

FIRST STEPS IN GÖTTINGEN



A number of practical matters will need to be arranged during the first days of your stay in Göttingen. This chapter will guide you through the most important steps.

YOU MADE IT! WELCOME TO GÖTTINGEN!

After you have arrived, there are several important things you need to do. Please follow the next steps and take care of them immediately after your arrival to ensure that you can start and pursue your studies successfully:

- Get health insurance (if necessary)
- Register at the Residents' Registration Office
- Open a German bank account
- Pay the semester fees
- Enrol at the university
- Obtain your student ID card
- Apply for a residence permit at the Foreigners' Registration Office (if necessary)
- Register for a German course at the university (optional)
- Get a bicycle (optional)
- Keep calm: the first steps are always the hardest 😊

WELCOME DAY FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS

At the beginning of each semester, the International Student Services organises a Welcome Day designed especially for exchange students where you will be guided through all the required formalities of the enrolment process at the university and registration at the City Hall.

INTRODUCTION DAYS FOR DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS

There are also introduction days organised for international degree seeking students. However, these do not focus on the formal aspects of your stay in Göttingen.



HEALTH INSURANCE

Those who come from outside the European Union have to apply for German health insurance within the first two weeks of their stay in Germany. Health insurance is mandatory by federal law for all students. You will need proof of health insurance in order to enrol at the university and obtain your residence permit.

There are two types of health insurance in Germany: statutory health insurance (gesetzliche Krankenversicherung) and private health insurance (private Krankenversicherung). For statutory health insurance the terms of contract, monthly contributions and the scope of benefits are regulated by federal law. Students are insured at a favourable student rate, which at the moment is approximately 80 Euros per month.

The terms and conditions for private health insurance vary from provider to provider.

We recommend that degree students sign a contract with a German statutory health insurance. However, students older than 30 years of age cannot sign up for a statutory health insurance, but have to apply for coverage with a private insurer.

Please note that the student health insurance becomes valid only with the beginning of the semester (1st April or 1st October). Make sure that your travel health insurance is valid until then.

INFORMATION

Please note: Some private insurance companies will only accept students within a week of their arrival in Germany.

THIRD-PARTY LIABILITY INSURANCE

In Germany, it is common practice to have third-party liability insurance (private Haftpflichtversicherung) for any unintentional damages or accidents you may cause. Although this insurance is not compulsory, it is strongly recommended since it covers personal injury and damages to other people's property. Third-party liability insurance is held by the majority of the German population and costs around 6 - 10 Euros per month.



REGISTERING AT RESIDENTS' REGISTRATION OFFICE

Everyone who comes to Germany and plans to stay for more than three months has to register at the Residents' Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt) within a week of entering the country. There you will receive the Confirmation of Registration (Meldebestätigung). Take good care of it since you will need this proof of registration if you wish to extend your visa, open a bank account or get a mobile phone contract.

In order to register, you will need to present your passport and your Göttingen address. To avoid having to wait for a long time until you are seen, we advise you to go there early in the morning.

If you move to a new house during your stay in Göttingen, you have to notify the Residents' Registration Office of your change of address. When you leave Germany you must cancel your registration at the Residents' Registration Office.

RELIGIOUS FAITH

One of the questions on the registration form refers to your religious faith. The reason for this is that, in Germany, religious communities are entitled to use the services of the Tax Office to collect "Church Tax" and the Residents' Registration Office will transmit your tax-related data to the tax authorities. In Göttingen you can declare tax-relevant membership to the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran or the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Any other religious faith will not affect your registration and taxation.

Address:

Einwohnermeldeamt, Hiroshima Platz 1
(inside the Neues Rathaus)

OPENING A GERMAN BANK ACCOUNT

In Germany, cash payments are still very common in everyday life. However, many of your regular payments, such as rent, are automatically deducted from a German bank account by direct debit. Note: Large stores, hotels, and restaurants accept international credit and debit cards. Smaller shops, however, might only accept cash or German debit cards (EC-Karte/electronic cash cards).

It is therefore important to have a current account (Girokonto) with a German bank. This is an account from which and to which money

can be transferred – nationally and internationally. You will also receive a German debit card (EC-Karte) for cashless payments and cash withdrawals from ATMs or cash points.

Most banks will allow you to open a student account if you provide them with your student documentation. Student bank accounts are not subject to any monthly handling fees in most of the banks.

Prior to your departure from Germany, do not forget to close your German bank account.

IN ORDER TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT YOU WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:

- Passport
- Confirmation of registration



PAYING THE SEMESTER FEES

All students have to pay semester fees of approximately 290 Euros per semester.

Make sure that you meet the payment deadline for the fees as indicated in your admission letter. Fees have to be paid via bank transfer. For more information, please refer to www.uni-goettingen.de/fee. Don't forget to state your name and application number on the bank transfer form. You will find your application number on the admission letter. If not, please get in touch with your contact person in Göttingen.

Please note that exemptions apply for exchange students from particular programmes and for students within certain German funded scholarship programmes.

SEMESTER TICKET

The semester fees cover a Semester ticket, which includes a train ticket, a bus ticket and a culture ticket for all the students.

