships offered by the DAAD, but other funding organisations, as well.

#### **More information?**

► [www.funding-guide.de](http://www.funding-guide.de)

### Funding for European students

There are special exchange programmes for students from EU countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Turkey.

The **ERASMUS** programme, for example, promotes European student exchange. The exchange programmes are coordinated on the basis of bilateral agreements between two universities or departments. This means that if you intend to accept an ERASMUS grant, you will be a guest at the German partner university with which your home university cooperates. ERASMUS provides grants for study visits and internships lasting three to twelve months. For foreign study visits, students receive a maximum of 300 euro per month, and for internships abroad, 400 euro a month. Furthermore, ERASMUS grant recipients are not required to pay tuition fees.

If you wish to study abroad for three to twelve months, have already studied for two semesters at home, but are ineligible for funding through ERASMUS, the **“Free Mover Scholarship Programme”** (FMS) might be an alternative. Enquire about this programme at your home university.

#### More information?

► [ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus](https://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus)



## 1.4

# Applying for a degree programme

In this section we tell you the most important things you should know about applying for admission to a degree programme at a German university.

There are different ways to apply for admission to a German university. For you, the form of application depends on which subject you wish to study.

We distinguish between two categories of subjects in Germany:

- Subjects with a **centrally restricted admission policy** (nationwide *numerus clausus*). These subjects are so popular that there are far more applicants than available places at the university. At present, these subjects include Medicine, Pharmacology, Psychology (*Diplom*), Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry.
- Subjects with **no or a locally restricted admission policy** (*numerus clausus* implemented by the university).

The following information is only a general guideline. To be on the safe side, enquire about the application procedures pertaining to your degree programme at the International Office at your German university.

### How do I apply for a subject with a centrally restricted admission policy?

A nationwide *numerus clausus* (NC) applies to those subjects for which there are more applicants in Germany than the university system can absorb. If you wish to study one of these subjects, there are special conditions that pertain to your application.

Where you submit your application depends on:

- the country you come from, and
- whether you have a German higher education entrance qualification (see p. 20).

Two groups of applicants must submit their applications to the Central Office for the Allocation of Study Places (ZVS):

- Applicants from EU member states, as well as Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway
- Applicants who have received their secondary school-leaving certificate in Germany or at a German School abroad

### More information?

► [www.zvs.de](http://www.zvs.de)

All other applicants should submit their applications directly to the university of their choice, or apply through uni-assist.

### How do I apply for other subjects?

All international students who wish to study subjects with no centrally restricted admission policy should apply either:

- directly to the **International Office** or the **Student Administration Office** at the university where you wish to study (for addresses, refer to the CD-ROM included with this brochure), or
- through uni-assist.

More than 100 universities in Germany cooperate with uni-assist. If the university of your choice is one of these, then you should apply through uni-assist. If not, then apply directly to the university. You can view a list of universities which participate in uni-assist at [www.uni-assist.de/uni-assist-hochschulen.html](http://www.uni-assist.de/uni-assist-hochschulen.html).

### What is uni-assist?

uni-assist helps international students apply for admission to German universities. At the same time, it assesses whether the foreign applicants have met the minimum formal requirements for admission as stipulated by the universities.

With uni-assist, you submit one application with which you can apply to several universities at one time. The staff at uni-assist quickly review your application and supplementary documents and notify you in time if they discover your application is incomplete. If your documents are in order and the formal prerequisites for study are met, uni-assist forwards your application to the universities of your choice.

### More information?

► [www.uni-assist.de](http://www.uni-assist.de)

But as mentioned above, please enquire about the application procedures at the International Office at the university of your choice.

## How much does it cost to apply?

You are required to provide a number of documents and certificates with your application for admission to a German university. In most cases, you will also be charged a processing fee. Be prepared to pay the following charges and fees:

- Fees for notarising copies and translations
- Examination fee for the TestDaF or DSH (the cost of which depends on where you take the test)
- Examination fee for the TestAS (100 euro)
- Processing fee for the application (see below)

The cost of the processing fee depends on where you apply.

Through uni-assist: Depending on your country of origin, your application or the first of several applications will cost a maximum of 55 euro. Each additional application costs 15 euro per university regardless of your country of origin.

Directly to a university: Some universities charge a processing fee for reviewing your application and supplementary documents.

Please remember that your application will only be processed after you have paid the fee!

Directly to the Central Office for the Allocation of Study Places: No application processing fee.

## What must I submit with my application?

You can obtain an application form from the university of your choice, uni-assist, the DAAD website or the Central Office for the Allocation of Study Places (ZVS).

Additional documents are also required, such as:

- Notarised copy of your secondary school-leaving certificate
- Notarised copies of all previous university degree certificates (if applicable)
- Passport photo
- Photocopy of your passport identification page (the page with photo and personal info)
- Certificate of language proficiency (see pp. 22–23)

Please note: Copies of documents will only be accepted if they have been notarised and are accompanied with a notarised translation in German. The German mission in your country, for example, can notarise copies and translations of your certificates. Some universities also accept copies of documents in English or French.

Your application will only be processed if you have submitted all the necessary documentation and paid the processing fee.

The application deadline is usually several months prior to the beginning of the new semester. Therefore, if you are unsure whether your application is complete, contact the International Office well in advance so that you can send the missing documents in time.

The admissions office will send you written notification regarding the outcome of your application. If you are accepted, you will receive notification of admission. In the letter, you will also find:

- Information regarding your place of study
- An acceptance reply card, which you must immediately sign and return to the admissions office
- Information regarding the enrolment (registration) period (see p. 51)
- Information regarding tests or certificates which you must still pass or obtain (if applicable)
- Testing date of a German language test or university preparatory entrance examination (if applicable)
- Invitation to an orientation event for new international students (if applicable, see p. 54)

### What important dates do I have to know?

Please note the following dates for submitting applications to the International Office, uni-assist and the Central Office for the Allocation of Study Places (ZVS). Your application will not be processed if you fail to meet these deadlines.

