

# A guide for international students

---

BACHELOR'S DEGREE COURSE APPLICATIONS  
AND ADMISSIONS AT HAW HAMBURG



---

Follow these 14 steps to your  
degree course with us!



**Why not take your first step into a successful future by applying to study at HAW Hamburg?**

---

## Welcome

---

Located at the heart of a fabulous, dynamic city which people from right across the globe call home, HAW Hamburg is Germany's fourth largest vocationally-focused higher education institution, with a wide range of Bachelor's and Master's degree courses on offer in subjects as diverse as engineering, business studies, life sciences, design, media and practice-based social sciences. We'd love to welcome you soon as one of our approximately 17,000 students.

Studying at HAW Hamburg means small classes, plenty of practical experience, and lecturers with strong track records in the real world of work. You'll benefit from teaching in accordance with the latest insights, innovative research methods, down-to-earth explanation of complex issues, and an environment where your ideas count – whether you want to design aeroplanes, develop computer games, care for people or conduct nutritional research. Our students and staff are looking forward to you joining us.

We've compiled this guide specially to help you, as an international student, navigate the application process for a place on a Bachelor's degree course at HAW Hamburg. Our Student Center teams are always on hand if you need a little extra help – you can contact us by email, give us a call, meet us at one of our information events, or make an appointment for a one-to-one chat.

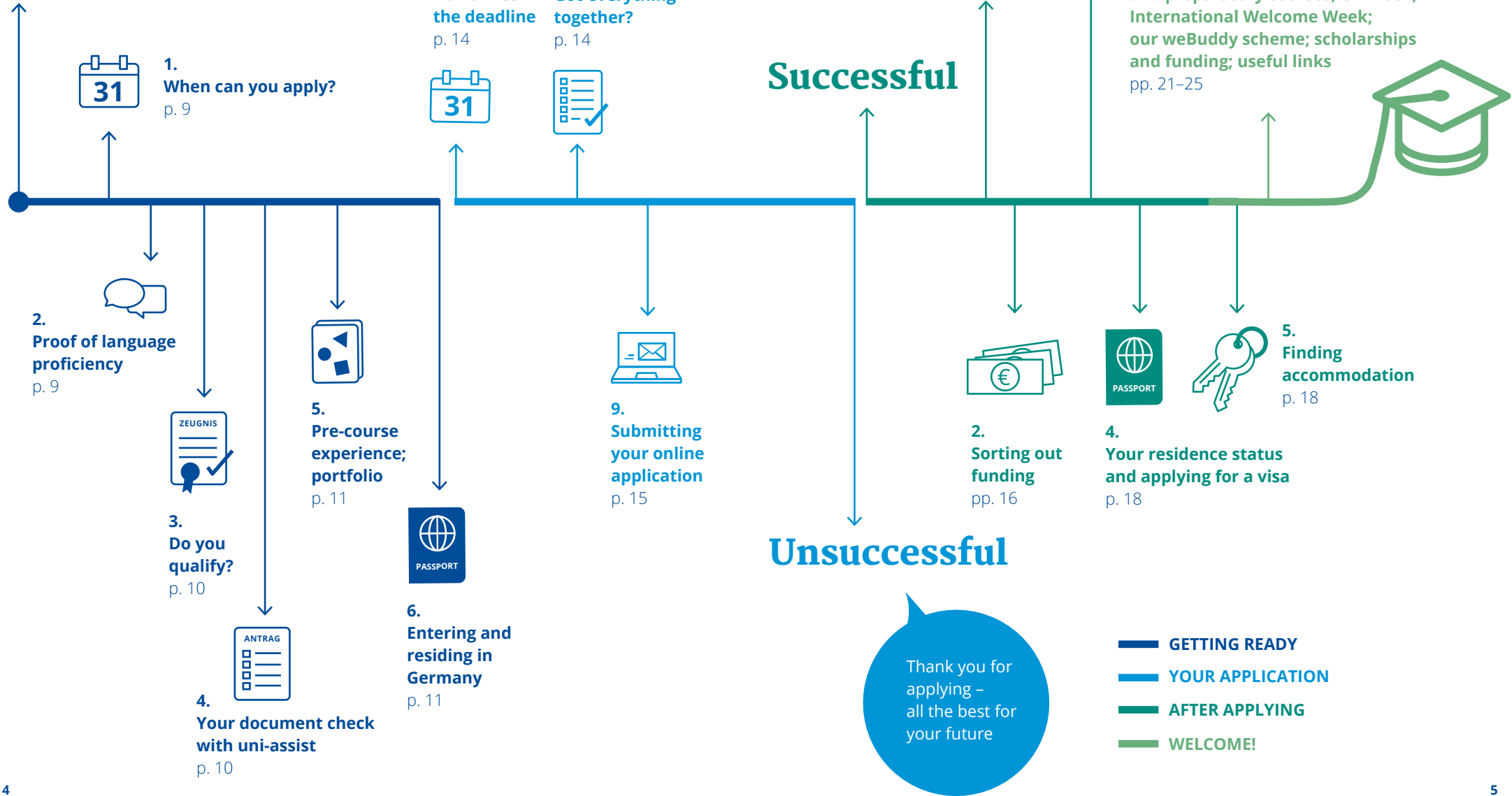
[Our Student Admissions and Registration Office](#) (Studierendensekretariat, StS) can help you on all admissions-related matters, while our [Student Counselling Team](#) (Zentrale Studienberatung, ZSB) can guide you in picking the course that's right for you. The [International Office](#) (IO) has all the answers on issues like funding your studies, residence permits, finding accommodation, life on campus, and language courses. If you are or have been a refugee, our [Centre for Migration Research and Integration Practice](#) offers courses and programmes to help you prepare for your studies and support with the transition to full student life.

