

Checklist - First Steps

A number of things need to be taken care of in your first few weeks in Germany. We have summarised the most important things for you. 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/upon-arrival>

- ☐ **Local Registration Office | *Bürgeramt*:** Registration with the *Bürgeramt* is mandatory for all persons residing for more than two months in Berlin. You will receive confirmation of registration immediately after registering. Keep this in a safe place, as you may need it later: for example, to apply for a residence permit, conclude an employment contract (tax number) or open a bank account.
- ☐ **Residence permit from the Foreigners' Registration Office:** If you require a residence permit, you should come directly to our office during consultation hours in the first weeks after your arrival. We will handle the application for you - you do not need to go to the Foreigners' Registration Office yourself.
- ☐ **Health insurance policy:** 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.
- ☐ **Bank account:** If you wish to open a German bank account, in most cases you need to be registered with the *Bürgeramt* first.
- ☐ **Telephone/internet:** To ensure that you can be reached on the go, you can conclude a mobile phone contract or buy a pay-as-you-go SIM card.
- ☐ **Radio and television licence fee:** Everyone living in Germany and registered in housing is legally required to pay a licence fee to fund public broadcasting.

At HU

- ☐ **Enrolling as a doctoral student:** Have you submitted an application for registration as a doctoral student but are not yet enrolled? You must usually apply for enrolment within four weeks of being approved. To do so, contact the admissions office for international students:
https://www.hu-berlin.de/en/studies/admission/admission-for-foreign-applicants-en/Zul%20Ausl?set_language=en
- ☐ **ID card for international guests:** As soon as you are registered with the International Scholar Services, you can receive an ID card at our office which simplifies your access to HU facilities, e.g. library, canteen (*Mensa*), language centre (*Sprachenzentrum*) or university sports.
- ☐ **HU account:** To use the internet and an HU e-mail address, you can apply for an HU account at the Computer and Media Service (CMS).

For researchers with an employment contract with HU

- ☐ **Tax number:** The HU personnel department requires this number to correctly account for and pay you your salary. You will receive a tax number if you state that you will be working as an employee when registering at the *Bürgeramt*.
- ☐ **Selection of tariffs with the VBL:** The VBL (*Versorgungsanstalt des Bundes und der Länder, Federal and State Pension Institution*) provides occupational pension coverage. As an HU employee, you will be automatically registered there. For the first two months of your employment, however, you have the option of selecting between two tariffs when working under a temporary contract. Especially if you are working in Germany for less than five years, it is highly advisable to get informed about the different options.