

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

for international students from non-EU/EEA countries

1. Visa

Most non-EU/EEA students require a visa to enter Germany which must be applied for at the German diplomatic missions abroad (embassies or consulates) **before** entering Germany. Do not come to Germany on a tourist visa and attempt to have it changed to a student visa while you are here – this will not work and you will have to return to your home country to apply for a student visa! You do not need a visa to enter Germany if you are a citizen of an EU member state, of a member state of the European Economic Area (EEA; Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland) or of the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Israel, Japan or Korea (ROK).

The German Foreign Office has further details (the page linked to is in English):

www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/einreiseundaufenthalt/-/231148

2. Residence permit

International students need a legal entitlement (*Aufenthaltstitel*) to live in Germany. This document is issued by the Immigration Office of the city of Passau (Ausländeramt: Rathausplatz 1, 94032 Passau).

The specific legal entitlement applying to international students is the residence permit (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*) which is issued subject to a fee of 100 euros (effective April 2024).

If your visa has been issued for the entire duration of your stay, only a city registration at the Immigration Office is necessary. In that case, you don't need to apply separately for a residence permit.

You can apply for a residence permit at the earliest 3 months before the visa expires.

Requirements for a residence permit:

- **Fully completed application form with a biometric passport photo**
(forms are available at the website of the Immigration Office or at the International Office of the University of Passau during the orientation weeks. The International Office of the University of Passau will also help you to fill in the application form.)
- **Valid passport**
- **Enrolment certificate of the University of Passau**
- **Residence registration confirmation and landlord's certificate (in German it is called "Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung" which you can download here: <https://www.passau.de/rathaus-buergerservice/dienstleistungen/a-z/meldeamt/>).**
- **Up-to-date proof of health insurance (confirmation in paper form; no copy of insurance card).**
For both the residence permit and enrolment at the university you need a health insurance policy that provides coverage equivalent to the coverage provided by German statutory health insurance companies. It must include the following services: medical and dental treatment, supply of medicines, bandages, remedies and aids, hospital treatment, medical services for rehabilitation as well as services in case of pregnancy and childbirth. **The coverage can't have a financial upper limit**, regardless of how high the limit is. Important: Foreign health insurance policies (e.g. travel health insurance policies) are not sufficient because their cover has limits (in terms of treatment types and costs) and because they are only valid for a limited period of time.
- **Sufficient financial proof for your stay:**
You have to prove that your stay in Germany is financially secure. Sufficient funds are available to you if they correspond to the maximum BAföG (Federal Training Assistance Act) funding rate

(currently **934.00 euros monthly**, as of April 24). If you receive a scholarship that is at least this amount per month, a corresponding proof is sufficient.

Otherwise the following financial proofs will be accepted:

- The student opens a German savings account on which he/she deposits sufficient funds (€934 × the intended study months). The savings account must contain a blocking notice that allows a maximum of €934 per month to be withdrawn from it.
- Student job or internship proven by **employment contract with payslips** (see also section no. 3 Employment)
- **Combination financing** through an employment contract and an additional savings account, for example, half each.
- A **guarantee** ("Verpflichtungserklärung") issued by the Foreigner's Office, by companies, organizations or private individuals **resident in Germany**, stating that all costs incurred for the period of study will be covered. You must also prove that the promised money of €934 monthly is actually paid to you (e.g. by account statements).

3. Employment while studying

By law, the residence permit gives you the opportunity to **work for 140 working days** (or 280 half working days) per year. A work permit from the employment agency is not required for this. In addition, international students may (without time limit) take on part-time student jobs (as a student assistant) at the university.

4. Required German language skills

Applicants can take recognized **language examinations** abroad or in Germany before starting their degree programme in order to provide proof of the knowledge required for the university degree programme. Language certificates that are also taken into account by the university for the admission decision are: <https://www.uni-passau.de/en/german-language-requirements>. In addition, suitable proof of the required language skills must be provided for the visa application.

5. Average duration of study

For a course of study to be considered proper and within regulations, an international student **must not exceed the average duration of study for the respective programme by more than three semesters**.

The total length of stay for a degree programme is a maximum of 10 years (including preparatory studies).

6. Change of purpose of your stay/change of degree programme

Your degree programme is specified in the purpose of your stay (in your residence permit). A change of study programme means a change in the purpose of residence.

Under immigration law, a change of study programme always requires a corresponding prior modification of the residence permit or the ancillary provision contained therein; the respective application must be submitted to the Immigration Office (Ausländeramt).

The international student must provide proof that previous periods of study have been recognised. A repeated change of study programme is generally incompatible with the legal provisions in regards to an appropriate duration of studies.