Guide to Bureaucracy for International Students

Welcome to Freiburg! To make your first few weeks in Freiburg easier, we have created a checklist of the necessary administrative steps for you.

Important! Students from outside the EU, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, or Switzerland need a "residence permit" for their stay in Germany. In this case, you either enter with a visa or, if you’re from certain countries, you can enter Germany without a visa and stay for 90 days. If the duration of your visa or the 90 days is not enough for your study time in Germany, you must make an appointment with the foreigner’s office after your arrival in Germany to apply for a residence permit (see step 5).

1. Step: Since the waiting time for the appointment can be very long, contact the foreigner’s office as soon as you arrive in Freiburg.

2. Step: Citizens’ Service Center (German: Bürgerservicezentrum)

According to the German registration law, everyone living in Germany permanently or temporarily must register their residence at the municipal office. To register, you must first make an appointment.

The following documents must be submitted:

- Identity card or passport
- Proof of residence
- Possibly, IDs of family members: for children without a children's passport, you must submit their birth certificate
- Possibly, original certificate with translation for marriage abroad or birth of children abroad
- Possibly, questionnaire for the registration of minor children

You will receive a registration confirmation from the registration office. Keep this document safe, as you will need it for many other matters. More information about residence registration can be found here: https://www.freiburg.de/pb/-/205332/vbid3818

3. Step: German bank account

If you stay in Germany for more than a few weeks, you should open a bank account here. For students, it’s often free, and it has many advantages:

- Withdraw money for free from many ATMs in Germany
- Make cashless payments
- Set up "standing orders" for regular payments - like rent, health insurance, or phone. The amount will then be automatically deducted from your account every month.

Some banks offer a low-cost or free student account:
- Postbank
  Adress: Basler Str. 2 oder Eisenbahnstr. 58
- Deutsche Bank
  Adress: Rotteckring 3
- Commerzbank
  Adress: Kaiser-Joseph-Str. 251
If you want to take up a part-time job in Germany, you'll likely need a German account.

To set up an account, you usually need:
- A passport or ID card
- A student ID, enrollment or study certificate, or the university's admission notice
- Confirmation of registration (see step 2)
- Possibly, the visa for Germany or the residence permit from the foreigner's office (see steps 1 and 5).

More information about bank accounts in Germany can be found here: https://www.study-in-germany.de/de/aufenthalt-planen/geld-und-kosten/geld-und-bankkonto_27017.php

4. Step: Health insurance

All students in Germany must have health insurance. We recommend signing up with a statutory health insurance company. They offer a favorable student rate up to the age of 30.

Except for a small amount, this health insurance covers the costs of medical treatments and prescription medications. Note: dental prostheses are usually not fully covered!

For university enrollment, you need health insurance or a confirmation of exemption from the insurance obligation (e.g., for students with an EHIC - "European Health Insurance Card").

More information about health insurance and exemption can be found here. Or feel free to contact our social counseling for more information and questions.

Contact details for statutory health insurance companies in Freiburg:

Social Counselling SWFR
Adress:
Basler Str. 2, 79100 Freiburg
Phone:
+49 (0)761 2101-233
E-Mail:
sozialberatung@swfr.de
Public consulting hours:
Tuesday 9 am – 12 pm
Thursday 13:30 pm – 4 pm

5. Step: Foreigners' Office (German: Ausländerbehörde)

Students from outside the EU, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, or Switzerland need a "residence permit" for their stay in Germany. In this case, you either enter with a visa or, if you're from certain countries, you can enter Germany without a visa and stay for 90 days. If the duration of your visa or the 90 days is not enough for your study time in Germany, you must make an appointment with the foreigner's office after your arrival in Germany to apply for a residence permit.
Required are:
- Valid passport
- Proof of funding confirming that the costs of your studies are covered
- Registration confirmation (see step 2)
- Admission notice or enrollment certificate from the university
- Proof of health insurance (see step 4)
- A current biometric passport photo
- First-time issuance: EUR 100.00
- For those receiving a scholarship from public funds for their stay in Germany: no fee.

6. Step: Enrollment

Enrollment takes place at the student registration offices of the respective universities.

Required are typically:
- Admission notice
- Passport (possibly with a student visa) or ID card (for students from EU member states, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland)
- Application for enrollment
- Proof of health insurance or confirmation of exemption from insurance in Germany (see step 4)
- A current biometric passport photo
- Semester fee (possibly with tuition fees for international students*)
- If you have previously studied at another German university, you will also need the de-registration certificate from this university.

* Please note: Since the winter semester 2017/18, international students arriving from outside the EU for the purpose of studying have to pay an own contribution of 1,500 euros per semester.

7. Step: Semester ticket

Now you can buy the semester ticket. It is valid in the city of Freiburg and in the districts of Emmendingen and Breisgau-Hochschwarzwald.

- Start per calendar month (March/April and September/October)
- valid for 6 months for the respective semester
- personal (with student ID and ID)
- for Freiburg students from 7 universities
- Price 96 € per semester

With the SemesterTicket you are always mobile. It is available for students of the following universities:

- Albert-Ludwigs-Universität
- Evangelische Hochschule
- Hochschule Macromedia Freiburg
- Hochschule für Musik
- Internationale Studien- und Berufsakademie ISBA
- Katholische Hochschule
- Pädagogische Hochschule

More information [here](#)

8. Step: You've made it 😊 If you have any questions about studying, contact SWFR!