



Universität Hamburg
DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG

First Steps for international students

Katja Grannis

29.09.2025



Foto: UHH/von Wieding

WHO WE ARE

International Student Support

- Department for International Affairs / Section International Student Services and Mobility
- Advice and counselling for international students on matters related to immigration law

Website:

[Studying and getting a degree](#)

Email:

international-student-support@uni-hamburg.de

PLEASE NOTE

1. Please enter your questions in the chat AFTER we have finished the presentation.
2. Most information aimed at international degree-seeking students from outside EU (residence permit etc.).
3. Slides available on PIASTA's website.

Agenda for today

1. Introduction to immigration law, §16b AufenthG
2. Registration with the city authorities
3. Residence Permit
4. Working as a student
5. Going abroad as a student
6. Typical pitfalls
7. Counseling services at UHH

1. Introduction §16b AufenthG

- §16b AufenthG allows students from non-EU countries to stay and study in Germany
- defines students' rights and obligations
- important for legal and successful study in Germany



Rights and obligations §16b AufenthG

Rights

- entitles to stay in Germany for the purpose of studying
- right to work limited to 140 full days or 280 half-days annually and other student activities
- **max. 10 years** (including Studienkolleg, Bachelor and Master)
- Additional 5 years if you continue with PhD

Obligations

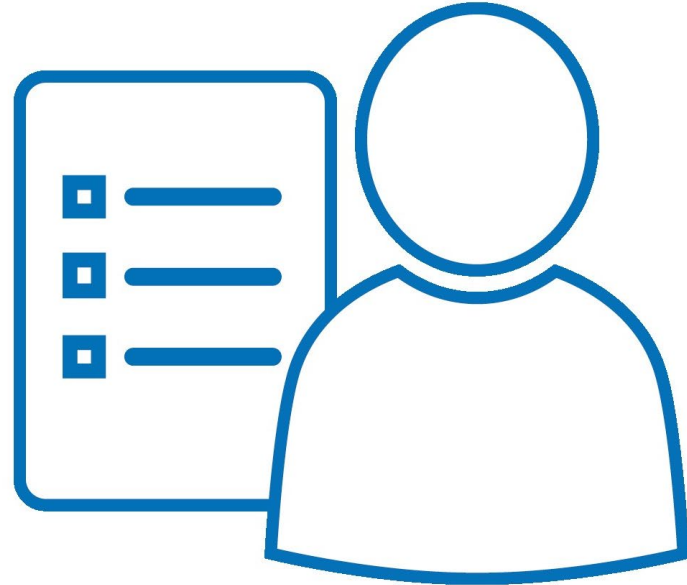
- register your address (Anmeldung)
- maintain health insurance coverage
- proof of financial resources
- apply for and hold a valid residence permit (§16b) regularly
- inform authorities if study or personal circumstances change

2. Registration of address

Mandatory for everyone living in Germany for more than 3 months

You need the Meldebescheinigung (Proof of Residence) in order to

- open a bank account,
- get German health insurance,
- apply for a residence permit,
- get a mobile phone number.



2. Registration of address

Which documents do you need?

- Landlord/-lady confirmation
“Wohnungsgeberbestätigung”
- Official photo identification (identification card or passport)
- Administration fee: EUR 14



Registration of address

Which documents do you need?

- Landlord/-lady confirmation
“Wohnungsgeberbestätigung”
- Official photo identification (identification card or passport)
- Administration fee: EUR 14
- More information and forms: [Reporting a move to Hamburg from abroad](#)