Your application journey: ready, set, go!

# Contents



HAW Hamburg: who we are in 120 seconds  
HAW Hamburg in figures  
It's your choice  
pp. 6-8



# HAW Hamburg: all about us

HAW Hamburg is northern Germany's leading higher education institution with a focus on real-world, sustainable solutions to today's and tomorrow's societal challenges, undergirded by academic reflection and first-class research. Delivering outstanding degree courses via top-quality teaching is our key priority and commitment to our students, and we are also currently consolidating our growing research reputation. People from over 100 nations across the globe are shaping our institutional present and future – we believe that our diversity is our strength.

**HAW HAMBURG:  
WHO WE ARE  
IN 120 SECONDS**



<https://youtu.be/q0h5lomi5sw>

## HAW HAMBURG IN FIGURES

**37**

Bachelor's degree courses to choose from (three in cooperative form and a further ten available as cooperative programmes)

**3**

Bachelor's degree courses run jointly with the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology

**35**

Master's degree courses (including four continuing education courses)

approximately  
**17,000**

students

almost

**170**

partnerships with higher education institutions worldwide

about  
**2,200**  
international students from over 100 countries

**412**

professors

**468**

employed research and teaching lecturers

**552**

technical and administrative staff

(Figures correct as of winter semester 2022/23)

## IT'S YOUR CHOICE

### HAW Hamburg:

We don't run entrance examinations, unless you're interested in a course in our Design department. We'll assess your application on the basis of your academic qualifications to date, backed up by your exam certificates or official school grade reports, and other documents. But there are a few things you'll need to think about before you begin your application. Read this guide carefully to find out how to prepare and how to make sure your application shows us your qualifications and abilities.

**Sara:**  
I know what degree course I want to do. How do I apply?

### HAW Hamburg:

Good choice! Do you know which field you want to study in? Are you thinking of a specific [degree course](#)? Or aren't you sure yet which courses might suit you? Why don't you try out our [HAW Degree Course Navigator](#) or come and [have a face-to-face chat](#)? We're sure to find answers together.

