



HANDBOOK

for International Students



Hallo!

Welcome to your guide full of helpful information for starting at Osnabrück University.

We hope it makes your journey exciting and easy!



UNIVERSITÄT
OSNABRÜCK

ASTA



DISCLAIMER

This handbook is part of a voluntary project by current international students of Osnabrück University. We want to share our own experiences with new fellow students in order to facilitate their arrival in Osnabrück.

Hence, **THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT OF OSNABRÜCK UNIVERSITY and NO WARRANTY** is given that all information is correct. We nevertheless believe that the information provided here will be very helpful for new international students because it is written from the perspective of international students.

Note:

- We strongly encourage you to log in to Discord if it is accessible in your country, as we provide a comprehensive list of updated and pertinent information there, which also includes the information found in this handbook.
- <https://discord.com/invite/bqQNDsHAZ2>
- Additionally, information regarding life in Osnabrück - such as obtaining a residence permit, purchasing a SIM card, opening a bank account, extending your visa, and navigating the process of studying at Osnabrueck University (including registering for courses and exams) can be found and maintained in our Discord community or on the UOS website.



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I. Overview- Checklist after receiving your admission & enrolment letter

Search for accommodation (after admission)

- You can register the dormitory room even before finishing your university enrollment as long as you have the university admission.
- University official guide: <https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/prospective-students/international-prospective-students/service/looking-for-a-room/>
- please note: there is no guarantee that you get a room offer even if you pay the registration fee

Enrol in University

- Pay the tuition fee through your German bank account
- Submit all required documents

Activate your StudIP account as mentioned in the welcome letter you received (after enrolment)

- studip.uni-osnabrueck.de/dispatch.php/start
- Check the "Notice board" for room advertisements and second-hand items for sale, among other things.
- Review upcoming courses to prepare for them.

Log in to your Sogo email

- sogo.uni-osnabrueck.de/SOGGo/so/
- Always check it frequently. A lot of emails will not be notified on StudIP.

Register for the German course (Completely free for students of University)

- General information here: www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/university/service-facilities/language-center/learning-languages/german-as-a-foreign-language/

Find an OSKA mentor (Who can support you in the 1st semester) _ optional

- Read more about the program here: www.uni-osnabrueck.de/studieninteressierte/studienbeginn/oska-a-mentoring-zum-studienstart/

I. Checklist after receiving your admission letter

Search for accommodation - Apply for the dorm

*the dormitories are not part of the university. They are handled by the "Studentenwerk".

Register for the dormitory as soon as possible.

- University official guide: <https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/prospective-students/international-prospective-students/service/looking-for-a-room/>
- Studentenwerk guide: <https://www.studentenwerk-osnabrueck.de/en/housing/online-application.html>
- Here you can apply for a place in a student dorm. Please notice that in the apartments men and women live together but in separate bed rooms. Alternatively, you can ask for a list of private housing providers.
- Wir Quartier (provided by Studentenwerk) are dorms in exchange for help, but you still get on a waiting list. More information and registration via [studentenwerk-osnabrueck.de](https://www.studentenwerk-osnabrueck.de)

Detailed steps:

1. Register link: <https://www.studentenwerk-osnabrueck.de/en/housing/online-application/application-form.html>
2. Choose language: English in the right corner.
3. Fill in the information:
 - Location of Uni: Osnabrueck
 - Desired rental properties: depending on you, most common is option a & b.
 - Choose 3 places that you want to stay (Choose 3 options to have higher chance to get a room in dormitory)
 - Move in date: choose the semester you want to move in, the date will be set automatically. (In case, you want a room within your current semester, choose in the current semester from the date you want)
 - Your personal information
 - Data about your study course
 - Address (home): information about your home country address
 - Address (term time): fill your temporary/ friends/.. address or address that you will stay at when you come to Germany before receiving the room
 - Attach file scan of your passport and certificate of enrolment (If this is not possible for whatever reason, please mail your certificate of enrolment to: wohnen@sw-os.de → also possible at a later date)
4. Enter the security code.
5. Agree with data privacy agreement and send. Don't forget take a screenshot of the Studentenwerk Bank account information for you to send the 10 euro application fee after that.
6. Send 10 euro to Studentenwerk Bank account information that you saved. Your application is only validated when Studentenwerk receives your payment. *Please note that the application fee does not mean a guaranteed room offer at the dorm!