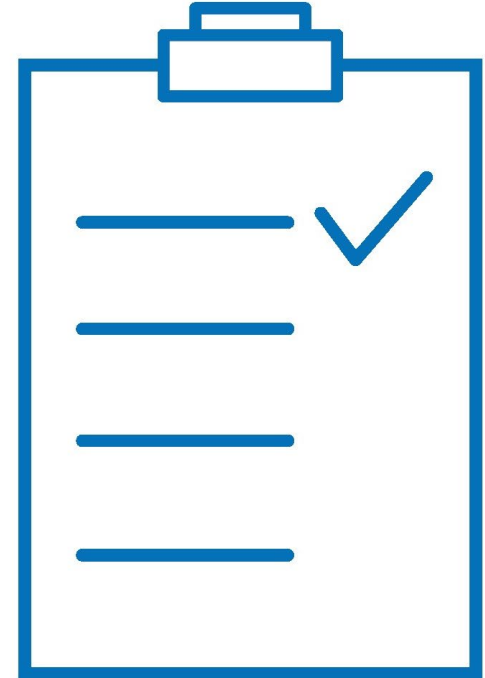
**Within two weeks after
having moved into
accommodation**



Registration of address

What if you haven't found permanent accommodation?

- If you sublet a flat / room: main tenant needs to get permission and issues „Wohnungsgeberbestätigung“
- Mandatory if you sublet for more than 3 months, voluntary if less than 3 months
- If you live temporarily with relatives / friends without paying rent: main tenants need to have permission to sublet and issue „Wohnungsgeberbestätigung“



Registration of address

Where can you register your address?

- book an appointment in advance:

[Termin buchen - Online-Dienst Einstiegsseite – HamburgService](#) (first page only in German, click „hier starten“)

- Choose „Einwohnerwesen“ or „Hamburg Service locations for residents“



Registration: Book appointment



Welcome to the online appointment booking

For which area do you want an appointment?

[Certification for foreign countries](#)

The Office for Migration is authorized to attach an apostille or pre-certification to public documents issued by authorities in the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. For criminal record certificates (Führungszeugnisse), you can obtain the apostille or pre-certification from the Office for Migration.

[Construction advice and inspection of building files in the district of Eimsbüttel](#)

The WBZ is responsible for information regarding building law matters and the potential development of properties. The building records are available for request access to their property files.

[Customer services of Kasse.Hamburg](#)

The customer service of Kasse.Hamburg will help you with all questions regarding current enforcement proceedings and the collection of maintenance fees. Furthermore, you can pay the outstanding items on site in cash or by EC card.

[Gerne in Kita!](#)

The "Gerne in Kita!" project offers families from Harburg and Harburg daycare centers the opportunity to receive counseling by phone or in person. For more information, please visit [Gerne in Kita!](#)

[Hamburg Service locations for residents](#)

The Hamburg Service locations for residents affairs are responsible for registration and ID matters. Many people are still familiar with the name "Hamburg Service locations for residents affairs". From 01.09.2023, the City, Altona, Barmbek-Uhlenhorst and Harburg are merged into the Hamburg Service locations for residents affairs.

[Hamburg Welcome Center for Professionals](#)

You have been present at the Hamburg Welcome Center (Hammerbrook district, Süderstr. 32 b) and have received a letter from the Bundesagentur für Arbeit.

Registration:

- book an appointment in advance: Registration in Hamburg
- Information on registration: Reporting a move from abroad

Registration: Book appointment

☐ Apply for express passport ?

eID Karte für europäische Bürgerinnen und Bürger

☐ Apply for an eID card as a European citizen ?

Abholung (nur im Standort der Beantragung)

☐ pick up ID card ?

☐ pick up passport ?

Wohnsitzänderung

☐ Moving within Hamburg ?

Alternatively, [available online at any time](#) without appointment!

☐ Report a move to Hamburg from another federal state ?

Alternatively, [available online at any time](#) without appointment!

☒ Reporting a move to Hamburg from abroad ?

☐ Deregister apartment ?

Führerschein

Registration:

- book an appointment in advance: Registration in Hamburg
- Information on registration: Reporting a move from abroad

Registration: Book appointment

Choose the location

Possible weekdays

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Earliest date:

17.09.2025

Desired time frame

06:00



- 22:00



< Back

Search

Here we have appointments available for you

The earliest appointment is available here:

[Hamburg Service - Standort Bergedorf Einwohnerangelegenheiten](#)

