



**UNIVERSITÄT  
BIELEFELD**



**International Office**

## **Checklist for Studying Abroad**

### **Preliminary Considerations: 1 1/2 Years in Advance**

- Decision as to your choice of partial, full or postgraduate studies, or alternatively an internship or language course abroad, or perhaps instead of studying, a gap year for social work, au-pair work, work & travel, etc.?
- Check whether participation in an existing mobility programme (e.g. ERASMUS) is an available option – does my home university have any cooperation agreements which would make it easier to get to a host university?
  - [www.uni-bielefeld.de/io](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/io)
- Are my language skills sufficient and how can I improve them? Do I have to take a language exam?
  - e.g. TOEFL, IELTS, DELF/DALF or a DAAD language certificate
  - Language courses and exams in the University Language Centre:
    - [www.uni-bielefeld.de/fachsprachenzentrum](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/fachsprachenzentrum)
- Start gathering information (see below)

### **Studying in the Destination Country: 1 1/4 Years in Advance**

- The higher education system of the host country:
  - What types of higher education institutions are there?
  - What degree programmes are available?
  - How is the programme structured? (academic year, semester, trimester, examination period etc.)

### **Admission Requirements**

- Are there admission restrictions for certain subjects?
- What are the registration dates?
- Is a language or subject-related examination to be taken before commencing studies? (If yes: dates, location, requirements, period of validity)
  - e.g. for the USA: TOEFL and/or GRE test (Graduate Record Examination)
    - useful Infos at: <http://usa.fh-hannover.de/studtest.htm>

- For first-year students: Is the German higher education entrance qualification (general higher education entrance qualification, subject-related higher education entrance qualification, entrance qualification for studies at universities of applied sciences) recognised?
- For continued studies: How are previous course and examination achievements recognised (assessment abroad, credit points, ECTS)?

### **Recognition of Academic Achievements**

- What can be recognised? This question is crucial for planning your project and should in any event be clarified before departure.
- Which office is responsible for crediting and recognizing achievements?
  - Recognition according to the subject; either e.g. the ERASMUS coordinator or directly via the module coordinator
- What form of documentation is necessary for academic performance and examination achievements?

### **Costs and Financing: 1 Year in Advance**

- Are tuition fees applicable and if so, to what extent?
- How high is the cost of living and how expensive is accommodation?
- What funding options exist (scholarships, BAföG, study and education loans, charitable foundations)?
- Am I allowed to work in addition to my studies?

### **Administrative Preparations: 6 to 3 Months in Advance**

- What are the entry and residence regulations (visa)?
- What types of accommodation are available?
- Which documents are required for the application (e.g. translation of certificates, certified documents, expert opinions)?
- What deadlines must be met (e.g. application deadlines, language test date)?
- When do I have to apply for a leave of absence for the semester(s)?
  - A leave of absence can be applied for at the Registrar's Office. During leave of absence, no credits can be earned at Bielefeld University, but credits earned abroad can be recognised; the semester(s) will not be counted, the social contribution will be waived
  - [www.uni-bielefeld.de/studierendensekretariat](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/studierendensekretariat)
- Do I need additional health insurance and do I need other insurances (travel cancellation insurance, luggage insurance etc.)?
  - Often your own insurance company will provide cost-effective additional insurance for abroad
  - European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for people with statutory health insurance for European countries
  - International insurance through the DAAD or ADAC

- What vaccinations do I need and what medicines do I take with me (visit the doctor)?
  - Recommendations for individual countries can be found on the Federal Foreign Office website
    - [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Startseite\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Startseite_node.html)
- How can I manage my financial affairs (opening my own account abroad, international bank transfer, use of credit cards)? Do I need a foreign driving licence?
  - Ask your own bank whether there is a 'partner bank' abroad.
- Where can I get an "International Student Card"?
  - Can be requested from the ASTA office
- What issues do I need to clarify in my home country (giving notice or sub-letting a flat etc.)?
  - The International Office is always looking for accommodation for international students at Bielefeld University. Infos unter:
    - [wohnen-io@uni-bielefeld.de](mailto:wohnen-io@uni-bielefeld.de)
- Where can I get the cheapest tickets for travel?
- When do I say goodbye to family/friends?