I. Checklist after receiving your admission letter

Search for accommodation - Apply for the dorm

7. After you register successfully, you will receive:

- An email to record the information you have submitted, immediately after your submission
- An email confirms that Studentenwerk has received your 10 euro application fee. This email will come later, maybe 1-3 working days.
- They'll put you on the waiting list for your chosen housing complex from your requested moving-in date.
- If a room becomes available for the specified period, they'll send you an email containing further information and a tenancy agreement for signing.
- If no accommodation is available at that time, you'll remain on the waiting list for four weeks.
- If you're still interested in finding accommodation with Studentenwerk, you have to send an email to follow up with your registration to let them know before the four weeks are up. Otherwise they'll assume that your application is no longer valid (wohnen@sw-os.de)

Important things to note when dealing with the Studentenwerk:

- Keep an eye on your email, as the Studentenwerk will communicate with you through this channel. Check your inbox frequently.
- Be prepared to make a deposit before receiving your room. This is a common requirement (Deposit for a furnished room: 600EUR, less for an unfurnished room)
- Read all the terms and conditions carefully, and make sure to sign all required documents.
- Note that the rent includes operating fees such as heating, electricity, internet, and water.
- You need to schedule an appointment with Studentenwerk's janitor in charge of your complex to receive your room key. Keep in mind that they only work on weekdays until Friday noon time, and not on Saturdays and Sundays.

I. Checklist after receiving your admission letter

Search for accommodation - Other options

Some links to organisations where you could find an apartment:

1. Wohnen für Hilfe: <https://www.wfho.de/>

- They arrange apartments for which in return students help in the household and other chores (German skills are recommended).

2. Non-profits and other actors

- Diakonie Osnabrück Stadt und Land: <https://www.diakonie-os.de/angebote/fluechtlingsarbeit-migration/international-studierende.html>. They offer consultation services for international students in difficult life situations.
- Experiment e.V.: low-cost accommodation (40€ per month) in host families
- Alevitic community: <https://www.avicenna-studienwerk.de/>
- for refugees and asylum seekers: <https://zusammenleben-willkommen.de/#beratung>

3. Shared living

- Anyone looking for a quick temporary solution can find what they are looking for at the Osnabrück-based "Mitwohnzentrale Zweitraum". It arranges short-term co-housing opportunities.
- Fees are charged depending on the length of the lease and the amount of rent.

4. (Private) Housing market

- wg-gesucht.de
- kleinanzeigen.de (be careful, there are quite a lot of scams on this page)
- immobilien.noz.de On Wednesdays and Saturdays, apartments are offered in the newspaper's housing market of the Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung (NOZ), both online and in the paper.
- Housing offers and requests can be published online on the University's black board: schwarzesbrett.uni-osnabrueck.de (please search under Wohnungen -> Biete) Or log in on your studIP, under <https://studip.uni-osnabrueck.de/plugins.php/schwarzesbrettplugin/category/view/>
- Tips: After you get your student account from university, login to StudIP (<https://studip.uni-osnabrueck.de/dispatch.php/start>) asap then you can find some people looking for roommates on the Black Board.

5. University official guide:

- <https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/prospective-students/international-prospective-students/service/looking-for-a-room/>

6. AStA Bettenbörse/bed surfing - ONLY ACTIVE WHEN THE DEMAND IS HIGH

- Offers an emergency spot on a couch/bed/mattress to stay for the first weeks while searching for an apartment (limited availability).
- Only online before the start of each semester - ask the AStA if it's currently available

I. Checklist after receiving your admission letter

Search for accommodation - Tips

Temporary housing options:

- When you first arrive in Germany, you can contact your own country student associations in the city you're going to and inquire if anyone can host you for a few nights.
- You can also consider renting a room on Airbnb or finding short-term rentals (Zwischenmiete). Note that these options may not allow you to register your residence (Anmeldung). If you choose Zwischenmiete, make sure to clarify the terms with the landlord.