Available as of 9/18/2025

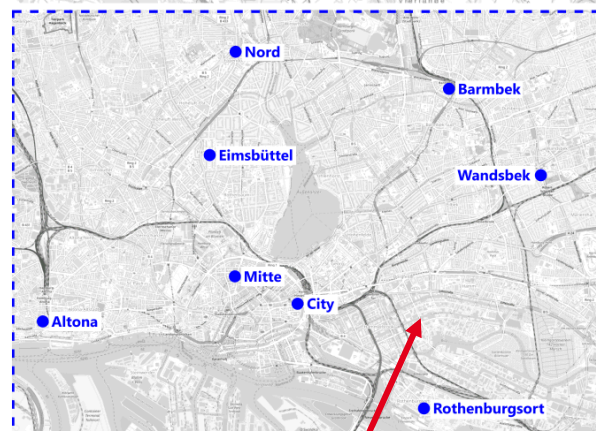
[Hamburg Service - Standort Blankenese Einwohnerangelegenheiten](#)

Available as of 9/18/2025

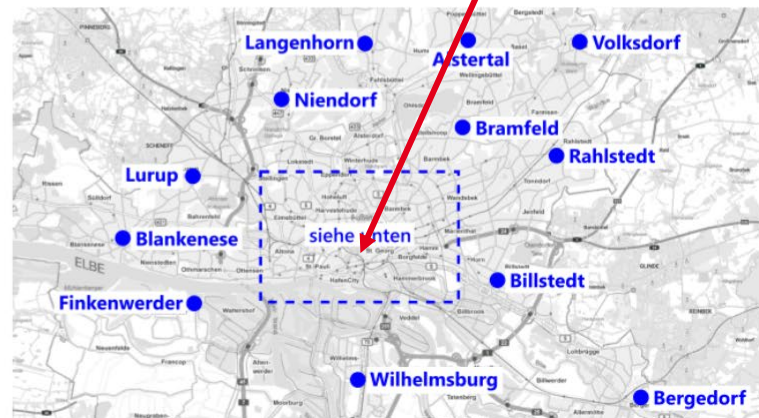
Later also available (A-Z):

[Hamburg Service - Mobiles Team Süd Einwohnerangelegenheiten Standort Finkenwerder](#)

Available as of 10/23/2025




© OpenStreetMap contributors



Universität Hamburg
DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG

Registration: Book appointment

← ↻ 🔒 <https://driveport.de/termine/TerminZeit>

 **Hamburg Appointments**

Appointment booking - HS Einwohnerangelegenheiten

Choose time

Please choose a time at the selected location Hamburg Service - Standort Blankenese Einwohnerangelegenheiten:

Tomorrow: [08:30](#)

Tu, 10/14/2025: [07:00](#) [07:30](#) [08:00](#) [09:30](#) [10:00](#) [10:30](#) [11:00](#) [11:30](#) [12:00](#) [12:30](#) [13:00](#) [13:30](#) [14:00](#)

We, 10/22/2025: [11:10](#)

Mo, 10/27/2025: [07:00](#) [08:00](#)

Tu, 10/28/2025: [08:30](#) [10:20](#) [10:30](#) [11:00](#) [11:30](#) [12:00](#)

We, 10/29/2025: [07:15](#) [07:30](#) [08:00](#) [08:50](#) [09:00](#) [09:30](#) [10:00](#) [10:45](#) [11:00](#) [11:45](#) [12:00](#)

Th, 10/30/2025: [07:00](#) [07:30](#) [08:00](#) [08:30](#) [09:00](#) [09:30](#) [10:00](#) [10:30](#) [11:00](#) [11:30](#) [12:00](#) [12:30](#) [13:00](#) [13:30](#)

