



PhD students: Checklist for arrival and during your stay in Frankfurt am Main

This checklist will help you determine the tasks that you have to complete during your relocation to Frankfurt. However, please note that this checklist is not a complete list of all necessary tasks, but is a summary of the most important pieces of information. The tasks do not need to be completed in the order in which they are shown in the list. Please contact us if you need assistance with any of the formalities described here; we would be glad to help you!

1. Fill in Goethe Welcome Centre's questionnaire

You should complete the Goethe Welcome Centre's online check-in questionnaire latest by the time you arrive in Frankfurt (http://linkto.eu/GU_welcome)

We can provide you with important information and inform you about special events and advisory programs only after we have received the completed questionnaire. All information that you provide is kept strictly confidential.

2. Enrolment with Goethe University

Your first point of contact is the [International Office](#). Please visit the International Office during their consultation hours for international PhD candidates and bring the following documents:

- Original certificates which entitle you for doctoral studies
- Translations of certificates (not necessarily if your originals are written in English or French)
- Letter of acceptance from the Doctoral Committee
- Language certificates
- Proof of health insurance
- One passport photo
- Your passport

The International Office will pass you on to the Students Administration Services where you will pay your semester fee (currently approximately 350,- €) and receive your Goethe Card as well as your user ID for internet access at the university.

3. Register with the city of Frankfurt

You must register at the Residents' Registration Office (*Bürgeramt*) in Frankfurt within two weeks after arrival. This rule applies to all German citizens as well as to international guests who will stay in Germany for more than three months. **In order to register, the GWC can help you to get an appointment.** You need to bring your personal identity card, a valid rental contract and a lessor confirmation to the Residents' Registration Office (www.uni-frankfurt.de/gwc/Registration) For later visits you may choose between different Residents' Registration Offices depending upon your place of residence in or around Frankfurt (www.meldebox.de/Umzug-Frankfurt-am-Main/Einwohnermeldeamt).

4. Opening a bank account

Because monthly rental payments, electrical bills, and insurance fees are normally directly charged to a bank account and salaries and scholarship funds are directly deposited to one's account, it might be advisable especially for Non-Europeans to open a German bank account (*Girokonto*) for the duration of your stay in Frankfurt. **The GWC provides you with information and contact details.** Please find more information on our homepage (www.uni-frankfurt.de/gwc/Bank-account).

5. Visa and residence permit

Non-European foreigners generally require a visa to enter Germany and also a residency permit if they are planning to stay for an extended period of time. The entry visa can usually be obtained through German consulates located abroad. Depending upon the length and purpose of the stay in Germany, a Schengen-Visa is required (**research stay** in Germany for up to three months) or a national visa (**research stay** exceeding three months). Foreigners who require an entry visa must also receive



permission to stay in Germany if their planned stay exceeds the length of the issued visa. In this case, a residence permit is required. This applies to foreigners who are permitted to enter and stay in Germany for up to three months without a visa, too. These varying regulations depend upon the country of origin of the person traveling to Germany. If you are planning to stay in Germany longer than three months, you must apply for a residence permit at the Foreigners' Office (*Ausländerbehörde*).

We are happy to assist you in arranging an appointment with the *Ausländerbehörde*.

The following documents are required at the time of the appointment:

- Valid passport
- Residence permit application form
- Proof of financial support: employment contract/ scholarship certificate
- Proof of health insurance coverage
- Rental contract
- 2 biometric passport photos
- service fee of 100-130 EUR
(the fee depends upon the length of the granted residence permit)
- A service fee of 110 EUR is charged for extending a residence permit.

Please find further information on our homepage (www.uni-frankfurt.de/gwc/Visa).

6. Rental contract and security deposit

A written rental contract is usually signed with the landlord before moving into an apartment. By signing the contract, you legally recognize and accept the conditions of the contract; therefore, the entire contract should be read very thoroughly. It is common in Germany that the landlord requires a security deposit amounting to about two months of rent. This money will be set aside and returned to you once you move out if no damages have been made to the apartment or you do not have any outstanding payments to the landlord. A security deposit should amount to three months' rent at the most. Before moving into your new apartment/house you should insist on a hand over record/ walk-through report to avoid any unjustified damage claims once you move out again.