Common types of accommodation for students:

- The most common type of accommodation for students in Germany is a single room (Einzelzimmer) in a Wohngemeinschaft (WG), which is a shared flat. In a WG, each tenant has a private room while sharing the kitchen and bathroom. Some higher-end WGs may offer single rooms with private bathrooms. You can find WG listings online or consider renting an apartment with friends to form a WG. Student dormitories usually offer WG-style accommodations as well, along with other options like studio apartments or apartments for couples.

Challenging months for finding accommodation:

- The months of September, October, and November are particularly challenging for finding accommodation in Germany, especially in cities with a high student population. Many students start their studies during this period, and there is a high demand for WG-style housing.

When to start searching:

- If you haven't arrived in Germany yet, the chances of securing accommodation remotely are quite low. Renting in Germany often requires in-person visits and discussions with landlords or current tenants (common in WGs). It's advisable to prepare in advance.

Applying for waiting lists at student housing:

- Before arriving, you can apply to the waiting lists (Warteliste) of student dormitories without needing to prove your student status. Waiting times vary depending on the city, ranging from a few days to several months or even years.

I. Checklist after receiving your admission letter

Search for accommodation - Tips

Researching rental prices:

- Before you arrive, research rental prices in the city you're heading to. You can use websites like wg-gesucht, ebay kleinanzeigen, or immobilienscout to get an idea of the rental market.

Considering outskirts of the city:

- Living in the city center can be competitive. However, Germany's excellent public transportation network often extends to the outskirts. Use Google Maps to estimate commuting times from potential housing locations to the city center. Compare the prices of accommodations in different areas.

Writing a letter of interest (Anschreiben) for apartment viewings:

- Treat your apartment search like a job application. Write a letter of interest in German, similar to a cover letter. Introduce yourself, your studies, and your plans in Germany. Address specific requirements from the rental listing. Include your desired move-in date and contact information.

Viewing the apartment:

- Check nearby amenities such as public transportation, supermarkets, and pharmacies. Examine the condition of the walls and floors for cracks and document them. Test all utilities, windows, and doors. Inquire about the heating system and proper ventilation techniques to prevent mold.

Reviewing the rental contract:

- Thoroughly read and understand the rental contract. Pay attention to specifics such as the security deposit, termination conditions, and responsibilities. Clarify any uncertainties with the landlord. → **Attention: Documents will always be in German!**

Seeking help if needed:

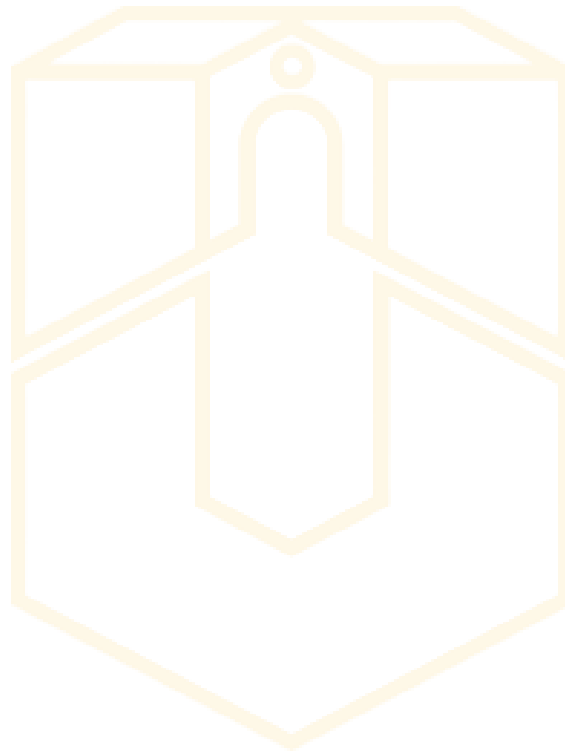
- If your search proves difficult, reach out to your university's AStA (student association) or International Office. AStA may provide temporary accommodations and information on housing resources.