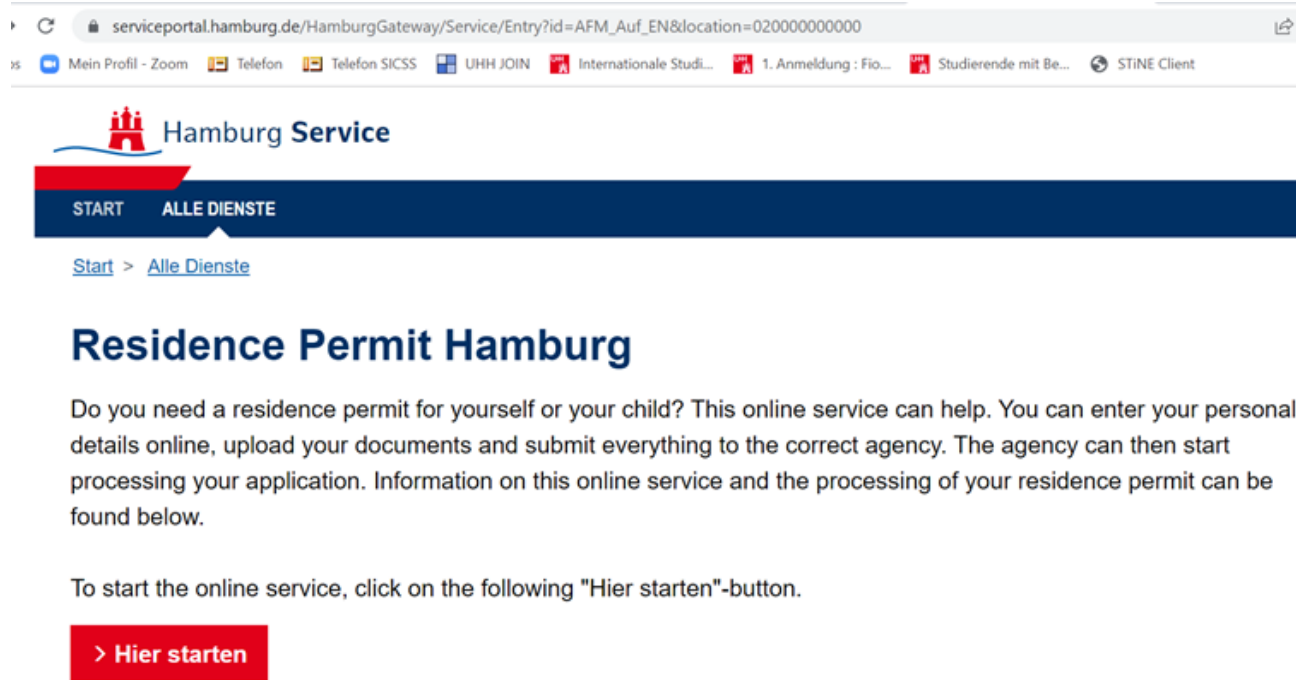
[< Back](#)

Registration:

- book an appointment in advance: Registration in Hamburg
- Information on registration: Reporting a move from abroad

3. Residence permit – where to apply

[Online](#)
[application tool](#)



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `serviceportal.hamburg.de/HamburgGateway/Service/Entry?id=AFM_Auf_EN&location=020000000000`. The browser's address bar and tabs are visible. The page header features the "Hamburg Service" logo and a navigation bar with "START" and "ALLE DIENSTE" buttons. Below the navigation bar, a breadcrumb trail reads "Start > Alle Dienste". The main heading is "Residence Permit Hamburg". The text below the heading explains the online service for applying for a residence permit. At the bottom, a red button with the text "> Hier starten" is displayed.

serviceportal.hamburg.de/HamburgGateway/Service/Entry?id=AFM_Auf_EN&location=020000000000

Mein Profil - Zoom Telefon Telefon SICSS UHH JOIN Internationale Studi... 1. Anmeldung : Fio... Studierende mit Be... STiNE Client

Hamburg Service

START ALLE DIENSTE

[Start](#) > [Alle Dienste](#)

Residence Permit Hamburg

Do you need a residence permit for yourself or your child? This online service can help. You can enter your personal details online, upload your documents and submit everything to the correct agency. The agency can then start processing your application. Information on this online service and the processing of your residence permit can be found below.

To start the online service, click on the following "Hier starten"-button.

> Hier starten

Residence permit – where to apply

- Enter your data into the [Online application tool](#)
- Upload all necessary documents
- The Hamburg Welcome Center will contact you and inform you when your appointment will take place.

