

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 the country. 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) or of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, Korea (ROK), New Zealand, Switzerland or the USA.

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.

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

Requirements for a residence permit:

- Fully completed application form with a biometric passport photo (forms are available at 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.)
- Passport
- Certificate of enrolment at the University of Passau
- Residence registration form and housing certificate (in German the form is called 'Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung'). These can be downloaded from www.passau.de/Rathaus-Politik/Formulare.aspx (the page linked to is in German)
- Proof of sufficient health insurance coverage:
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.

- Proof of sufficient funds 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 monthly BAföG (Federal Training Assistance Act) funding rate (currently €934).
If you receive a scholarship with a monthly stipend of at least €934, a document confirming this will also be accepted as proof of sufficient funds.

Otherwise, the following proofs of funding 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.
- Employment contract for a student job or internship, see also section 3 (Employment) below.
- Combination financing through an employment contract and an additional savings account, for example, half each.
- A guarantee ('Verpflichtungserklärung') given by a company, organisation or private individual, which promises that they will pay for any expenses incurred during your stay in Germany. The guarantee has to be certified by the immigration office if the guarantors are based in Germany, or, after a credit check, by the relevant German embassy if the guarantors are based abroad.

If the proof of funding takes the form of a guarantee ('Verpflichtungserklärung'), you must prove that the promised money is actually paid to you, i.e. you will have to submit your account statements showing that the funds have been credited.

3) Employment while studying

By law, the residence permit gives you the opportunity to work for 120 working days (or 240 half working days) per year. A work permit from the employment agency is not required for this activity.

Furthermore, international students can gain an unlimited amount of student work experience (e.g. as a student or graduate assistant) at the University.

4) Required German language skills

Applicants can acquire proof of German language skills required for their degree programme even before coming to Germany. For an overview of language requirements for each degree programme of the University, visit www.uni-passau.de/en/german-language-requirements.

Recognised German language certificates are:

- The following Goethe-Institut certificates:
 - *Goethe-Zertifikat C1 or C2: Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom (GDS)* [for programmes requiring level C1]
 - *Goethe-Zertifikat B2* [for programmes requiring level B2]

- The *Deutsches Sprachdiplom der Kultusministerkonferenz – Zweite Stufe* (DSD II) of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz, KMK*)
- *Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (TestDaF)

Applicants for a degree programme with a C1 or C2 CEFR German language requirement who are already in Germany and do not have any proof of German language proficiency must pass the German language test for university admission for foreign applicants (*Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang, DSH*) at the required level before commencing their university studies.

5) Duration

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

The total length of stay in Germany for the purpose of higher education must not exceed 10 years (including preparatory courses).

6) Change of purpose of your stay/change of degree subject

Your degree subject is specified in the purpose of your stay (in your residence permit/legal entitlement to reside in Germany). A change of subject requires a change in the purpose of your stay.

Legally, a change of subject always requires a prior modification of the residence permit or the ancillary provision contained therein. To apply for such a modification, you must submit a form to the Immigration Office (*Ausländeramt*). You will be required to provide evidence that previous study periods will be counted towards the new degree programme.

You should always keep in mind the total length of stay for the purpose of higher education when considering changing your degree subject. Changing the subject more than once is not recommended, as this may cause you to exceed the statutory limit, leaving you unable to complete your degree before your residence permit runs out.