**Ahmad:**  
I'd like to study at HAW Hamburg.

### \*Proof of English for the Information Engineering degree course:

– A recognised language test:	– A degree completed in English
Test Minimum Score	
BULATS 65	– A degree completed in a majority English-speaking country
Cambridge FCE grade B	
CAE	– A year of study successfully completed at a university
CPE	in a majority English-speaking country (as defined by the <a href="#">UK Home Office</a> : Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, New Zealand, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, USA)
IELTS 6.0	
Pearson PTE General level	– The general university entrance qualification from
3 PTE Academic 59	a secondary school in Germany with a score of at least
TELC English B2	8 points in English
English B2-C1	
University	
TOEFL IBT 87	
(Institution PBT 550	
Code: 8226) CBT 220	

## LET'S GET GOING! – THE FIRST 10 STEPS TO YOUR DEGREE COURSE

# Getting ready



## 1. WHEN CAN YOU APPLY?

You'll need to choose a specific degree course and find out when the application period for that course is. You can check this on our [website](#). Application periods are usually:

- for winter semester: **1 June–15 July**
- for summer semester: **1 December–15 January**
- Please note: The application periods for non-EU applicants for the **Information Engineering** degree course are **1 April to 31 May and 1 October to 30 November**.



## 2. PROOF OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

For your application to be accepted, you'll need to prove that you have achieved the required language competency level in the course language ([German](#) or [English](#)). You can check the course language in the information on your chosen degree course published on our [website](#). See the information box on the left for details for our Bachelor in Information Engineering.\*

You may need to take a test of your language proficiency. The test will need to take place at least one month before the application period opens, so that you can receive your certificate in enough time to submit it online with your application. Make sure you check when the test you need takes place.

**NB:** Admission to degree courses offered by our Design department is subject to your score in a [test of artistic aptitude](#), which takes place before the application period starts. Make sure you check dates and deadlines!

**All in good time:** You'll need to start planning for your application at least three months before the application period opens.



### 3. DO YOU QUALIFY?

If you want to study at a higher education institution in Germany, you'll need what's called a Hochschulzugangsberechtigung (HZB) – a school-leaving qualification which is accepted for admission to a degree course in Germany. The [anabin](#) database will tell you whether your school-leaving qualification is accepted by German higher education institutions. If it says you will need to go through a Feststellungsprüfung/ Studienkolleg, this means you will have to take an extra preparatory year before being allowed to study for a degree course in Germany. You can do this either in Germany, at a recognised [Studienkolleg](#), or at a university in your home country, where you will need to study for at least two semesters.

If you completed your schooling in China or Vietnam, you will additionally have to have your documents checked by the academic screening service ( [Akademischen Prüfstelle](#), APS) of the German embassies in Peking, Shanghai or Hanoi. You'll need a certified copy of the APS certificate for your next step in the application process.

### 4. YOUR DOCUMENT CHECK WITH UNI-ASSIST

You will need to request what is known as preliminary review documentation (Vorprüfungsdokumentation, VPD) from [uni-assist](#), an organisation which checks qualification documents from outside Germany for German higher education institutions. They will check whether your academic qualifications permit you to study at HAW Hamburg, and will also map your final grade/s onto the German grading system so you and we know the level of achievement which your grades are equivalent to. It can take up to eight weeks for uni-assist to check your documents, so you should make sure to apply for your VPD at least two months before the application period for your chosen course opens. You get your VPD by following these steps:

- Have the certificate confirming your school-leaving qualifications (and your Bachelor's degree certificate, if applicable) translated into German or English and a certified copy of the certificate and the translation made. You can find certified ('beeidigte') translators working in Germany here: <https://search.bdue.de/>
- Register for the [VPD procedure](#); make sure you read all the relevant information carefully before entering your data. Then pay the [administration fee](#).
- Send your certified copies of your certificates and their translations to uni-assist in Berlin. Their address is on their website.



### 5. PRE-COURSE EXPERIENCE; PORTFOLIO

Some HAW Hamburg degree courses require you to have completed up to 13 weeks of pre-course experience. You'll need to demonstrate a minimum of 9 to 13 weeks of experience relevant to the course of your choice, which will help you gain insights into the fields most closely related to your future studies.

Make sure you check the [information](#) on your chosen course on the HAW Hamburg website; if you have any questions, the appropriate advisor will be happy to help you. Pre-course experience provides you with a basic level of practical experience which you will be able to expand on during your degree course. It also, in fields where it is not mandatory, makes your application more likely to succeed and will put you at an advantage once you're enrolled on your course – students who haven't done

13 weeks of pre-course experience will have to complete this requirement by their fourth semester.