7. Health insurance

If you will be staying in Germany for an extended period of time, you and your accompanying family members should obtain health insurance coverage in Germany. German health insurance companies generally reimburse medications, doctor's fees, and hospital fees. It is also very important that the health insurance also covers medical treatment for acute illness and accidents. Health insurance coverage is also required by the *Ausländerbehörde* in order to receive a residence permit. Please find further information on our homepage (www.uni-frankfurt.de/gwc/Health-insurance).

8. Further important types of insurance: liability insurance (*Haftpflichtversicherung*) and accident insurance (*Unfallversicherung*).

We strongly recommend obtaining private liability insurance at the latest shortly after your arrival in Frankfurt. This insurance coverage compensates for damages to another person, for example through carelessness (causing an automobile accident while riding a bicycle). Please inform yourself if your liability insurance in your home country remains valid in Germany. Accident insurance (*Unfallversicherung*) is a component of the compulsory German state social insurance. This insurance covers you in case of an accident at work but does not cover any private accidents. If you have an employment contract in Germany, you do not have to personally apply for accident insurance because your employer is fully responsible for the accident insurance coverage. You should consider if you would like to take out a supplemental private accident insurance. Scholarship recipients are usually

exempt from the obligatory German state social insurance. Further information can be found on our homepage (www.uni-frankfurt.de/gwc/Insurances).

9. Obtain a tax number

If you have an employment contract with the Goethe University you will have to submit a tax number to the human resource department. This confirmation will be sent automatically to your new address about 3-4 weeks after your registration with the *Bürgeramt*.

10. Goethe-Card

International researchers and guest researchers receive a card from the Computer Center (*Hochschulrechenzentrum/HRZ*).

This personal “Goethe-Card” allows you to perform several procedures that will certainly be useful throughout your stay:

- Employment and services card
- Identity card used for research and taking out books or other media from the university’s libraries.
- Access to various buildings
- Cash-free payment in the university cafeteria
- Copy card
- As a service card, the Goethe-Card allows you to participate in university sport courses.

Either your inviting school or institute at the Goethe University will have to apply for this card and/or you enrol as PhD student.

Only guest researchers who are staying longer than four weeks at the university or at associated institutions as well as PhD students may receive the Goethe-card. More important information about the Goethe-Card card can be found on the Computer Center’s website (www.uni-frankfurt.de/hrz).

11. Internet and e-mail

PhD students enrolled at GU have free access to internet and e-mail on the university’s premises. In order to gain access you will use the username given to you by the Computer Center (HRZ). If you are employed at GU, your access has to be applied for at the Computer Center by the secretary of your host institute/faculty.

12. Language Courses

Basic German skills will be greatly useful in handling day-to-day tasks and activities. The GRADE – Goethe Graduate Academy organizes language courses especially designed for PhD students (www.goethe-university-frankfurt.de/54290660/300_Language_Tools)

13. Transportation

Frankfurt’s public transportation system of city buses and trams is very well organized. You can find information about tickets, fees, and transportation connections on RMV’s website (www.rmv.de). PhD students enrolled at GU enjoy free transportation provided with the Goethe Card. Employees of the Goethe University may also apply for a highly subsidized so-called “job ticket”. Additionally, many locations in Frankfurt may easily be reached by bicycle and there are many possibilities to buy used bicycles.

(www.goethe-university-frankfurt.de/47516964/Bicycling)

If you want to bring your car to Germany, you can find more information about this topic on the EURAXESS Germany website: (www.euraxess.de/portal/home_en.html). Further information may be found on our homepage (www.uni-frankfurt.de/gwc/Transportation).

14. Events and Activities

Social events for PhD students are organized by GRADE – Goethe Graduate Academy. (www.goethe-university-frankfurt.de/54959511/500_Social_Event)

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