



General legal information for immigrants enrolled in or finishing a course of study in Germany:

RESIDENCY PERMIT FOR STUDY PURPOSES

DURATION OF STUDIES:

Your studies must be the primary purpose for your residency.

The study preparation period (e.g. German courses, preparatory studies) cannot not exceed two years.

Your studies in Germany must be purposeful and orderly, meaning that you will have to study continuously and without taking too much time. You may not exceed the average time of studies by more than three semesters (1.5 years).

Residency permits for study purposes cannot exceed a total duration of ten years, which includes undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies (e.g. Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD). Included in this total duration is the aforementioned study preparation period.

The foreigners' office conducts regular check-ups to ensure that your studies are conducted in an orderly fashion. You will be asked to supply transcripts of records as well as a confirmation of your prospective date of graduation from the university. If you cannot supply these documents, your application for extension of your residency permit may be rejected.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE / SEMESTER ABROAD

Both of these count towards the average time of studies. Therefore, if you plan a leave of absence semester or a semester abroad, you need to ask the permission of the foreigners' office, and thus permission of these should be requested at the foreigners' office.

CHANGING YOUR COURSE OF STUDIES

You may change your course of studies without requesting to do so at the foreigners' office within 18 months of starting your studies.

If you wish to change your course of studies/degree program after this time period, the foreigners' office may deny this request. If changing your course of study/degree program is likely to result in your exceeding the 10-year study period, the foreigners' office may deny extension of your residency permit.

Should you exceed the maximum study period, the extension of your residency permit may be denied. This decision is made at the discretion of the foreigners' office.

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WORKING DURING YOUR STUDIES

A residence permit for study purposes allows working for up to 120 full or 240 half days each year. Your work may not jeopardize the success of your studies. Please note: If you find a job at the university (e.g. as a tutor), this will not count into the 120 days.

In addition, you may exceed the annual maximum for the purposes of a mandatory internship if your course of studies / degree program requires it. Please make a formal request for this by handing in official documentation at the foreigners' office

Non-mandatory internships will be counted towards the annual maximum of 120 full/240 half days.

DOCUMENTATION

All formal requests concerning the residency permit for purposes of study require the following documents:

- Copy of a valid passport
- Copy of your residency permit including supplementary sheet
 - If applicable, copy of temporary residency permit (Fiktionsbescheinigung)
- Biometric passport photo (can be taken at the foreigners' office)
- Transcript of records
- Written confirmation of prospective graduation date
- Proof of health insurance
- Proof of livelihood
 - (bank statement for the last three months, declaration of obligation by a guardian or sponsor, or similar)
- Fee for newly issued residency permit: 93,- €

(further documentation may be required in some cases)

RESIDENCY PERMIT FOR PURPOSES OF JOB SEARCH:

After successful completion of your studies, your residency permit may be extended by up to 18 months for the purpose of finding a job that is adequate to your study degree. After this period, no further extension is possible. Should you have been unable to find employment related to your course of study, you will be required to return to your country of origin.

You may submit a request at the German embassy in your country of origin for a visa for job search purposes. However, this is only possible after having spent a period of time in that country equal to the amount of time previously spent in Germany with a residency permit for purposes of job search.

RESIDENCY PERMIT FOR PURPOSES OF EMPLOYMENT:

After successful completion of your degree, you may also immediately request a residency permit for purposes of employment, as long as said employment is adequate to your degree. Residency permits for jobs that do not require an academic degree cannot be granted. Additionally, the residency permit can only be changed in this manner if you have a valid legal claim, for purposes of vocational education (§ 16a), for purposes of employment as a specialist (§§ 18a and 18b), and for purposes of employment with significant practical experience in the area of employment (§ 19c section 2 of German residency law).

All formal requests concerning the residency permit for purposes of job search or employment require the following documents:

- Copy of a valid passport
- Copy of your residency permit including supplementary sheet
 - If applicable, copy of temporary residency permit (Fiktionsbescheinigung)
- Biometric passport photo (can be taken at the foreigners' office)
- Proof of graduation
 - Diploma or official document from the university of successful completion of studies, including information on course of study, grade, and date of completion
- Proof of health insurance
- Employment contract
- Proof of livelihood
 - (bank statement for the last three months, declaration of obligation by a guardian or sponsor, or similar)
- Completed form: Employment statement
- Fee: 93,-/98,- €

(further documentation may be required in some cases)

(This is a legally non-binding English translation for information purposes only. Please refer to the original German legal texts for comprehensive information.)