If you wish to **begin your studies in the winter semester**:

- Submission period: beginning of June to 15th July
- Notification of admission will be sent to you in August / September.
- Rejection letters are sent out in September / October.

If you wish to **begin your studies in the summer semester**:

- Submission period: beginning of December to 15th January
- Notification of admission will be sent to you in February / March.
- Rejection letters are sent out in March / April.

Please note: Submission periods vary. In some cases, admission is only possible in the winter semester, and in other cases, the deadlines are earlier. Therefore, enquire at the university of your choice about the exact dates and start of the semester.

### Helpful link

► [www.inobis.de](http://www.inobis.de)

This website contains a broad spectrum of useful information and databases on university admission and application with comprehensive application checklists relevant to your desired degree, the university of your choice and your country of origin.

[www.young-germany.de](http://www.young-germany.de)

# Meet the young side of Germany

**The website for  
high potentials  
around the world**

[www.young-germany.de](http://www.young-germany.de)



# 1.5

## Entering and staying in Germany

In this section we tell you whether you will need an entry visa and/or residence permit.

As an international student, you may require a visa depending on where you come from and how long you wish to stay in Germany.

### Do I need a visa?

► **Are you a citizen of an EU member state or Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland?**

All you need to enter the country is a valid personal ID card or passport. Once you have arrived in Germany and found accommodation, you must register with your local Residents' Registration Office where you will receive a statement certifying your right of residence (see p. 53).

► **Please continue reading on p. 38.**

► **Are you a citizen from a country other than those named above?**

You may need a visa depending on how long you intend to stay in Germany.

**Longer than 90 days:** Generally speaking, if you wish to stay in Germany longer than 90 days, you will require a visa.

Citizens of **Andorra, Australia, Canada, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, San Marino, South Korea** and the **United States of America** can obtain such a visa after they have arrived in Germany. In other words, you are permitted to enter the country without a visa, but are required to obtain a residence permit to stay in Germany. If you come from **Andorra, Honduras, Monaco or San Marino**, you are generally allowed to enter the country without a visa as long as you do not intend to gain employment in Germany.

For **all other nationals**, if you wish to stay longer than 90 days, you must apply for an entry visa at one of the responsible German missions abroad **before you come to Germany**. If you enter the country without a visa, you will have to leave Germany after three months and apply for an entry visa in your home country.

**Shorter than 90 days:** Special rules apply if your stay does not exceed 90 days. In this case, you also do not require a visa if you come from one of the following countries: **Argentina, Bermuda, Brazil, Brunei, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Macau, Malaysia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Singapore, Uruguay, Vatican City or Venezuela.**

Visit the DAAD website at [www.daad.de/deutschland/download](http://www.daad.de/deutschland/download) for a detailed info sheet concerning the legal regulations for entering and staying in Germany.

### Medical examination

If you apply for a visa, you may be asked to present a health certificate. You can obtain information regarding this requirement at the German mission in your country.

In some cases, you may be required to undergo a medical examination if you wish to extend your stay in Germany. However, the regulations vary from state to state. The Aliens' Registration Office in your university town can provide more information.

If you would like more information or have questions regarding visa applications, contact the German embassy or consulate in your home country. You can find the addresses of the German missions around the world at [www.auswaertiges-amt.de](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de).

### What kind of visa do I need?

The type of visa you need depends on whether you have already received your notification of admission from a German university.

**Important:** Do not enter the country as a tourist! A tourist visa cannot be converted to a student or applicant visa.

### Applicant visa

If you have **not yet received notification of admission** to a university or university preparatory course, you should apply for an applicant visa.

This three-month visa allows you to become acquainted with university study in Germany and meet the admission requirements. If you find that three months is not long enough, you may extend your visa to a maximum of six months. If you are admitted to the university or a university preparatory course within this period, you may apply for a student visa, or a residence permit for purposes of study.

## Student visa

If you have received your **notification of admission to university** or a **university preparatory course**, you should apply for a student visa. Student visas are usually issued for a **three-month duration**. If you plan on studying in Germany for a longer period, you will have to apply for an extended residence permit at the Aliens' Registration Office in your university town.

## What documents do I need to apply for a visa?

We recommend contacting the German mission in your country for a complete list of documents required for a visa application. As a rule, you will be asked to present:

- Certificate confirming health insurance coverage (see p. 27)
- Proof of financial resources (see pp. 28–29)
- Certificates of past academic work and achievements
- Certificate of German language proficiency or proof that you intend on participating in an intensive language course in Germany
- **For a student visa:** notification of admission from your German university. If you have not yet received this letter, you may present instead a statement from the university confirming its intention to admit you.
- **For an applicant visa:** a higher education entrance qualification recognised in Germany

## How do I get a residence permit?

All international students, who are neither citizens of an EU member country nor from Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, have to apply for a residence permit from their local Aliens' Registration Office if they intend to study in Germany longer than 90 days (see p. 53).

## Can I extend my stay in Germany after my studies?

If you successfully complete your degree programme in Germany, you may – if you wish – stay in Germany and look for a job.

For this purpose, you can apply for a residence permit for the purpose of seeking employment. You do have to prove, however, that you have adequate financial resources to cover your living expenses and are seriously looking for a job that corresponds to your qualifications. You may continue working a part-time job while you are looking for full-time employment – but only as much as students are allowed to work without a work permit (see p. 64).

Once you have found a full-time position, you have to apply for a residence permit which allows you to take up gainful employment in Germany. To be eligible for such a visa, you have to meet very specific requirements.



The conditions for seeking employment have significantly improved for non-Europeans in recent years. Previous employment regulations stipulated preferred treatment of Germans, citizens of the EU, Liechtenstein, Norway, Iceland and Switzerland. At the end of 2007, foreign graduates from German universities were guaranteed equal opportunity in matters of employment.

