

Frequently Asked Questions Winter Semester 2018/19

For exchange students participating in bilateral and State-to-State exchange programs:

1.) How do I get to Heidelberg from Frankfurt International Airport?

For the most current information on travel options to Heidelberg, please see the section 4, Arrival: Welcome to Heidelberg, on our website:

<http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/international-exchange>

2.) How do I arrange for housing at Heidelberg University?

By indicating that you would like to reserve a room in a student residence on the housing section of your application for admission. As an exchange student, you do not have to apply for housing through the Studierendenwerk.

Please note that we cannot guarantee that you will receive accommodation with the attributes requested on your housing form. Especially rooms in the city center are very much in demand and it is unlikely that all requests for rooms in the *Altstadt* can be met.

You can have a look at the student residences on the *Studierendenwerk's* website below.

Please click on: *Student Living* => *Our Halls*

<http://www.stw.uni-heidelberg.de/en>

3.) How much will the monthly rent be for my room?

Rent will be between 230 and 350 EUR per month.

4.) Are the rooms in student residences furnished?

Yes, you will find the following in your room: wardrobe, bed and mattress, desk and desk chair, shelf. A ceiling light is provided; however, desk and other lamps have to be b(r)ought, and bulbs are to be replaced by the tenant. Pillows, blankets and sheets are **not** included. You can bring your own or purchase them from the *Hausmeister* of your residence (ca. 70 Euro) or at a store.

5.) Do the student residences have kitchen facilities, washing machines and dryers?

Yes, you will either have a kitchenette in your room or share a kitchen with other students in your apartment or on your floor. Washing machines and dryers are available in almost every building.

6.) When will I find out exactly where I will be living while studying abroad?

Around mid-July, *Studierendenwerk* will contact you by email and send you your housing contract. You will be asked to sign the contract, and return a scan to *Studierendenwerk* by a specific date. You will also be asked to pay the first month's rent, the one-time administration fee and the (refundable) deposit for your room by that specific date.

On the day of your arrival in Heidelberg, you will be handed over the keys for your room, and a print version of your contract.

If you have a small budget or cannot live without free Internet access in your room, please do not forget to mention this in your housing request. Please keep in mind that the rooms in the historic city center (*Altstadt*) do not have direct (free) Internet access.

Please note: The housing market in Heidelberg is extremely tense, request for student housing, which is the most affordable and convenient accommodation, is very high. Merely 15 percent of Heidelberg Students are able to secure a room in a student residence. As an exchange student, you have the huge privilege to receive a residence room, and *Studierendenwerk* will do its best to meet your accommodation requests. Please understand that it will not be possible to change your housing assignment, even if not all your requests could be met.

7.) Where can I find private accommodation?

If you prefer private accommodation to living in a student residence, we will send you a list of newspapers and popular websites on which students and landlords offer rooms and flats on request. If you need further assistance with finding accommodation, you can contact the housing department at aaazimmer@zuv.uni-heidelberg.de

Please keep in mind that private accommodation is usually considerably more expensive than a room in a student residence and that it is very difficult to find private accommodation in Heidelberg as the housing market is very tight.

8.) If I want to send myself a package before I depart for Germany, what address should I use?

Universität Heidelberg, Dezernat Internationale Beziehungen
z.Hd. your exchange coordinator's name AND your name
Seminarstraße 2
69117 Heidelberg
Germany

9.) Are meal plans available for the dining halls at the university?

There are no meal plans at the university, but you will only be charged a subsidized student rate for meals in the cafeterias when you pay with your Student ID card.

10.) Where can I buy groceries, cosmetics and household goods?

There are a number of shops where you can do your necessary shopping all over town, e.g. *Aldi*, *Lidl*, *Penny & Rewe* for groceries, *dm*, *Müller* and *Rossmann* for cosmetics and *Galeria Kaufhof* for bedding, pots & pans, cutlery etc.

11.) Do I have to pay for the 4-week preparatory German language course?

For students coming through bilateral or state-to-state exchange programs, the 350 EUR course fee will be covered by the International Relations Office, the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Education or the *Baden-Württemberg Stiftung*.

12.) Do I need to select or register for courses before I arrive in Heidelberg?

You will have plenty of time to select and register for courses after your arrival if you are attending the 4-week preparatory German language course.

If you will not be attending the preparatory language course, you should view the online course catalogue and select courses in advance.

13.) Where can I find course catalogues online?

www.uni-heidelberg.de/studium/imstudium/vorlesungen/

The course catalogue for the upcoming semester will be available around late July. By looking at the courses offered in the current semester and in previous semesters, you will get a good idea of what to expect for your study period in Heidelberg.

If you would like to search for courses offered in English (or another language), please see <http://sf.uni-heidelberg.de/> and then click on: *Lectures => Search Lectures*. Enter the language of instruction that you would like to search for in the drop down menu and enter the department(s) in which you wish to conduct the search. Click on “*Select*” to select the name of the department(s) from a list. You can reveal the individual departments by clicking on the “+” to the left of *Fakultäten* and then selecting the *Fakultät* and department(s) in the same way. Once you have found the department(s), click on the box to the left to mark your selection (a green check will appear) and then click on the “*commit choice*” box at the bottom of the screen. To begin your search press “*Start Search*” at the bottom of the screen.

14.) Will I be required to earn a specific amount of credits while studying abroad?

Heidelberg University does not have a required minimum or maximum amount of credits or courses. You should consult your home university to see whether they have any credit or course requirements that you need to meet while studying abroad.

