

**Orientation Sheet - GUC Students – Long Term Stay in Germany (Excluding GUC Berlin Semester)**

Intention and Target Group

This sheet shall provide an overview for GUC students planning to come to Germany for a long term stay. This includes students coming to Germany for a bachelor, master or PhD project, or an internship and who stay for at least one month.

Pre-Requisites

The information provided covers the phase when the student already knows where she/he will go and what she/he will do. It is meant to facilitate the concrete preparation for the long term stay in Germany.

**General Information**

First of all: Welcome, it is great that you have decided to spend a part of your study program in Germany. Of course you know that there are a lot of cultural and social differences between Egypt and Germany. That is probably what makes your trip to Germany so interesting. There are nevertheless a few things that you might want to keep in mind to make your stay a success.

Generally speaking, the German university system expects students to be very independent. This means - for example - students have to take care of issues like transportation or housing themselves. Usually, a German student ID enables you to use public transportation in the city of the university. However, you will hardly find a university in Germany that runs its own transportation system like GUC. Likewise, most universities in Germany have dorms for their students. Being a guest student, you might be able to apply for a room there. Once you were admitted and handed over the key, you are expected to keep the room tidy (no cleaning staff) and to get along with your international flatmates (different cooking habits, different behavior concerning gender relations, differing political and religious world views…). Rarely, anyone will control you or your room as long as there are no complaints. This can be a very enriching experience, but it is sometimes challenging.

Also, the German university system (and work system alike) requires self-initiative and structure. There is always someone you can ask for help and support. But you clearly need to know what you want to achieve. In Germany, it is considered to be your responsibility to get the information you need (e.g. through internet research), to stay in touch with academic supervisors and other people important for your stay and to manage your time effectively.

Generally speaking, GUC students have completed all these tasks very successfully and maintained good relations with their international colleagues and supervisors. However, if you ever get into a difficult situation feel free to contact GUC German Office (guc@uni-ulm.de) and ask for support.

To read more about international students’ life in Germany, please go to:

<http://www.study-in.de/en/>

**Visa Issues**

If you want to come to Germany for a long term stay related to your studies please make sure that you get the right kind of visa from the beginning. If you travel with a tourist visa to Germany the Foreigners’ Registration Office will not change it to a student visa or residence permit later on. Therefore, please make sure that you obtain a visa for study reasons. It is also important that you make sure to get an invitation letter from the actual university or institute where you will be staying, e.g. if you will do your bachelor project at Munich University, get the invitation letter either from their International Office or directly from your supervisor’s institute, not from GUC German Office in Ulm or Berlin. This is to make sure that firstly your hosting institute is aware of your arrival and secondly that the local Foreigners’ Registration Office (in this case Munich) is notified by your hosting institute.

Ideally, the invitation letter shall also state that you will be admitted as a guest student or a visiting student (exact term may vary from university to university). You may find a template for an invitation letter in the section “Orientation Sheets” on our webpage www.guc.uni-ulm.de that might make it easier for your hosting institute to issue an invitation letter accepted by the embassy.

If you apply for a long term visa you will usually get one of these two options:

* National study visa for Germany, duration up to three months. This has to be changed into a residence permit at the local Foreigners’ Registration Office. The residence permit costs fees again.
* National study visa for Germany, duration up to twelve months. This visa can’t be extended or changed into a residence permit, but won’t cost you any additional fees once you are in Germany.

It is up to the embassy to decide which visa they give you.

**Housing**

Students in Germany either live in a university dorm or in private accommodation (or with their parents). In contrast to many other countries, Germany's universities do not automatically allocate a room when you register for your course.

GUC has its own dorm in Ulm, rooms are allocated through the Travel Office, Communications & External Relations Department. Please register with them as early as possible. In Stuttgart and Tuebingen, GUC has special arrangements, usually available semester wise (01 March-30 August, 01 September-28 February). Please contact our office (guc@uni-ulm.de) at least eight weeks in advance.

If you would like to use GUC housing offers in Berlin please contact

Ms Sarah El-Sawaf (sarah.elsawaf@berlin.guc.edu.eg) or

Mr Mohamed Salem (mohamad.salem@berlin.guc.edu.eg)

For all other cities you will have to go on flat hunting yourself.

One option is living in a shared flat (called Wohngemeinschaften in German, or just WG), it is probably the most popular form of accommodation among students. Several students look for a flat together and each has his/her own room, while sharing kitchen and bathroom. This means you are also responsible for maintaining and cleaning the shared facilities (not only your own room). The occupants also share the rent. Depending on where you study, you should calculate with 200 to 400 euros per month.

If you're looking in major cities like Munich, Cologne or Hamburg, you should allow yourself enough time to find a room in a WG. It's best to start before you leave home. Start by searching the internet. Numerous portals give a good overview plus the opportunity to send an email directly to a WG.

Other good sources for vacant rooms are the International Office and the noticeboards (Schwarzes Brett in German).