Unfortunately, this does not mean that finding a job or obtaining a permanent residence permit will be easy.

## 1.6

# Finding accommodation before you leave

In this section we tell you how to start looking for accommodation in Germany before you leave home.

Students in Germany either live in a student hall of residence or in private accommodation. In contrast to other countries, German universities do not automatically allocate rooms to students when they enrol (see p. 51).

Students are usually responsible for finding their own accommodation. Depending on where you live and what your financial situation is like, this may not be an easy task. Therefore, start looking for a place to stay early – ideally before you arrive in Germany.

The International Office at the university of your choice can provide useful information for finding private and shared flats.

### How do I get a room in a student hall of residence?

There are several student halls of residence in every university town. A room in a hall of residence is probably the cheapest accommodation you will find (see p. 27).

You have very good chances of getting a room if you apply early enough. We recommend applying as soon as you receive your notification of admission from the German university of your choice.

Although the Studentenwerk is usually responsible for allocating rooms at student halls of residence, the International Office at some universities also offers this service. Therefore, enquire first at your International Office about how to go about applying for a room in hall of residence.

## What kind of private accommodation is available?

There is a wide variety of private accommodation in every city. You will find offers for empty rooms and fully furnished apartments. Especially in university towns, there is numerous and relatively inexpensive accommodation to let on the housing market.

Therefore, you could look for a flat or room to let. Rooms in shared flats are often available, as well.

A shared flat (*WG*) is one in which several people live. Each flatmate has a room of his / her own and shares the kitchen, bathroom and sometimes the living room, as well. The cost of rent and telephone is divided between all the flatmates. This form of accommodation is very popular among students.

In most cases, tenancy contracts must be signed in person on location. This means that you will have to wait until you arrive in Germany before you can finally secure private accommodation. But you can already prepare for your search by looking into possibilities via the Internet right before you leave, and perhaps arrange an appointment to view a flat (see pp. 49–50).

# 1.7

## Final check

### Do I have all the necessary documents?

Before you leave home, make sure you have packed the following important documents:

- Passport, valid for as long as you wish to stay in Germany (a personal ID card is sufficient for citizens from the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland)
- Visa, if applicable (see pp. 36–38)
- Notification of admission from your German university or the confirmation that your application is being processed
- Proof of financial resources (see pp. 28–29)
- Originals with certified copies and certified translations (!) of the following documents:
  - Birth certificate
  - Secondary school-leaving certificate
  - University diplomas, language certificates, if applicable
  - Confirmation of health insurance coverage from your provider if your policy is recognised in Germany (see p. 27)
- Vaccination card, if applicable (enquire at the German foreign mission whether you require any vaccinations)
- International driving licence or translation of your national driving licence, if applicable



## 2. Getting started in Germany

In this chapter we tell you what you have to do during your first few days and weeks in Germany and where you can get help if you need it.

There are several things you'll immediately have to do when you arrive in Germany:

- Find accommodation
- Enrol at the university
- Register at the Residents' Registration Office
- Apply for a residence permit, if necessary
- Make a course timetable

There are many places that provide support and assistance with these tasks. Always remember, if you have questions or problems, there are many people available to help you.

### Recommended reading

You can obtain more detailed information and helpful advice about studying and living in Germany in the brochure **"Ziel Deutschland / Destination Germany"**, available at all DAAD offices around the world (for addresses, see pp.76–81). Or download a free copy from: [www.daad.de/deutschland/service/literaturtipps](http://www.daad.de/deutschland/service/literaturtipps).

## 2.1

# Getting help

Here we tell you who can best answer your questions in Germany and give you a general overview of where you can get help on campus.

### First step: The International Office

Perhaps the most important contact for international students is the International Office, also called the *Akademisches Auslandsamt* (AAA). Every university has an International Office responsible for fostering international university relations.

When you were planning your stay in Germany, you probably contacted the International Office at your German university. The staff at the International Office can also help you with problems you encounter after you arrive in Germany.

The International Office can provide you with all the necessary information for your first days in Germany. It can assist you with formalities, such as enrolling (see p. 51) and help you find a place to live.

The addresses of the International Offices at all the German universities are listed on the CD-ROM included with this brochure. Like most university offices, the International Office is generally open to students during the semester every morning from Monday to Friday.

### Mentorship programmes

Some German universities have established “mentorship programmes” which provide international students with a contact person of their own. Usually these contacts are experienced German students who volunteer their time to help take care of formalities, deal with everyday problems, or answer academic related questions. They will often contact students even before they’ve left their home country.

Enquire at the International Office whether your university offers a mentorship programme.



### *I like meeting ...*

people from different countries and cultures. It's really helpful for international students to get to know German students at the beginning of the semester. And for us mentors, it's great to be able to help. I especially helped Jaakko when he first arrived in Bielefeld – for example with getting a mobile phone, Internet connection and planning his course timetable.

**Sarina Drexhage** studies Linguistics and Law at Bielefeld University and is a mentor in the Brother-Sister Programme.

### *I received ...*

a mentor from the International Office at the Uni Bielefeld. Sarina contacted me while I was still in Finland. She picked me up from the train station and helped me with all sorts of practical matters. I could always call her if I needed help. Today I'm able to take care of most things myself, but it's good to know that Sarina's there if something happens.

**Jaakko Poikonen**, ERASMUS student from Finland, studies Political History at Bielefeld University.



## The Studentenwerk

The Studentenwerk is a national association that provides a wide range of services for students at German universities. For example, it allocates rooms at student halls of residence and operates the dining halls at the university.

Some Studentenwerk organisations offer special service packages to international students. These services make it easier for foreign students to adapt to studying and living in Germany.

The specific services included in these packages vary depending on the university. In most cases, they include:

- Room in a student hall of residence (see p. 40)
- Social fee and occasionally a semester ticket (see p. 25)
- Cultural events and excursions
- Meal vouchers for the dining hall
- Assistance with taking out a public or private health insurance policy (see p. 27)

At some universities the Studentenwerk offers sport and language courses, rents out bicycles, computers, crockery and bedding, and will even arrange to have you picked up from the airport.