Remember, finding accommodation in Germany requires patience and thorough research. Be proactive, prepared, and open to various housing options to increase your chances of success.

I. Checklist after receiving your admission letter

Search for accommodation - Scam Alert

- Please be aware of possible scams while searching for accommodation in Germany
- Be cautious of any room rental offers where the owner is not currently residing in Germany. These are often scams and should be approached with caution.
- If you receive a response to an accommodation search posted on eBay or other sites and the landlord claims to arrange a viewing through TripAdvisor, Airbnb, or any other similar service, be aware that this is not a legitimate service offered by these companies.
- Before signing a contract, always insist on viewing the apartment either in person or through a video call. **Do not pay any deposit beforehand.**



I. Checklist after receiving your admission letter

Enroll in University

The process of enrolling at Osnabrueck University typically involves the following steps (although they may vary depending on the student).

After submission of all required documents to the university as they mention in the admission letter & pay tuition fee, you will receive an email with all the necessary information to log in to StudIP, which is a software platform used to register for courses and access university-related information.

- Note that: **This account will be activated after 24 hours.**
- Contact: Students Office (studentsoffice@uos.de)

Upload your photo on StudIP when you receive your StudIP account (which is guided in the email).

When you arrive in Osnabrück, visit Building 19 as soon as possible to obtain your student card. With this card, you can use most of the public transportation in Lower Saxony for free thanks to the Niedersachsen Semesterticket. You can contact the AStA if you have questions about the ticket and its use.

* Pay tuition fee for the first semester

- Option 1: Go to the bank in your country and send the money to Osnabrueck Uni's account (be aware of possible charges of your bank for international transfers).
- Option 2: Ask a friend in Germany to pay for you first, then pay back the money when you come to Germany.
- If you have any issues when transferring your money to the University's bank account (for example: wrong reason for payment, you can send an email to studierendensekretariat@uni-osnabrueck.de)

I. Checklist after receiving your enrolment letter

Register for the German courses and other languages courses

Register for a German course (Completely free for students of University)

- If you want to study **A1.1**, send an email as soon as possible. Check the recipient email in "Read more" File in <https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/university/service-facilities/language-center/news-and-events/> and check the registration process.
- If you have a **higher German level**, check the date to participate in the assessment test. Check the date here: <https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/university/service-facilities/language-center/news-and-events/>
- You can also get the sample test by following their guidance.
- If you have German certificates, Send a copy of the certificate the recipient email in "Read more" File in <https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/university/service-facilities/language-center/news-and-events/>
- If you have questions you can also contact Claudia Nathaus (language center): claudia.nathaus@uni-osnabrueck.de

Register for other languages class:

- If you want to study other languages, for example: Spanish, French,... , check out this website for course details: <https://www.uni-osnabrueck.de/en/university/service-facilities/language-center/learning-languages/foreign-languages-for-general-and-professional-purposes/#c276386>
- These courses are taught in German.
- Check discord for detailed guidance.
- You can also contact Jan-Heinrich Brockmann (language center): jan.heinrich.brockmann@uni-osnabrueck.de
- Please note: voluntary/ additional language courses are subject to a fee

II. Some practical information

Entering Germany with a Visa

In order to register with the city of Osnabrück, you will have to make an appointment at the Bürgeramt. Please use the following link to access the online appointment system: https://timeacle.com/business/index/id/332/row_id/299

Please make sure to have the following documents with you:

- Accommodation provider confirmation
- Copy of valid passport (all pages containing content, e.g. stamps, etc.)

You will receive your registration confirmation straight after the appointment. The confirmation is needed to open a bank account.