If you would like to study for a creative arts degree in our [Design department](#), you will need to submit a portfolio of between 20 and 30 examples of your work, such as monochrome or coloured drawings or sketches. The portfolio forms part of the test of artistic aptitude you will need to pass.



### 6. ENTERING AND RESIDING IN GERMANY

If you are from a non-EU country, you will need to make an appointment for a visa application as soon as you have entered into the process of applying to HAW Hamburg. It may take up to three months for your visa to be approved and issued. We recommend you start this process as soon as you can, to ensure that you will be able to travel to Germany in time for the start of your course. You'll need initially to apply for a student applicant visa (*Visum zur Studienbewerbung*), which you can later convert to a student visa (*Visum zu Studienzwecken*). A useful link with information on the process is [here](#).

**Note:** Some institutions use uni-assist for their entire applications and admissions procedures. HAW Hamburg doesn't; all uni-assist does is issue the VPD. You apply online directly to HAW Hamburg.



**People from more  
than 100 countries  
help make  
HAW Hamburg  
what it is, and our  
diversity is our  
particular strength.**

---

# Your application



## 7. DON'T MISS THE DEADLINE

You can only apply within specific application periods (see step 1 on page 9). It's better to check application periods and deadlines once too often than to overlook something and miss a deadline. We can't make exceptions for late applications!

## 8. GOT EVERYTHING TOGETHER?

Check that you have all the documents you need for your application (including your VPD from uni-assist, your proof of language proficiency, etc.). Here's a [checklist](#) to help you. If you are from a non-EU country, you can increase your chances of a place by submitting additional documents online, such as a letter of motivation, your CV, transcripts of prior studies at institutions of higher education, certificates of completed practical experience, and work references. The checklist lists factors that increase your score in our assessment system for international applications.

EU applicants need to do the [HAW Degree Course Navigator self-assessment](#) before applying. These online self-tests relate to a range of different degree courses. We don't assess or rate the results.

All applicants should check whether their chosen degree course participates in the [Hochschulstart](#) procedure. Hochschulstart is an online gateway which helps German higher education institutions coordinate their admissions processes. Click on this [link](#) to find out, and follow the instructions there.



## 9. SUBMITTING YOUR ONLINE APPLICATION

Fill in our [online application form](#), upload all your documents, and then send it off. The link to the form is at the bottom of the page. Make sure you remember your application number and password, as you will need these later on too. **Please note:** The online application gateway is only open during application periods.

**NB:** When you register with Hochschulstart, you will be assigned two registration numbers which you will need later in the process. Don't lose them! Make sure you are using the same email address for all procedures relating to your application, so that your online application can link up to Hochschulstart and the Degree Course Navigator.

**Good luck!  
Daumen drücken!\***

\* 'Holding your thumbs' (Daumen drücken) is the way you wish someone luck in Germany.



# After applying



## 1. ACCEPTING YOUR PLACE

Once you have submitted your online application, our colleagues in the Student Admissions and Registration Office will check it carefully and process it. We receive several thousand applications each semester, so this may take some time. There is also an admissions committee for non-EU applicants made up of a range of HAW Hamburg members, whose job it is to choose applicants for the available places. Please be patient and understand that this process takes time. As soon as your application has been decided upon, you will receive notification to check your application account in the myHAW system, for which you'll need your login data from step 9 of the application procedure.

If you're among those who receive an offer of a place, you will need to accept it within a specific timeframe, by filling in the acceptance form (don't forget to sign it!)

and submitting any further documents requested – the Student Admissions and Registration Office will tell you if this is the case and what you need to submit. You'll also need to pay your [semester contribution](#). If you don't accept your place within the specified period, it will go to someone on the waiting list.



## 2. SORTING OUT FUNDING

You'll need to consider carefully how you are going to [fund](#) your course. Part of the visa application process involves proving you have sufficient funds (in a blocked account, via a scholarship or someone else's formal declaration that they will support you). You will require funds of around 11,000 Euro per year for expenses like your rent, your health insurance (see below), food, your semester ticket, and so on. You will be allowed to undertake paid work for a few hours per week, but you need to remember that your studies will take up a lot of your time and you may not find a suitable job immediately.