Depending on the specific services it includes, the package can cost between 158 and 358 euro per month and is only valid for a maximum of two semesters. Currently 39 of the 58 German Studentenwerk organisations offer this package and there is a limited number allotted to each Studentenwerk. If you are interested, enquire at the Studentenwerk at your German university well in advance.

### More information?

► [www.internationale-studierende.de](http://www.internationale-studierende.de)

## Student unions

You can also get help and advice from the student union. The student union is elected by students to represent their interests. There are a number of unions which are known by their acronyms AStA (General Student Committee), UStA (Independent Student Committee) and StuRa (Student Council).

Student unions are responsible for organising athletic, cultural and recreational programmes at the university. They offer advice on where to look for a job or accommodation. Sometimes they organise carpools to other cities. Some student unions even offer German courses to international students and help non-German speaking students find a language partner (see pp. 68–69).

### International student organisations

Many German universities have student organisations which specialise in assisting foreign students.

They support newcomers, organise parties, excursions and pub evenings at which one can quickly get into contact with other students (see p. 62).

### Departmental committees

If you have any specific questions concerning your subject, we recommend turning to your departmental committee (*Fachschaft*) for help. This committee is comprised of a group of students who are elected to represent student interests in a certain department.

At the beginning of each semester, the departmental committee organises information events for new students. This is where you can find out how to plan your studies. It's also a good place to get to know other students. The departmental committee can also provide you with initial orientation at your new university.

## 2.2

# Finding accommodation

In this section we tell you where you can spend your first nights in Germany – if you haven't already arranged accommodation – and how to go about finding a flat.

As we've mentioned earlier, it's best to start looking for accommodation in Germany before you leave home. This is particularly the case if you'd like to live in a student hall of residence (see p.40).

However, if you'd rather take private accommodation – a small flat or a room in a shared flat (see p.41) – you should start looking intensively once you've arrived in Germany. Usually landlords or flat-tenants only let rooms to people they've met in person. This means you will have to view the flat and speak with the landlord personally. If you like the accommodation and agree to the terms, and the landlord accepts you as a tenant, you can then sign a tenancy agreement.

Enquire at the International Office for helpful advice on finding accommodation in your area.

### Where can I spend my first nights in Germany?

You're in Germany, but have no place to stay? There are many places you can spend your first few nights – the International Office can inform you about your options. The Studentenwerk and university administration in some university towns offer inexpensive accommodation to students for their first nights.

Of course, you can always stay overnight at a small hotel or youth hostel. If you wish to go to a youth hostel, you must be a member in an association affiliated with the International Youth Hostel Federation. If you are not already, you can join the association for a small membership fee when you arrive at the youth hostel.

### More information?

► [www.jugendherberge.de](http://www.jugendherberge.de)

### Where do I find ads for flats to rent?

Offers for free rooms and flats can be found in flat advertisements – and these can be found in many different places. At some universities, the Studentenwerk, student union or International Office offer an accommodation service for students. There you can find addresses of private landlords who have rooms to let.

There is also a notice board at the university called a *Schwarzes Brett* with offers for rooms to let. You can also leave a message on the board saying that you are currently looking for a room.

You will find flat advertisements in the local newspaper – usually in the Saturday edition. The daily newspapers frequently maintain websites where ads are posted. Rooms to let are also printed in city magazines and student newspapers.

Apartment-finding websites on the Internet are also very helpful. Some specialise in finding accommodations especially for students, such as the following sites:

- ▶ **[www.studenten-wg.de](http://www.studenten-wg.de)**
- ▶ **[www.studenten-wohnung.de](http://www.studenten-wohnung.de)**
- ▶ **[www.easywg.de](http://www.easywg.de)**
- ▶ **[www.wg-gesucht.de](http://www.wg-gesucht.de)**
- ▶ **[www.mitwohnzentrale.de](http://www.mitwohnzentrale.de)**
- ▶ **[www.homecompany.de](http://www.homecompany.de)**

## 2.3

# Enrolling at your university

In this section we tell you how to enrol (register) at your university in Germany.

Before you can study at a German university, you first have to enrol. This procedure is called enrolment or registration (*Immatrikulation*). Once you're formally enrolled, you may attend courses at your university, take examinations and finally receive an academic degree. Enrolment also allows you to access all facilities at the university, for example, the library, sports grounds and computer rooms.

You may enrol at your German university as soon as you receive your notification of admission (see p. 34) from the International Office or Central Office for the Allocation of Study Places (ZVS). The notification also includes information concerning the enrolment period. Please note that the enrolment period can be rather short and you have to show up in person in order to enrol at the university.

You have to bring several documents with you when you enrol. Please enquire at the International Office about which ones are required at your university. In any case, the registration officials are sure to ask for the following two documents:

- Your notification of admission
- Confirmation of health insurance coverage

Once you've enrolled, you will immediately receive written confirmation. This confirmation serves as your student identification until you receive your official student ID by post. You will require this confirmation of enrolment, for example, when you apply for a residence permit at the Aliens' Registration Office (see p. 53).

## 2.4

# Taking care of formalities

In this section we tell you where you have to register after you've found an accommodation and enrolled at the university.

So, you've found a room or flat? Now you will have to take care of some formalities. But don't worry – you can count on your fellow students and the International Office for help.

### What do I have to do at the Residents' Registration Office?

Once you have found accommodation, you have to inform the Residents' Registration Office (*Einwohnermeldeamt*) of your place of residence. In larger cities, it is usually located in the district office or *Bürgerbüro* responsible for the city quarter in which you live. Ask the International Office for the address.