15.) What initial expenses will I have at the beginning of my stay in Heidelberg?*

The first day:

- 25 € or more for transportation to Heidelberg
- ca. 70 € or more for sheets and bedding (optional)

The first week(s):

- 74.80 € student services' fee (once a semester)
- ca. 170 € Semester ticket for public transportation(optional)
- ca. 90 € German health insurance, if necessary (permonth)

*) prices may increase a little for the next semester

16.) Do I have to open a bank account in Germany?

Yes; you will be required to pay your monthly rent by transferring it from a German bank account. Although most German banks do not charge a monthly fee for a student account, you may have to pay an additional fee to withdraw money from your bank account back home. You should ask whether your bank has an agreement with a German bank to waive these fees before you depart for Germany.

17.) I have been awarded a scholarship from Baden-Württemberg. How do I receive my scholarship money?

If you receive a scholarship from the *Baden-Württemberg Stiftung* or from the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts, your scholarship will be paid in monthly instalments. You can pick up the first instalment cash at the *Universitätskasse* (university cashier, Seminarstrasse 2) after your arrival to Heidelberg. Please note that the *Universitätskasse* keeps very limited hours of operation (Monday and Thursday 10 am – 12:00 noon).

Once you've opened a German bank account, you should pass on your bank information to your exchange coordinator at the International Relations Office. He or she will arrange for your scholarship money to be transferred into your bank account at the beginning of each month.

18.) Do I need to apply for a visa before travelling to Germany?

Citizens of the USA, Canada, Brasil, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Israel and EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland) may apply for their residence permit after arriving to Germany. However, some students find it **more convenient to apply for a study visa while still at home**, in order to avoid having to deal with the required bureaucratic procedures in Germany immediately after their arrival.

If you are a citizen of an EU-country, you do not need a residence permit to study in Germany.

Citizens of countries not mentioned above MUST apply for and receive a valid student visa before entering Germany.

19.) Am I required to take out German health insurance? (ca. 90 Euro per month)

We highly recommend that you take out student health insurance in Germany. Without it, you will have to pay for medical care out of your own pocket and then submit the receipts and paperwork to your insurance provider for reimbursement.

More importantly, you may not qualify for a residence permit if you do not have sufficient health coverage.

Please note: It is up to the city's Foreigners' Registration Office to decide whether the insurance coverage provided is considered to be sufficient. While students staying for one semester only may receive a residence permit upon presentation of international health coverage, students staying for a **full academic year** do not qualify for a residence permit if they cannot provide proof of "**unlimited**" health coverage for Germany (in most cases only provided by German statutory insurance for students).

If you are planning to take out student health insurance in Germany, please keep in mind that your coverage will begin on the first day of the Semester (October 1st). If you will be arriving in Germany prior to the first day of the winter semester, you need to bring health insurance for the period between your arrival and the beginning of the semester.

If you do not wish to purchase German health insurance, you must bring proof of your health insurance coverage from home in order to receive a residence permit (see *proof of health* insurance under the visa requirements below).

20.) Are there any documents that I need to bring from home for the residence permit application process?

Yes, please bring the following documents:

- **Passport and a copy of your passport.**
- **Statement of financial support** (e.g. bank statement, **notarized** parental letter, confirmation of scholarship). Your statement(s) of financial support must prove to the "Bürgeramt" that you have at least 735 € to live on for each month of your stay. You can also fulfil this requirement by having a parent/guardian sign a financial statement (see "*Erklärung*" below). The information below the signature (name, occupation, address) should pertain to your parent/guardian. **The declaration is only valid if notarized.**
- **Proof of health insurance:** You will need to show proof of insurance **and a description of your coverage** from your home country, **or** a current "*Krankenkassenbescheinigung*" from your German health insurance provider. **An insurance card is not sufficient proof of insurance.**

If you do not plan to take out health insurance in Germany, you will need to bring a letter from your health insurance provider, in which it is clearly stated that you will have health insurance coverage for

the entire duration of your stay in Germany. A description of the health insurance coverage, which can often be found on the provider's website, is also required to determine whether the insurance coverage is sufficient.

If you are planning to take out student health insurance in Germany, please keep in mind that your coverage will begin on the first day of the Semester only (October 1st). If you will be arriving in Germany prior to the first day of the semester, you need to bring health insurance for the period between your arrival and the beginning of the semester.

Please note that students over the age of 29 do not qualify for state health insurance and have to purchase insurance from a private health insurance provider.

Here you will find general information about health insurance in Germany:

<https://www.laverbraucherportal.de/versicherung/krankenversicherung/en>

For more detailed information on insurance, please consult section 7 of the student handbook.

ERKLÄRUNG / FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Zur Vorlage beim Bürgeramt, Abteilung für Zuwanderung und Ordnungsangelegenheiten über die vorgesehene Finanzierung des Studiums an der Universität Heidelberg von:
For submission to the Central Administration Office regarding the financial support for studies at Heidelberg University of:

Herr/Frau _____ (Name of Student)

Hiermit erkläre ich, dass ich für alle mit dem Studium des obengenannten Studierenden verbundenen Kosten (monatlich mindestens 735,- Euro) aufkommen werde.

I hereby certify that I am willing and that I do promise to provide at least 735 EUR per month for the educational expenses of the above-mentioned student.

Datum / Date

Unterschrift / Signature (e.g. parent or guardian)

Name:

Adresse:

Beruf / Profession: