

## Information on Visas & Residence Permits

February 2019

The following guide provides basic information, but please note that every situation is individual, therefore this document has no binding legal character. Please contact your local *Ausländerbehörde* (Immigration Authority), which will be pleased to answer any questions regarding your residence status.

Students from the EU, EEA and Switzerland do not require a visa or a residence permit. A form of valid ID or passport is sufficient, but you must **register your German address with the local authorities (*Wohnsitz*)**. For more information on registration, see the "Accommodation" info leaflet.

**The following aspects only apply to prospective students and students who are not from the above-mentioned countries:**

### Before Entry<sup>1</sup>

If you are planning to study in Germany, you need to apply for a Study Visa (*Visum für Studienzwecke*) or a Student Application Visa (*Studienbewerbervisum*) at a German diplomatic representation in your home country. The visa will be converted into a residence permit (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*) after your arrival in Germany.

[www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Laenderinformationen/03-WebseitenAV/Uebersicht\\_node](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Laenderinformationen/03-WebseitenAV/Uebersicht_node)

**Please note:** *If you enter the country with a tourist or visitor visa, you will have to **return to your home country and apply for the required visa from there!*** Please also note that a **Student Application Visa** does not allow you to do an internship or to work in Germany.

Once you are accepted onto a German degree program, you will receive a **Study Visa**. If you want to do a pre-internship in Germany, you must also apply for a **Study Visa** as the internship is part of your studies.

If you have not yet been accepted for a study program, but are interested in studying in Germany or are planning to do a pre-study course, you will receive a **Student Application Visa**.

#### Please note:

It may take up to 8 weeks or even longer to issue a visa, so please make you leave enough time for your preparations.

To apply for your visa the following documents are required:

1. A valid **passport** (valid for at least 6 months)

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<sup>1</sup> For students from Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea and the USA the following exception applies: they may apply for a residence permit after entry into Germany. This also applies to students from Andorra, Brazil, El Salvador, Honduras, Monaco and San Marino, provided they do not intend to take up employment in Germany.

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2. The **Application Confirmation (*Bewerberbestätigung*)** from the university or **official notification that Uni-assist has forwarded your application documents to the university via the Applicant Portal** (for a Student Applicant Visa application) or the Notice of Admission (*Zulassungsbescheid*) from the **university** (for a Student Visa application).
3. A **Financial Statement** confirming that you have adequate funds to cover your living costs in Germany during your course of study, e.g., in the form of 1) a blocked account (*Sperrkonto*), 2) a scholarship, 3) a formal written letter by a person living in Germany confirming that they will cover your living costs, 4) proof of your parents' income and assets, 5) funding as stated in the German *Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz* (BAföG - Federal Education and Training Assistance Act). You must prove that you have a minimum of 720 Euros per month at your disposal, and that you have enough funds (= 8,700 Euros) to finance your first year of study.

When applying for a visa you must also prove that you can support yourself during your intended course of study. You can find information on the living expenses you can expect in Germany in our [“Financing your Studies” info sheet](#).

The validity period of the visa depends on the specific purpose of your stay and will be issued for a period of 3 months up to 1 year. The purpose must be fulfilled within the specified time period – e.g., pre-study preparation courses must be completed within 2 years.

The residence permit for study purposes is restricted to the chosen course of study and higher education institution, but may be changed if plausible reasons are given.

### On Arrival in Germany

A few days after registering your current address with the local authorities (*Einwohnermeldeamt* *Bürgerbüro*) you can register with the *Ausländerbehörde* (immigration authorities) responsible for your place of residence and apply for a residence permit, which, like the visa, depends on the purpose of your stay and is valid for a limited period of time.