You will need the following documents to register at the Residents' Registration Office:

- Your passport and visa, if you have one
- Your tenancy agreement or statement from your landlord that you have moved in

You may also be asked to provide confirmation of enrolment or a copy of your passport. Before you go, we recommend enquiring at your International Office about exactly which documents you should bring along.

After you have filled out a registration form, you will receive confirmation of registration. Make sure to take good care of this document as you may need it later to verify your place of residence.

Please note: Anyone who lives in Germany and moves to a new location is required to inform the Residents' Registration Office of their new place of residence within one week after moving in.

## How do I get a residence permit?

The formalities involved with obtaining a residence permit depend on which country you come from.

### ► Are you a citizen of a EU member state, or Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland?

You will receive a certificate confirming your right of residence when you register at the Residents' Registration Office. In some cases, you may be asked to show how you intend to pay for your living expenses (see p. 28) and provide proof that you have health insurance (see p. 27).

### ▷ Please continue reading on p. 54.

### ► Are you a citizen from a country not listed above?

After you have registered at the Residents' Registration Office, you will have to go to the Aliens' Registration Office (*Ausländer-behörde*) in your city. The International Office can give you the address and a list of documents you should bring along.

You have to apply for a residence permit at the Aliens' Registration Office. Be prepared to present the following documents on request:

- Confirmation of registration from the Residents' Registration Office (see p. 52)
- Confirmation of health insurance coverage (see p. 27)
- Confirmation of enrolment from your German university (see p. 51)
- Proof of financial resources (see pp. 28–29)
- Your passport and current visa, if you have one (see pp. 36–38)
- Certificate of health (see p. 37)
- Money for the residence permit fee (enquire at the International Office about the current rate)
- Your tenancy agreement
- Biometric passport photos

You will then be issued a residence permit valid for at least one year and a maximum of two years. It can be extended, if necessary.

## 2.5

# Organising your studies

In this section we provide you with general information about how to organise your studies in Germany, for example, what kind of courses there are, how the degree programmes are structured and how to schedule your courses.

Studying at a university is very different from going to school – perhaps even more so in Germany than in other countries. While secondary school pupils are provided with a fixed timetable, university students have more freedom in planning their studies. They can often choose between many different courses that interest them.

The freedom to organise your studies requires a certain amount of independence and initiative. This doesn't mean, however, that you have to make every decision yourself. Take advantage of the advising services at your university. There are orientation events for new students at the beginning of every semester. These events are offered by **AStA** (see p. 47) and the **departmental committees** (see p. 48) and provide information about the university, its facilities and the structure of your degree programme.

In addition, the International Office usually organises an extra orientation event for new international students. The event offers helpful advice concerning how to plan your studies. The invitation to the event is usually included along with your notification of admission.

### What kind of courses are there?

There are several kinds of courses you can take at German universities. Their importance depends on your degree programme and the type of university you attend.

The most important forms of instruction are lectures, seminars / courses, tutorials / practical sessions, revision courses and colloquiums.

**Lectures** (*Vorlesungen*) are held by university instructors on a certain theme. Although there is generally no limit to how many students may attend, there is also no open discussion during the lectures.



Discussions with the professors and other students play a central role in **seminars** (*Seminare*) and **courses** (*Kurse*). The number of participants is restricted.

In a **tutorial** (*Tutorium*), students may review and further investigate the content of a lecture in more detail. These sessions are taught by tutors (often upper-level or graduate students). Such courses, which accompany lectures and seminars, may also be taught by lecturers, assistant lecturers, assistant researchers, etc. These courses are often called **practical sessions** (*Übungen*).

Some degree programmes also offer **working or learning groups**. These groups provide students the chance to review the course material and prep each other for upcoming examinations.

In some subjects, **revision courses** (*Repetitorien*) give students the opportunity to review the course material together with a university instructor in order to prepare for an examination.

**Colloquiums** are events at which students can share and discuss ideas with one another during the final examination phase.

Some universities have also developed **online learning modules**. They are intended to supplement other courses offered at the university.

## Faculties, schools / institutes, departments

At larger universities, various disciplines are sometimes bundled into faculties or schools, such as the "Faculty of Philosophy" or the "School of Medicine".

Each subject is supervised by an institute or department. Depending on the university, the institute or department may be situated in a building of its own, or on one or more floors of the main building. This is where you will find your instructors and fellow students, as well as a library of subject-specific literature. If nothing else, your department is an ideal place to make academic and personal contacts.

## How are degree programmes structured?

The study regulations at your university stipulate the structure of its degree programmes. They specify the content of the programme and what students are required to do to receive a degree (see p. 12–13). Therefore, obtain the study regulations concerning the degree programme you have chosen. The study regulations are usually posted on the website of your department or institute.

**Bachelor's and master's degree programmes** are divided into modules. Modules are academic units comprised of thematically related courses – e.g., lectures, seminars and practical sessions. A module can take a maximum of two semesters to complete and consist of six to ten hours of academic work per week.

### ECTS credit points

Academic achievement in bachelor's and master's degree programmes is assessed on the basis of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The ECTS determines the amount of work necessary to attain an academic degree. This includes the preparation and revision of the course material, attaining certificates of achievement and preparing for examinations. The completed work is then graded and averaged as the final grade.

One credit point is equivalent to 25–30 hours of work. The degree programmes are usually structured in such a way that students have to complete 30 credits per semester in order to complete the programme in the prescribed time.

The ECTS makes it easier for universities in other countries to recognise students' academic achievement. If your university at home does not recognise these credit points, you can have your course participation and passed examinations certified by your professor or lecturer.

Credit points are awarded for each module that you successfully complete. In order to finish your studies, you must obtain the total amount of credit required by your programme.

Depending on the study regulations, students require 180 to 240 credit points for a bachelor's degree. Sixty to 120 credit points are required for a master's degree.

