

## Checklist - Before Arrival in Germany

You will have to deal with many issues when planning a stay abroad. We have summarised the most important points and recommend that you begin dealing with them at an early stage before your arrival. If you have questions, we would be happy to offer further help in person. You will also find detailed information about all aspects on: [https://www.international.hu-berlin.de/en/wissenschaftler/international-scholar-services/before-arrival?set\\_language=en](https://www.international.hu-berlin.de/en/wissenschaftler/international-scholar-services/before-arrival?set_language=en)

- Visa/entry requirements:** When you are a Non-EU citizen you will generally need a visa to enter Germany. Please note that processing a visa application takes at least 4 to 6 weeks. Sometimes, you must even expect processing times of several months. This is why we recommend that you submit your visa application as early as possible.
- Health insurance:** In Germany you are required to have valid health insurance. You must have it from the day you arrive. However, if you have an employment contract at HU, you have to get insurance through a statutory health insurance; and can select and register with a provider of your choice. If you are a researcher at HU under a scholarship, as a visiting scholar or in a self-funded capacity, you usually require a private health insurance. Please check in time which insurance cover will be necessary for you.
- Finding accommodation:** Finding suitable accommodation in Berlin can be a difficult process and requires patience. Ideally, you should start looking at the various services that can help you find accommodation ahead of time.  
  
In order to help International Scholars find an apartment, we collect private rental offers in an informal database which we can pass on to you. If you require further information or advice regarding the housing market in Berlin, you can consult us at any time.
- Local Registration Office:** German law requires you to register with the authorities. This means that international researchers at HU must visit a *Bürgeramt* (local registration office) to register themselves within 14 days of moving in to accommodation. Your best course of action is to book an appointment to register with one of Berlin's 40 *Bürgerämter* at an early stage (ideally before arriving in Berlin) as you may have to wait for an appointment for several weeks: <http://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/120686/>
- Driving licence:** If you want to drive a car in Germany, you will need a driving licence that is valid in Germany. The driving licence from your home country will be valid for six months. Afterwards you will need to convert it into a German licence: <https://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/327537/>

## Important documents

You may need to present the following documents while in Germany. We recommend you bring with you certified copies or originals of the documents (including certified translation if applicable):

- Passport / ID (valid for the entire duration of your stay in Germany)
- Visa
- Credit / debit card
- Birth certificate – required to register with the *Bürgeramt*
- Marriage certificate – required to register with the *Bürgeramt*, also required for spouse's residence permit
- Proof of university entrance qualification and university degree (originals) – required to enroll as a doctoral candidate or conclude an employment contract
- Proof of funding for your stay (e.g. salary slip, scholarship certificate) – required to issue a visa or residence permit
- Letter of invitation from the host department or inviting professor
- Proof of admission as a doctoral candidate
- Health insurance certificate – including a list of the monthly contributions you pay for your health insurance