To apply for a residence permit for study purposes the following documents are required:

- **passport and visa if necessary**
- **passport photo** (biometric)
- **enrolment certificate** (*Immatrikulationsbescheinigung*) from your higher education institution (or a conditional Notice of Admission [*vorbehaltlicher Zulassungsbescheid*] if you are applying for a study program)
- **certificate of residence** (*Meldebescheinigung*) and your **residential lease contract**
- **proof of sufficient financial resources** to cover your living costs (*Finanzierungsnachweis*)
- **health insurance**
- **application form** for a residence permit (approximately 100 Euros)

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Usually, a residence permit is issued for a period of up to two years (depending on the proof of financial resources and the documents listed above) and must be extended to the maximum period of two years before expiry. Whether your permit is extended depends on your study progress, i.e., whether you are passing exams and collecting credit points. Please note that Immigration Authorities may check on whether you are taking your studies seriously and are going to complete them within an appropriate timeframe.

Information for Pre-Study participants: You will only be able to apply for a residence permit for participation in a pre-study course, but once you have completed your pre-study internship the permit can be extended to a residence permit for study purposes. For this, you will also need to produce written confirmation from Hochschule Geisenheim University that you are taking part in the program and, when possible, provide the internship agreement.

### **Important:**

**Your residence permit will become invalid if you leave Germany for longer than six months or if you change your university or course of study without prior approval from the Immigration Authorities.**

### **What is an “electronic residence permit”?**

The electronic residence permit (*elektronischer Aufenthaltstitel*) or “eAT” takes the form of a plastic card, similar to the German ID card. It stores information about your residence permit in Germany and the EU. From September 1 2011, the eAT will replace the adhesive label in your national passport.

Please contact the Immigration Authorities at least one month before your current residence permit expires, as issuing the new eAT takes several weeks.

Additional provisions relating to work permits, employment and other matters are printed on a supplementary sheet as well as being stored on the eAT chip.

Information about the eAT and what it looks like can be found here:

[www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/Aufenthalt/eAufenthaltstitel/e-aufenthaltstitel-node](http://www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/Aufenthalt/eAufenthaltstitel/e-aufenthaltstitel-node)

### **Immigration Authorities serving the Rheingau area and Wiesbaden**

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| <p><i>Ausländerbehörde Bad Schwalbach</i> (for residents of the <i>Rheingau-Taunus-Kreis</i>)<br/>Heimbacher Str. 7<br/>65307 Bad Schwalbach<br/>Phone: +49(0)6124/5100<br/>For opening hours please see: <a href="http://www.rheingau-taunus.de//index.php?id=109">www.rheingau-taunus.de//index.php?id=109</a></p> |
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| <p><i>Ausländerbehörde Wiesbaden</i> (for residents of Wiesbaden)</p> |
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Alcide-de-Gasperi-Str. 3  
65197 Wiesbaden  
Phone: +49(0)611/31-7474  
E-Mail: [auslaenderbehoerde@wiesbaden.de](mailto:auslaenderbehoerde@wiesbaden.de)  
Appointment necessary!  
[www.wiesbaden.de/vv/oe/05/33/141010100000002642.php](http://www.wiesbaden.de/vv/oe/05/33/141010100000002642.php)

### Links

#### **DAAD – Legal framework for entry and residence**

[www.daad.de/medien/deutschland/stipendien/formulare/info\\_aufenthaltsrecht\\_zuwanderung.pdf](http://www.daad.de/medien/deutschland/stipendien/formulare/info_aufenthaltsrecht_zuwanderung.pdf)

#### **Information about visa applications (Hochschule Geisenheim)**

[www.hs-geisenheim.de/fileadmin/Dateien\\_Hochschule\\_Geisenheim/Internationales/International\\_Office/Texte\\_PDF/Information\\_about\\_visa\\_application\\_Geisenheim.pdf](http://www.hs-geisenheim.de/fileadmin/Dateien_Hochschule_Geisenheim/Internationales/International_Office/Texte_PDF/Information_about_visa_application_Geisenheim.pdf)

#### **Auswärtiges Amt (Federal Foreign Office) – entry and residence**

[www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen\\_node](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen_node)

For enquiries about visas and residence permits:

**International Office**

[international@hs-gm.de](mailto:international@hs-gm.de)

[pre-study@hs-gm.de](mailto:pre-study@hs-gm.de)