## What kind of examinations are there?

You can collect credit points by regularly attending lectures or sessions. However, courses often conclude with an examination. There are several types of examinations, for example:

- Written examinations
- Short presentations on a particular subject
- Seminar papers on a particular subject
- Oral examinations

## How do I draw up a course timetable?

The study regulations for your degree programme provide a general overview of the material covered in your programme and the modules you have to complete. However, it does not offer a specific course timetable, as each module is comprised of courses of varying thematic focus from which you can choose.

To draw up a **course timetable**, you will need a **course prospectus** (*Vorlesungsverzeichnis*). For each subject there is also an **annotated course programme** (*KVV*) which is usually posted on the institute's website. The *KVV* provides detailed descriptions of all the courses offered during the upcoming semester. Often these descriptions are supplemented by a list of relevant literature to help you prepare for the course.

Sudden changes regarding courses are usually posted on the institute's *Schwarzes Brett* or website.

Usually you are required to register for the seminars and lectures which you select for your module. Most institutes allow students to register for their courses online.

Some subjects are extremely popular, and as a result, the size of the courses is restricted. Therefore, if you would really like to attend a particular seminar, be sure to register well in advance.

Have you now drawn up a timetable? Have you registered for your courses? If so, then you're ready to start studying in Germany.





### 3.

## Making your stay a success

In this final chapter we describe three important ways of making your stay in Germany a positive experience – making contacts, gaining professional experience and learning German.

The next step on your agenda is to get settled in Germany and gather useful experience. To help you, we have compiled some useful tips and advice.

## 3.1

# Making contacts

In this section we tell you where you can meet people and make friends and contacts during your studies.

Academic success is certainly not the only factor that determines how comfortable you are in Germany. The quality of life is largely influenced by the personal contacts you make.

University life is different in every city – perhaps because every university is different. Some universities are rather small and familiar. Others are vast institutions of learning and research where it's not always easy to get to know other students.

Therefore, we've listed a few ideas below to help you make contacts easier. Of course, you will surely discover other ways to make friends and establish contacts yourself.

**Tip 1: Participate in the orientation events for new students.** These events are usually organised by AStA, your institute or department, or the International Office. Orientation events are ideal for meeting students who – like you – are yet unacquainted with the university.

**Tip 2: Dare to take the first step.**

Don't always wait for other people to approach you. Take the initiative and introduce yourself!

**Tip 3: Attend pub evenings, join university societies and sports courses, go to parties.** In Germany, social life often takes place in pubs, restaurants and cafés, and as a result, students like getting together at their favourite pub. Some institutes and university organisations arrange so-called **Stammtische** or pub evenings. At a *Stammtisch* you can get to know your fellow students better and perhaps make plans to do something later on.

There are **societies** at every university where students get together who have common interests and hobbies. You are sure to find a wide variety of student clubs, political groups, university choirs, orchestras, theatre groups and much more. Such societies are an ideal place to make contacts. Enquire at your student union or the Central Student Counselling Office about the student societies at your university.



## We offer ...

*a shuttle service for the new foreign students, show them around the university and city and organise a pub tour and a nice welcoming breakfast. They especially like our bicycle rental service! With our Intercambio-SprachDuo, they can quickly meet German students and do activities together to improve their German. We at AEGEE are always happy when foreign students contact us and we can do our part to make their stay in Passau unforgettable!*

**Luise Hertwig** studies European Studies at the University of Passau and is the ERASMUS representative at AEGEE-Passau.

There are Protestant, Catholic and other **religious student congregations** in most university towns in Germany. These groups not only gather for worship, but also organise excursions, parties, discussions and many other events for their members. For a list of addresses, visit your university website.

There are a number of **international student organisations** in Germany. These organisations hold events that are ideal for meeting people and sharing information. These include:

- **AEGEE** – Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe: A European student association of all faculties ([www.aegEE.org](http://www.aegEE.org))

- **AIESEC**: The world's largest student organisation in the field of economics and business administration ([www.aiesec.de](http://www.aiesec.de))
- **ELSA** – European Law Students' Association: A student organisation for prospective lawyers ([www.elsa-germany.org](http://www.elsa-germany.org))

Every university offers a wide range of **sports groups** in practically every discipline imaginable. Most groups are free to join and provide many opportunities for meeting other students. You can obtain the current list of sports groups from your university's website.

And finally, you can make new acquaintances at university parties that are held every semester.



## 3.2

# Gaining work experience in Germany

In this section we tell you how you can gain experience on the German labour market through part-time work and internships – and what you have to be aware of.

Perhaps you wish to take advantage of your time studying in Germany to gain some work experience in the German labour market. Part-time jobs and internships offer a perfect opportunity to do this. Above all, working is a good way to make professional contacts.

And, of course, a part-time job can help you earn some extra money. Keep in mind, however, there is no guarantee you will find a part-time job in Germany, and if you do, you probably won't earn enough to cover all your living expenses. German labour laws restrict how many hours foreign students are allowed to work.

### What kind of part-time jobs are available to students?

Working at an institute, library or other facility at your university would be an ideal way to enhance your university experience.

Waiting tables at cafés or pubs is traditionally popular among students, as well. Other students find work at copy shops, assist visitors at trade fairs, drive delivery trucks, work as cycle couriers, cleaning staff, etc.

If you are looking for a job, check the notices and help-wanted ads on the *Schwarzes Brett* at your university, in libraries, supermarkets, etc. Many universities offer a job-finding service for students. Contact your Studentenwerk or the local employment agency for more information.

### More information?

► [www.germany-opportunities.de/jobs](http://www.germany-opportunities.de/jobs)

## How much am I allowed to work?

There are labour laws that precisely stipulate how many hours students are allowed to work. The regulations vary according to where the students come from.

► **Are you a citizen of one of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, or United Kingdom?**

You may work as much as you'd like without any additional permit. However, like German students, you should not work more than 20 hours a week during the semester. If you do, you will have to pay into social security.

► **Please continue reading on p. 65.**

► **Are you a citizen from a country not listed above?**

You are only allowed to work 90 full days or 180 half days in a year. Those who wish to work longer require a work permit from the Federal Employment Agency and the Aliens' Registration Office. Whether you are issued a work permit largely depends on the condition of the job market in your city. You are less likely to receive a permit in regions with higher unemployment rates.

If you have a student job on campus or work as a research assistant, it's usually no problem to exceed the 90-day limit. However, you must notify the Aliens' Registration Office if you do.

Please note: The labour laws pertaining to international students are very restrictive, and if you break them, you risk being expelled from the country.

Self-employment and freelance work is generally not permitted.

If you are attending a language course or foundation course, you may work during the semester breaks, but only with the explicit permission of the Aliens' Registration Office and the Federal Employment Agency.

Internships are regarded as regular employment. This applies even when the internship is unpaid. Every day of your internship is subtracted from your 90-day employment credit. And if you have already worked the full 90 days and wish to take an internship, you will have to apply for an additional work permit from the Aliens' Registration Office and the Federal Employment Agency.

There is, however, an exception to this rule. An internship is not regarded as regular employment if it is required by your degree programme (mandatory internship). No permission is necessary for mandatory internships and they are not subtracted from your 90-day employment credit.

### More information?

► **[www.daad.de/deutschland/download](http://www.daad.de/deutschland/download)**  
Information leaflet on employment in Germany  
for foreign students

You can find the address of the branch office of the Federal Employment Agency in your university town at:  
**[www.arbeitsagentur.de](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de)**.



## *I completed ...*

*a two-month internship with the Boston Consulting Group. It was a great experience. I could see how the knowledge I'm gaining here at the university can be practically applied. I was able to jump right in and take on responsibility. Now that I'm applying for doctoral programmes, the internship is a great advantage for my career.*

**Przemysław Rymaszewski** comes from Poland and studies Business Administration at the University of Cologne.

## **What are the benefits of an internship?**

Many students take advantage of internships to gain practical, professional experience during their education. Becoming acquainted with working life helps many people make decisions concerning their own professional orientation. Some students use their work experience to concentrate on certain areas of interest in their studies. Internships also allow students to make contacts outside of the university environment.

Internships are mandatory in many degree programmes and are supervised by university instructors. In some cases, students must complete an internship before they can enter a degree programme (see p. 21).

You can complete an internship at a company or organisation. Internships usually last a few weeks to several months. Generally interns receive no or very little payment for their work.

If you wish to complete an internship while studying in Germany, you can contact the following offices or organisations:

- The internship office at your university
- International Office
- An international student organisation, such as AIESEC, ELSA (see p. 62) and IAESTE ([www.iaeste.de](http://www.iaeste.de))

## **More information?**

► [www.germany-opportunities.de/jobs](http://www.germany-opportunities.de/jobs)

### 3.3

## Learning to speak (better) German

In this section we tell you how much German you need to successfully study and live in Germany and how you can improve your German.

Studying at a German university usually requires some knowledge of German. However, just how much depends largely on your degree programme.

### How much German do I need?

If you are enrolled in an English-language degree programme, you generally require no knowledge of German. On the other hand, you must have a good level of proficiency in English.

For degree programmes taught in German, you will need better proficiency in German for the social sciences than in the natural sciences – particularly in terms of writing and speaking.

Your language ability must be sufficient to understand lectures and participate in discussions in seminars. You will also have to understand scientific texts. You should be able to adequately discuss scientific topics orally, and analyse and argue positions in written form.

When you apply to a degree programme at a German university, you will have to submit certificates confirming your German proficiency (see p. 22–23). Of course, this shouldn't be the only reason to learn German. Even after you've passed a language examination or achieved the necessary test results, you should continue working to improve your German.

Language skills are not only necessary for your studies. Knowing German is important for life outside the university. It will help you master daily life, participate more intensively in German society and significantly improve your chances of making contact with others.

### DUO online language course

The DUO online language course prepares students at all language levels for university study in Germany.

#### More information?

► [www.deutsch-uni.com](http://www.deutsch-uni.com)



## *I've decided ...*

*to study in Germany. Later on I'd like to work in a global context. That's why it's important to gain international experience during one's studies. If possible, I'd like to study International Economics at a German university. To get into such a programme, I need a solid background in German. I already learned a lot of German during my exchange year in Düsseldorf. But to really succeed at the university, I'm taking an intensive German course that will prepare me for the TestDaF or DSH exam.*

**Tobias Cummins**, secondary school graduate from Barbados, participant of the International Summer Course "Düsseldorf live" at the IIK Düsseldorf e.V. ([www.iik-duesseldorf.de](http://www.iik-duesseldorf.de))

## How can I improve my German?

Ideally you should learn as much German as possible before you come to Germany. German courses are offered, for example, at the many Goethe Institutes around the world.

If you wish to improve your language skills in Germany or have to increase your proficiency in order to be admitted into a degree programme, there is a wide range of opportunities available.

**German universities** offer language courses, for which students often have to pay an extra course fee. In addition to language courses during the semester, some universities offer intensive **summer courses**. These generally take place between June

and September. There are numerous summer courses offered throughout Germany which are open to students at all language levels.

### More information?

► [www.summerschools.de](http://www.summerschools.de)

Many **institutions and language schools** offer German courses. These include the Goethe-Institut ([www.goethe.de/de](http://www.goethe.de/de)) and adult education centres ([www.vhs.de](http://www.vhs.de)), as well as many other, mainly privately funded schools. Fees are charged for these courses, however.

A good place to start looking for courses and schools is the database offered by the Association for German as a Foreign Language (FaDaF) at: **[www.fadaf.de/de/daf\\_angebote/sprachkursangebote](http://www.fadaf.de/de/daf_angebote/sprachkursangebote)**.

#### More information?

► **[www.deutsch-lernen.net](http://www.deutsch-lernen.net)**

### Self-test: How good is my German?

The levels for language courses in Germany are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (A1 for beginners to C2 for advanced students).