The advantage: You immediately get to know some nice people, and the rent is not too high. The downside: Depending on where you want to study, it can take a while before you find a room, because there's great demand, especially at the start of the semester.

www.wg-gesucht.de

www.easywg.de

www.studenten-wg.de

The other option is living in a dorm. German dorms are usually administered by Student Services (Studentenwerk). The room is usually fully furnished and might cost you between 158 and 358 euros per month. This often includes internet, TV and laundry facilities.

In big cities, it might be quite difficult to find a room on short notice and you can't choose your fellow flatmates. It is also pretty common to live in mixed-gender flats in the student dorms. If you wish gender-separated facilities, please inform the Studentenwerk you are applying to. Accordingly, they might be able to offer you a gender-separated accommodation.

**International Office of your host university**

In Stuttgart, Tuebingen and Ulm, your main contact person at the university’s International Office (IO) will be a member of GUC German Office.

In all other cities, please check the university’s website to find out about the contact person for new arrivals. The IO will guide you through the process of enrollment at the university, they might be able to help you with accommodation and support you when doing the registration with the Foreigners’ Registration Office.

They often offer all kinds of interesting courses, i.e. on intercultural communication, and a “study buddy programs” where you can get in touch with German students willing to help international students in their every-day-life.

**Health Insurance**

Health insurance is mandatory for everybody (Germans and foreigners alike) in Germany and you will not be able to enroll at a university or start working as an intern without it. In most cases, the health insurance you got in Egypt to acquire the visa is not sufficient.

It depends on the university what kind of health insurance they want you to have. Some universities, Ulm for example, accept MAWISTA student insurance (www.mawista.com). Other universities require a membership in a public/national health insurance.

While MAWISTA costs around 38 euro per month, public health insurance is around 78 euro per month. Please check the website of your university’s IO or ask for details.

**Enrollment/Registration as a Student**

This is your first step to become an official member of the university. The enrollment certificate and students ID is a prerequisite to apply for residence permit at the Foreigners’ Registration Office, to use university facilities (cafeteria, copy machines, library…) and to get various discounts.

**Coordination with GUC Student Affairs Department**

Please make sure that you have the needed approvals from the GUC – Student Affairs Department - for your study stay in Germany, whether for bachelor thesis or for studying different courses - to avoid any problems in the credit transfer process later on. Students who travel without getting a detailed approval on the courses to be studied in Germany and the exact timings before their travel, might not be granted the credit transfer of the courses after their return and will have to repeat them in GUC and thus delay their graduation. Students traveling for taking courses in Germany to be transferred back to the GUC curricula shall pay the tuition fees normally. Please refer to the GUC Student Affairs Department for more details before your travel.

**Foreigners’ Registration Office**

All residents in Germany are required by law to register at the registration office of the town they move to within one week after arrival.

Usually you will need the following documents (but please check with your local IO):

* Valid passport
* Confirmation of enrollment
* Proof of health insurance
* 2 passport sized biometric photographs. The rules for biometric photos are strict. If your pictures don’t fulfill the official standards you will have to make new photos. This is usually quite expensive. Please refer to http://www.bundesdruckerei.de/en/service/service\_download/service\_citizen\_idDocSample\_05\_72dpi.pdf or to Orientation Sheet 1.2 to find out more.
* Proof of financial means (e.g. a confirmation of your scholarship or bank account showing that you have 670,00 Euro for each month you want to spend in Germany)
* Rental agreement (e.g. confirmation by the landlord or the dorm where you rented a room)

**Bank Account**

Many things in Germany can’t be paid in cash, but have to be paid via bank account, e.g. rent and health insurance contribution. You therefore need to open a German bank account if you haven’t already opened an account with Deutsche Bank in Cairo.

Some banks offer checking accounts for students for free.

For more information: www.study-in.de/en/life/job-money/money-bank-account/

**Living Costs**

During the first days after your arrival in Germany you will probably have a lot of expenses. These expenses are very likely:

* Rent (300-400 Euro)
* Rent Deposit (3xRent)
* Health Insurance (78 Euro monthly)
* Semester Fee (depending on the university and city, around 100 Euro)
* Semester Ticket for Public Transportation (100-400 Euro, depending on the city)
* Registration Fee and Residence Permit (around 100 Euro)
* Mobile and Internet (depends on you)
* Furnishing, kitchen equipment, bed linen etc.

After you have found accommodation and settled down, your monthly living expenses for a regular student lifestyle will probably be around 700 Euro per month.

This link provides a regional overview: www.stepmap.de/karte/deutschland-149592

Before you apply in Germany you should be aware that in principle you will have to live of your own personal funds or scholarship resources only. Regardless of your future status at your university there won’t be a guarantee that you will get a job to support yourself during your stay.

Please also refer to the Orientation Sheet section of our webpage [www.guc.uni-ulm.de](http://www.guc.uni-ulm.de)

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