## 3. HEALTH INSURANCE – A MUST

You need proof of adequate health insurance to register at a German higher education institution. Your insurance should meet the standard stipulated by Hamburg's *Ausländerbehörde* (office for residents of non-German nationality). If you are privately insured, your insurer should complete a [certification of private health insurance coverage](#) to submit to the *Ausländerbehörde*.

You will need to submit confirmation of health insurance when enrolling as a student of HAW Hamburg. EU students who wish to remain with their home system or insurer will need to present their European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) to a German state health insurer, such as the Techniker Krankenkasse or AOK, which will then issue a *Befreiungsbescheinigung* (confirmation of exemption).

If you are from a non-EU country, you can present proof of travel health insurance when enrolling, but you will need to take out German health insurance within two months of your arrival in Germany. We strongly recommend you choose a state (as opposed to private) health insurer.

If you do choose a private insurer, you will need to additionally go to a state health insurer, show them proof of your private policy, and get a *Befreiungsbescheinigung* (confirmation of exemption), which you then submit to the Student Admissions and Registration Office. You can only get a *Befreiungsbescheinigung* in the first two months after you enrol at HAW Hamburg. If you miss this deadline, you may be deregistered, which will invalidate your visa or residence permit. (You'll need to prove health insurance to get a residence permit – see below).

**NB:** Private and travel health insurance policies often fail to meet this standard. We recommend that international students take out [state health insurance](#) (*gesetzliche Krankenversicherung, GKV*). Make sure you are able to cover the premium, which in the case of GKV will be around 95 Euro a month. If you don't pay for two months running, your insurer may inform us and we may be forced to deregister you, which will lead to the loss of your student status and consequently of your residence permit. In other words, your insurance will be one of your most essential bills while you are in Germany.



## 4. YOUR RESIDENCE STATUS AND APPLYING FOR THE CORRECT VISA

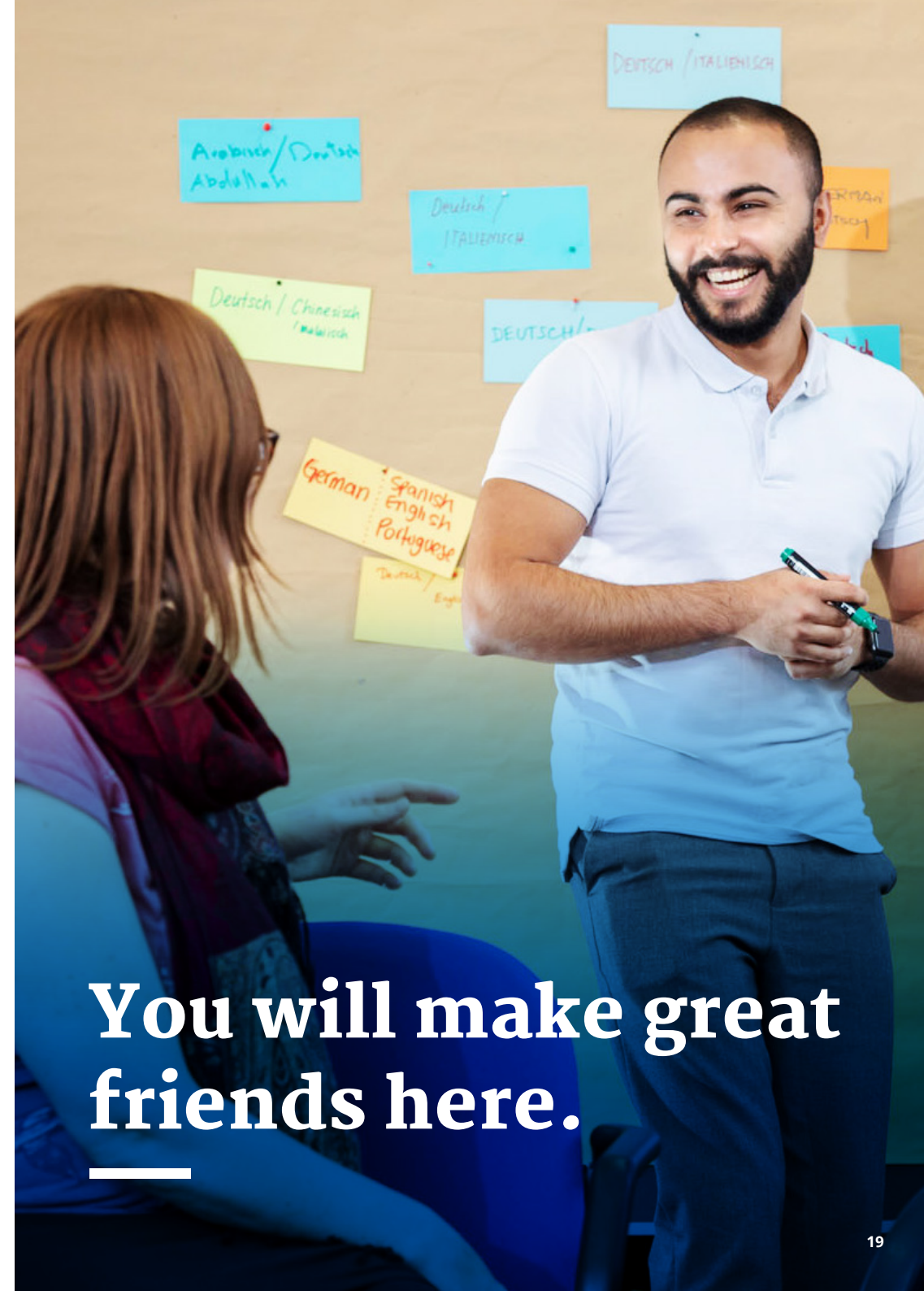
Students from EU countries don't need a [visa or residence permit](#) to study in Germany, but they do (as do all Germans) need to register their address with their local *Einwohnermeldeamt*, which in Hamburg may be called a 'customer service centre'. Students from outside the EU will need a residence permit in order to study in Germany. If you already have a student applicant visa (*Visum zur Studienbewerbung*) (see step 6 on page 11), you will now be able to convert it into a student visa (*Visum zu Studienzwecken*). If you don't have any visa or residence permit yet, make an appointment as soon as possible with your nearest [German Embassy or German Consulate-General](#).