PLEASE NOTE: Your initial application after entering Germany will be processed by the [Hamburg Welcome Center for Professionals](#).



Residence permit - Which documents do you need?

- national passport
- proof of residence (Meldebestätigung)
- rental agreement or other proof of accommodation
- current certificate of study/ enrollment
- proof of financial resources (following slide)
- health insurance confirmation

For appointment:

- biometric photograph (not older than six months)
- fee: appr. 100 EUR



Forms and checklists:

<https://www.hamburg.com/welcome/forms/>

Residence permit – finances

Minimum of 992 EUR/month or 11.904 EUR/year

Proof of finance:

- bank account statement
- scholarship
- formal obligation (Verpflichtungserklärung)
- bank statements of parents...
- own income (usually only after you have received residence permit)
- combination 1-5



Residence permit – what`s next?

- It can take up to 5 months before you hear back from the Hamburg Welcome Center.
- You should receive a fictional certificate before your visa expires.

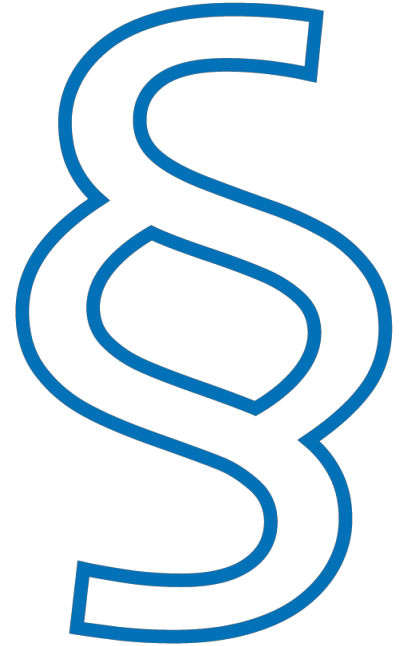
In case of visa-free entry:

- Please mention during the online application that you were granted visa-free entry and need an appointment, urgently.

For general questions,
please contact the
Hamburg Welcome
Center directly.

When your visa expires

- If you have submitted your application for a residence permit prior to the expiry of your entry visa, **your visa will remain valid** until a decision on the application has been made. (§81, section 4 AufenthG)
- You should receive a document called [Fiktionsbescheinigung](#) (fictional certificate).
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Differences between visa-free entry and entry with visa.



When your visa expires

	Visa necessary to enter Germany	Visa-free entry into Germany
Application for a visa to enter Germany	X	
Application for a residence permit after entering Germany	X	
Travel within the Schengen Area / Traveling out of and reentering Germany	possible during the entire length of visa	
Employment in Germany while studying	X	



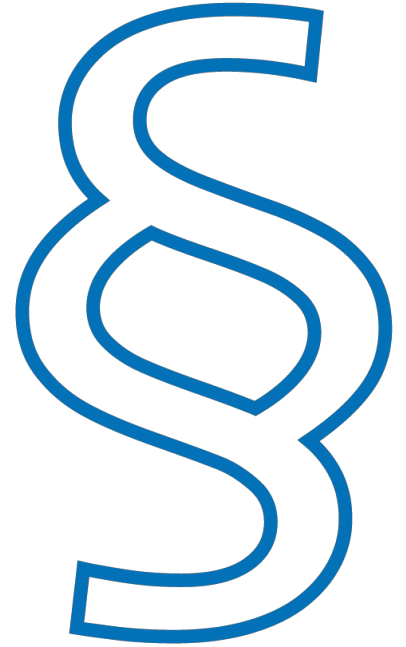
When your visa expires

	Visa necessary to enter Germany	Visa-free entry into Germany
Application for a visa to enter Germany	X	not necessary
Application for a residence permit after entering Germany	X	X
Travel within the Schengen Area / Traveling out of and reentering Germany	possible during the entire length of visa	only within the 90-day visa-free entry period (not when no residence permit has been issued after the 90 days have expired)
Employment in Germany while studying	X	not possible until residence permit has been issued