The train ticket allows you to use local trains within the federal state of Lower Saxony and surrounding areas free of charge. The bus ticket allows you to travel for free with the city buses in Göttingen, and to Bovenden and Rosdorf. With the culture ticket, you receive drastically reduced or even free entrance to cultural events, such as theatres or museums, as well as music events in clubs or cultural centres. Please refer to www.uni-goettingen.de/semester-ticket for more information about the semester ticket.

ENROLLING AT THE UNIVERSITY

Only after having enrolled at the university you will officially become a student. In order to enrol, you have to fill out the corresponding online form, which you can find here: www.uni-goettingen.de/all-applicants. Please note that there are different forms for students from EU and non-EU countries, as well as for exchange students.

INFORMATION

Do you have any questions concerning the enrolment procedures? Please feel free to contact the International Student Services! You will find their contact details on page 9.

After filling out the form you will receive your application number: please save and make a note of it. The next step is to either send the documents that were requested in the letter of admission by post or bring them personally to the International Office.

At the time of mailing/bringing the said documents, please have the semester fees transferred to the University of Göttingen. Your enrolment can only be finalised after the fees have been received.

After you have paid the fees and submitted all the required documents, you will receive a confirmation of enrolment together with a temporary student identification card if you have enrolled before the semester start.

INFORMATION

Bachelor applicants don't have to fill out any forms at this point as you receive your personal number when you apply.

OBTAINING YOUR STUDENT ID CARD

After enrollment every student of the university receives his/her own student card in the form of a chip card. At the same time, you will receive your access data for the eCampus portal, where you will find online facilities for organising your studies, such as the FlexNow examination management system, the Stud.IP

learning management platform, your student email account and the self-service functions which you can use to re-register for the next semester, print out enrolment certificates or edit your contact data. For more information about these services, please refer to page 38.



THE STUDENT CARD ITSELF FULFILS A GREAT VARIETY OF FUNCTIONS APART FROM JUST BEING A MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION. YOUR STUDENT CARD:

- Provides proof of student status
- Acts as a library card for SUB
- Enables you to access FlexNow (online examination services)
- Acts as a ticket for regional trains and a ticket for cultural events
- Enables you to access to the student sports facilities
- Allows you to pay in the cafeterias and canteens

In order to get your student card, you have to go to the chip card office located in the Central Lecture Hall Building (Zentrales Hörsaalgebäude; ZHG) between the lecture halls ZHG 010 and ZHG 011. The chip card issue office is open from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

You will need your matriculation number and a valid photo identification document (ID card or passport) in order to have the student card issued.

First of all, you must have a photo taken at one of the terminals provided for this purpose. Use your matriculation number to log in on the terminal and save the photo.

You can subsequently collect your finished student card from the chip card issue office and use all functions of the chip card immediately.

APPLYING FOR RESIDENCE PERMIT

If you are a student who needs a visa to enter Germany, and you intend to stay in Germany longer than three months, you have to apply for a temporary residence permit within three months of entering Germany. You can do this at the Foreigners' Office.

The first step here is to ask for an appointment. Please contact the Foreigner's Office either by phone or by email in order to arrange an appointment.

Contact:

auslaenderstelle@goettingen.de
(+49) 551 - 400 2508



IMPORTANT

Please note that the Foreigner's Office will only accept applications if you have **made an appointment in advance**, and that processing applications can take several weeks. So do make an appointment as soon as possible, and enquire about the documents that you have to bring with you.

NORMALLY YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BRING THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS WITH YOU:

- The Confirmation of Registration (Meldebestätigung) from the Residents' Registration Office (Einwohnermeldeamt)
- A copy of your rental contract
- The admission letter from the University of Göttingen
- A copy of your proof of adequate health insurance
- Proof of sufficient financial funding
- A valid passport and copies of the first page and the visa, copy of entry stamp
- One biometric passport photo
- A completed residence permit application form requesting a residence permit to be issued
- Cash or a debit card in order to pay the fees

REGISTERING FOR A GERMAN COURSE AT THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Göttingen offers all students the opportunity to attend German courses of the university on a free of charge basis. Courses of all levels are offered. In order to register for one of the courses, you have to take a placement test. The test will indicate which courses are suitable for you.

An online placement test has to be taken before the start of the semester in the Mediothek of the ZESS – Language Teaching Centre (Goßlerstraße 10). The test lasts 30 minutes and can be done from Monday to Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Friday from 10 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. Here you will find more detailed information about the placement tests: www.uni-goettingen.de/placement-test.

You can apply for the course of your level via StudIP after the start of the semester.



Students with no knowledge of German do not need to take a placement test. Simply please register directly via StudIP for an A 1.1 (Grundstufe 1) course.

GETTING A BICYCLE

As you will notice very soon, almost everyone in Göttingen seems to own a bike. Since this is the cheapest, most convenient and an environmentally friendly way of transportation, it is certainly a good idea to buy one. You can reach almost every place in Göttingen within a 15 minute bike ride.

An inexpensive new bike costs at least 150-200 Euros. Cheap offers for used bikes range from 30 to 80 Euros and are advertised on several university notice boards or on the online market. For more information, please refer to www.uni-goettingen.de/bicycle, where you will find all the information you need regarding bikes, including cycling rules.