## 5. FINDING ACCOMMODATION

Start looking as early as possible for [somewhere to live](#) during your course. It's very difficult indeed to find affordable accommodation in Hamburg. You should register your interest in a room in the student residences (*Studentenwohnheime*) run by the [Studierendenwerk](#) as soon as you've sent off your application for a place at HAW Hamburg, because waiting lists are often up to six months long. You should also look for private rentals or rooms in privately rented shared flats or houses (called *Wohngemeinschaften*, or WGs). But never pay for a viewing and never transfer money to a landlord, prospective flatmate or agent until both you and they have signed a rental agreement. Ensure you understand the contract's terms and ask the International Office or the AStA (HAW Hamburg's student representation body) for help if you're worried.

When you have registered your address with the *Einwohnermeldeamt*, which you need to do within two weeks of arriving in Hamburg, you will be given a *Meldebescheinigung* (proof of address, or proof of residence). This is an important document; you will need it for a lot of things as you set up your life in Hamburg, such as getting a mobile phone contract, sorting out health insurance, opening a bank account or accessing your blocked account. The *Meldebescheinigung* confirms that you have a fixed, registered address in Germany.



You will make great friends here.

# Welcome! Your future starts here.



## GETTING STARTED

### GETTING STARTED

Now you've arrived in Germany, are enrolled on your degree course with us, and have sorted out all the formalities – time to turn your attention to your studies.

### YOUR TIMETABLE AND PREPARATORY COURSES

Shortly before the start of the new semester, your department will publish timetables and details of preparatory courses and induction and orientation events on their [website](#). Make sure you check your HAW Hamburg email regularly, because you will receive important information this way.

**Please note** for the Information Engineering degree course: A preparatory course in mathematics will be offered at the beginning of September. Make sure to sign up for it.

### OE WEEK

Each department puts on its own induction events, called Orientierungseinheiten (OEs). First-semester students on Bachelor's degree courses have detailed OEs that last about a week (hence the name 'OE Week') and include information briefings, events to help you to get to know other students and staff, lectures and talks, faculty tours and leisure activities.

### INTERNATIONAL WELCOME WEEK

[The International Welcome Week](#) takes place a week before the OE events. It gives you the chance to meet students from other faculties and home nations, explore Hamburg, and find out important information on issues relating to your degree course and your residence in Germany.