If your visa expires

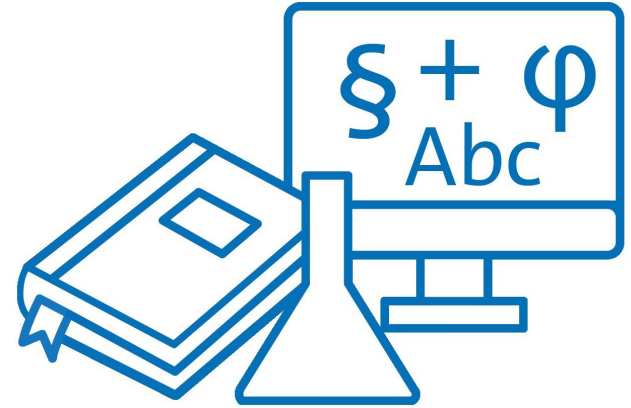
- ... and you haven't received a fictional certificate: Please contact the Hamburg Welcome Center
- ...and you were granted visa-free entry: ...please contact the Hamburg Welcome Center and explain entered without a visa but need an appointment for a residence permit, soon.



Residence permit – Am I allowed to work?

Employment up to 140 full days or 280 half-days per year
and secondary student work

- half-day = max. 4 hours,
- calendar year is relevant
- every legal job (no self-employment)



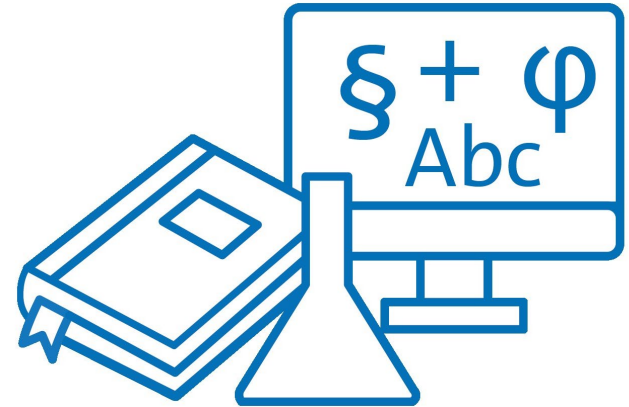
Residence permit – Am I allowed to work?

Secondary student activities (without any time restriction)

- student activities at universities and other academic institutions
- activities which serve an educational purpose in the subject area of the studies (e.g. AStA),
- **no time limit**

EU-Citizens

- no restrictions



Residence permit – Am I allowed to work?

PLEASE NOTE:

- students are generally only allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours / week during the semester (secondary student activities included)
- Any questions related to working as a student: [BeSI](#) (Counselling Center for Social and International Affairs at Studierendenwerk Hamburg)

Residence permit – Am I allowed to study abroad?

Yes!

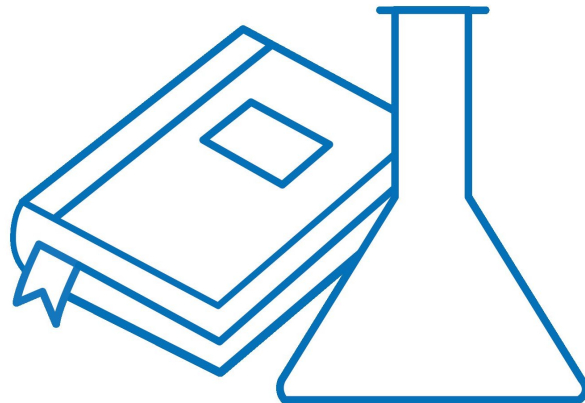
- If you plan to stay out of Germany for more than six months, please let your local immigration authority know.
- You will have to make sure your residence permit is valid until after your return to Germany.
- If you intend to spend a semester abroad within the EU, please contact us. We will discuss with you possible entry visa, REST directive etc.



Residence permit – Am I allowed to change my subject?