If you are interested in assessing your knowledge of German, then you can test yourself. To take a free test, visit the Goethe-Institut website **[www.goethe.de/einstufungstest](http://www.goethe.de/einstufungstest)**. After you have completed the placement test, you will receive a recommendation as to which course level would be appropriate for you.

If you would like to have your language level assessed more precisely and also require a certificate confirming your proficiency, you can take the OnDaF test for a fee (**[www.ondaf.de](http://www.ondaf.de)**). The test can also tell you whether your level is sufficient for taking the TestDaF.

The traditional (and often expensive) language courses are not the only way to learn German. Have you ever considered finding a language partner?

In a **language partnership**, two people get together and teach each other their native tongue. They meet on a regular basis and practice speaking in one language and then the other.

International Offices, international student organisations and student unions often have card files or websites with names of people who are interested in establishing a language partnership. You can also post a message on one of the many notice boards on campus, saying that you'd like to find a language partner.



## *During my studies ...*

*in Germany, I participated in several SprachDuo language partnerships. We met on a regular basis and practiced speaking – first in German, then in Arabic. The great thing about having a language partner is that there are no fixed course periods. You can arrange your meetings when you want and talk about the subjects that really interest you.*

**Rachid Bouriat** comes from Morocco and completed his master's degree in North American Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin.

# Good luck!

Studying in Germany is not only an exciting challenge, but also an important step on your career path.

Many, many foreign students complete their studies in Germany every year. Just in 2007, approximately 30,000 international students received a degree from a German university. With a bachelor's or master's degree in their pocket, they have the best chances for launching an international career.

For many students during their eventful time here, Germany becomes a home away from home. And most of them maintain a close relationship to Germany for the rest of their lives.

We wish you all the best!

## Tell us what you think!

Please help the DAAD improve its info brochures. Participate in our reader survey starting December 1, 2009 and be eligible to win an iPod nano and many other fantastic prizes.

► [www.daad.de/survey](http://www.daad.de/survey)



## Appendix

# Facts and figures – International students in Germany

Students at German universities	
	Number in 2008
German students	1,707,799
Foreign students	233,606
German-educated *	55,754
foreign-educated *	177,852
<b>Total students</b>	<b>1,941,405</b>

Origin of foreign-educated students *		
	Number in 2008	Percentage of all foreign-educated students in Germany
Africa	19,951	11.2
North/South America	11,345	6.4
Asia	58,152	32.7
Europe	87,632	49.3
Australia/Oceania	349	0.2

### The 15 highest ranking countries of origin

Number in 2008		Number in 2008	
China	23,983	France	4,726
Poland	10,289	Austria	4,503
Bulgaria	10,161	South Korea	3,963
Russian Federation	9,502	Spain	3,563
Turkey	6,911	Italy	3,461
Ukraine	6,404	Romania	3,247
Morocco	6,247	India	3,217
Cameroon	5,308		

### The 10 most popular subjects studied by foreign-educated students

Number in 2008		Number in 2008	
Economics	26,162	Human Medicine	6,974
Computer Science	14,450	Law	6,320
Mechanical Engineering	13,905	Music	4,881
Electrical Engineering	12,576	Industrial Engineering	4,297
German Studies	12,405	Biology	3,858

\*International students are comprised of **German-educated** (*Bildungsinländer*) and **foreign-educated** (*Bildungsausländer*) students.

**German-educated** students have received their higher education entrance qualification in Germany or in a German School abroad, **foreign-educated** students at a foreign school.

The figures above were taken from the DAAD publication "Wissenschaft weltoffen 2009" and are based on the 2008 academic year. Additional sources include official university statistics and the Social Survey by the Deutsches Studentenwerk.

# Goals, Roles and Programmes of the DAAD

The DAAD is a joint organisation of Germany's higher education institutions and is responsible for promoting international academic relations, primarily through the exchange of students, academics and researchers. Its programmes are generally open to all disciplines and all countries and equally benefit foreigners and Germans.

The DAAD also supports the international activities of Germany's higher education institutions by providing a number of services. These include information and publication programmes, marketing, consultancy, support and guidance services, plus an increasing number of institutional programmes that serve to raise the international profile and worldwide appeal of Germany's higher education institutions.

And, finally, the DAAD advises the German government on the formation of its policies in the fields of international cultural relations and academic relations at European and international level, as well as on questions of national higher education and development cooperation.

The predecessor to the German Academic Exchange Service, the "Austauschdienst der Hochschulen", was first established

in 1925 in response to an initiative in academic circles. It was dissolved in 1945 and newly established in 1950 as a registered association under private law.

The DAAD's full members are – on application – the higher education institutions represented in the German Rectors' Conference (*Hochschulrektorenkonferenz – HRK*) and the student bodies of these institutions. At the end of 2008, DAAD membership numbered 229 higher education institutions and 125 student bodies, with all the various types of higher education institutions represented.

Five strategic objectives give the various DAAD programmes their long-term orientation:

## 1. Scholarships for foreigners:

To promote studies and research by outstanding young foreign students and academics at German universities and research institutes.

## 2. Scholarships for Germans:

To promote young German professionals in their studies and research abroad (including ERASMUS).

### **3. Internationalising the higher education institutions:**

To raise the appeal of Germany's higher education institutions (including marketing and funding to raise the international dimension of German higher education).

### **4. Supporting German studies and the German language abroad:**

To promote German language and culture and encourage a knowledge of and interest in Germany as part of the process of global cultural exchange.

### **5. Educational cooperation with developing countries:**

To promote higher education development in developing and reforming countries as means of supporting their economic and democratic reform processes.

The DAAD is also responsible for promoting and funding pan-European mobility for students, academics and professionals. The DAAD is the so-called “national agency” for the EU **ERASMUS** programme and an information centre for ERASMUS Mundus, Europass, TEMPUS / cooperation between EU and non-EU countries and the Bologna Process.

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