### OUR WEBUDDY SCHEME

[weBuddy](#) is a scheme that matches international students just starting their courses at HAW Hamburg with a 'buddy' – a more advanced student from the same faculty. Your buddy can help you find your feet here, answer any questions you might have, and support you in building your social life. There are numerous events each semester for participants in the scheme, helping you get to know people and perhaps make new friends.

### SCHOLARSHIPS AND FUNDING

If you do well in your course, get good grades and are involved in supporting intercultural life at HAW Hamburg in particular or in Hamburg in general, you are eligible to apply for an academic scholarship ([Leistungsstipendium](#)) or an 'Engagement-Stipendium' for international students committed to helping others.



**We are here  
to help!**

---

# Useful links

---

## General information for international applicants and students

<https://www.haw-hamburg.de/en/international/international-students/>

## HAW Hamburg's Facebook page for international students

[bit.ly/HAWHHFacebook-Seite](https://www.facebook.com/HAWHHFacebook-Seite)

**Information on admissions, admissions quotas, and admission criteria at HAW Hamburg (in German)\*:** <https://www.haw-hamburg.de/fileadmin/Studium/Studierendensekretariat/PDF/Vergabeverfahren.pdf>

## Information on student finance and funding, scholarships/support, and the HAW Hamburg semester contribution

<https://www.haw-hamburg.de/en/study/tuition-fees-living-expenses-and-scholarships/>

## Our faculties and departments

<https://www.haw-hamburg.de/en/university/>

## Dates of semesters and teaching periods (in German)

(A semester is the higher education term for half of the calendar year; there is the winter semester (1 September–28/29 February) and the summer semester (1 March–31 August). Within these, there are teaching periods (*Vorlesungszeiten*).

The rest of the time is known as the *vorlesungsfreie Zeit*)

<https://www.haw-hamburg.de/en/study/organising-your-studies/>

## Forms for registering your address and applying for a residence permit

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

## Finding the appropriate Hamburg authority for your needs (in German)

[bit.ly/Behördenfinder-Hamburg](https://www.behördenfinder-hamburg.de/)

## Studierendenwerk website

(where you can register for a room in a student residence and find out about studying and living in Hamburg)

<https://www.studierendenwerk-hamburg.de/en/>

## Browse ads for rooms in shared flats/houses here

[bit.ly/Wohngemeinschaften](https://www.bit.ly/Wohngemeinschaften)

## Website of Hamburg's public transport service (HVV), with timetables, network and journey planner

<https://www.hvv.de/en>

\* The information in this link is valid only for *Bildungsausländer\*innen*, that is, school leavers without German citizenship who attained their *Hochschulzugangsberechtigung* in Germany via the regular route (not at a *Studienkolleg*), and for citizens of EU states.

## WHERE TO GET ADVICE ON STUDYING AT HAW HAMBURG AND CHOOSING A COURSE

---

### → Student Counselling Team

Rooms 121/122

Stiftstraße 69 / 20099 Hamburg

T +49 151 212 548 93

studienberatung@haw-hamburg.de

Telephone counselling hours:

Mondays and Tuesdays 10 am – 1 pm

Thursdays 1 pm – 5 pm

## INFORMATION ON APPLICATIONS, ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENT

---

### → Student Admissions and Registration Office

Ground floor

Stiftstraße 69 / 20099 Hamburg

T +49 40 428 75 - 9898

studierendensekretariat@haw-hamburg.de

For information on current office and opening hours please see

→ [haw-hamburg.de/en/study/contact-form/contact-information/](https://haw-hamburg.de/en/study/contact-form/contact-information/)

All reasonable care has been taken to ensure the information in this guide is correct.

Most recent update: October 2022

Student Center HAW Hamburg

Picture credits:

p. 2, pp. 12–13, p. 19 and pp. 22–23:

David Ausserhofer/HAW Hamburg

Design: Sandra Spitzer



**HOCHSCHULE FÜR ANGEWANDTE  
WISSENSCHAFTEN HAMBURG**

Hamburg University of Applied Sciences

---

**HAW-HAMBURG.DE**