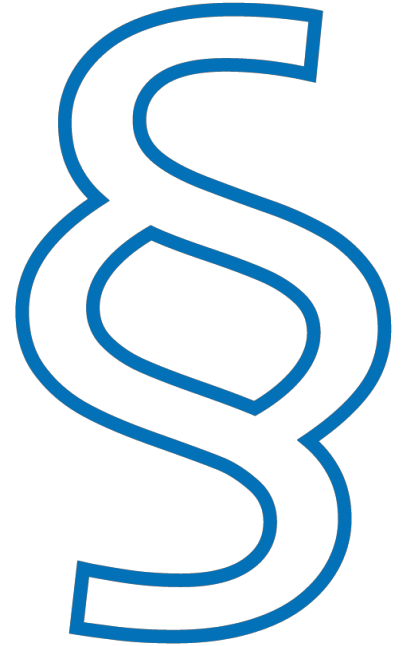
Yes!

- You need to inform your local immigration authority.
- Change of subject usually no problem during the first three to four semesters.
- After this time, the immigration authorities evaluate each case individually (statement by university might be requested; can the new program be finished within 10 years?)



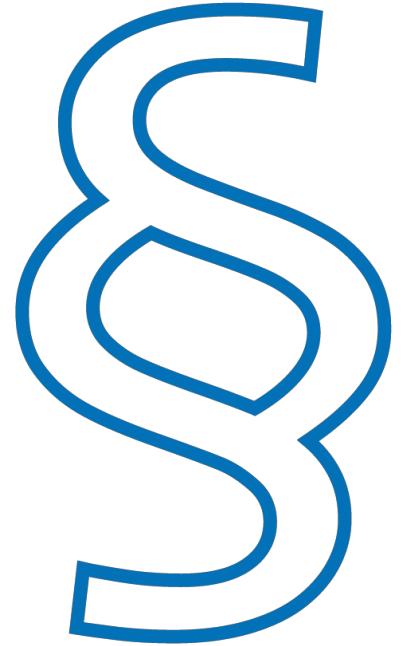
Residence permit – typical pitfalls

- Renew your residence permit before it expires
- Proof of financial resources necessary (can be mix of savings and job or scholarship => 992 € / month)
- Inform your Immigration Authority (Ausländerbehörde) of any changes in your student status (change of study program, graduation)
- You are allowed to work 140 full days or 280 half days per year => if you would like to work self-employed = „selbstständig“, you need the permission by the immigration authority.



Residence permit – typical pitfalls

- You are allowed to leave Germany for six months
=> if you do not return in time, your residence permit will expire
- If you would like to take part in a study-abroad program, inform your immigration authority about your plans
- **Limitation of ten years for Bachelor`s and Master`s degree**
- After graduation, you can apply for a job-seeking permit (for up to 18 months), work permit or Blue Card EU



Advising for international students

- Mix of digital and in-person counselling
- You can book short online appointments on our website:

[Applying for a residence permit : UHH : University of Hamburg](#)

Contact details:

Via email:
international-student-support@uni-hamburg.de

[Studying and getting a degree](#)

Advising for international students

When to contact us?

- Questions concerning your residence permit (renewal / working as an international student / changing your study program etc.)
- Issues concerning the progress of your study (illness / financial issues / personal problems etc.) that might affect your residence status
- If you intend to spend one or two semesters abroad.

Contact details:

Via email:

international-student-support@uni-hamburg.de

[Studying and getting a degree](#)

Other counseling services at UHH

Dep. of International Affairs

Advising on various topics offered by our Department

www.uni-hamburg.de/en/piasta/beratung.html

Campus Center contact form

For administrative and general topics regarding studying:

www.uni-hamburg.de/kontakt-cc
www.uni-hamburg.de/admission

Academic Offices in the Faculties

for topics related to your studies:

<https://www.uni-hamburg.de/en/campuscenter/beratung/weitere-beratungseinrichtungen/studienbueros.html>

Other counseling services at UHH

Accommodation

Studierendenwerk [Counseling Center Accommodation \(BeWo\)](#)

Health Insurance

Studierendenwerk [Counseling Center for Social and International Affairs \(BeSI\)](#)

Finances

Studierendenwerk [Counseling Center for Study Financing \(BeSt\)](#)

Discrimination complaints, counseling and advising

[Antidiscrimination Center](#) at UHH

Do you have any questions?