If your visa expires before the end of your stay, you will also have to apply for a residence permit. The following documents are required:

- Biometric passport photo (can be taken at the Foreigner's Office) proof of health insurance
- Enrollment certificate
- proof of sufficient funding (e.g. bank statements, blocked account, proof of scholarship, declaration of commitment or similar)
- Fee 100€ (free of charge for holders of a German scholarship; in this case, please submit corresponding proof)

Note:

- At the beginning of each semester, both Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and Osnabrück University organise a group appointment for new international students that have entered Germany without a visa or with a short-term visa in cooperation with the Foreigners' Office. We strongly recommend that you attend this appointment to complete your registration formalities! Dates will be published on both universities' websites in advance.
- In case you cannot attend the group appointment, you will have to make an individual appointment with the foreigners' office. Please send an e-mail containing your full name, date of birth and purpose of your request at abh@osnabrueck.de. Please note: To obtain an individual appointment may take some time.

II. Some practical information

Insurance

As a student in Germany you must have your public health insurance for enrolment. Without the confirmation of public health insurance, studies are not possible. The insurance company will submit this directly to the university.

→ Important for Exchange Students from the European Union: Students from EU countries, who are already insured in their home country, do not have to be insured in Germany. You can directly go to see the doctor with your European-Health-Insurance-Card (EHIC). Please send a copy of your valid EHIC to a public insurance provider.

You can check the insurance below to decide which one is most suitable for you.

Public Insurances (Examples):

- Only apply for students under 30 years
- For example:
- AOK: www.aok.de/pk/
- TK: www.tk.de/en
- Barmer: www.barmer.de/en
- For a full overview, please check: gkv-spitzenverband.de

Private Insurances:

- Students who are older than 30: If you are not a member of the EU you are not able to get into german Public-Insurance.
- For students above 30 years. After you buy the private insurance, you will need to send an email to a public insurance provider such as TK or AOK, **requesting them to issue an exemption from mandatory health insurance and send a notification to the university regarding your exemption from German statutory health insurance.**
- Note: If you choose private insurance, it's important to note that you will not be able to switch back to a public health insurance. While public insurance may be more expensive, it provides coverage for a wider range of medical services, including accidents and severe diseases. On the other hand, public insurances do not offer coverage for certain luxury services such as laser treatments, botox, fillers, and similar procedures
- For example:
 - AXA www.axa.de
 - Care Concept AG www.care-concept.de/berlin
 - Continentale (DAAD insurance) <https://www.daad.de/de/studieren-und-forschen-in-deutschland/studium-planen/krankenversicherung/>
 - Hanse-Merkur Reiseversicherung www.hmr.de
 - UNION Versicherungsdienst www.vela.insure

II. Some practical information

Electronic goods, including mobile phones,

You can buy various electronic goods, including mobile phones, at the following locations (selection):

- Saturn: Kamp 50
- Mediamarkt: Weberstraße 1. You can reach it by taking bus line M4 (Belmer Heide).
- Additionally, you can find second-hand objects such as books, furniture, and cheap tickets for concerts on the notice board ("Schwarzes Brett") or on Stud.IP

Finding a mini-job

Zenjob

- zenjob.com

kleinanzeigen

- kleinanzeigen.de/s-jobs

Jobvalley

- jobvalley.com

Job in university

- uni-osnabrueck.de/universitaet/stellenangebote/

SIM card for mobile phone

You can buy prepaid SIM cards at different company shops and supermarkets. The cards usually cost around 5 to 10 euro. Common options include:

- NETTO: Johannisstrasse 17, Hannoversche Strasse 48
- ALDI Petersburger Wall 9, Martinistrasse 93, Bohmter Str. 64
- LIDL: Hannoversche Str. 19, Iburger Str. 225, Mindener Str. 108
- Vodafone: Grosse Strasse 86-89, Johannistrasse 67
- Tchibo: Grosse Str. 21

University wifi

To access the university Wi-Fi, you will need to use your student account and follow the instructions on the following website:

- <https://www.rz.uni-osnabrueck.de/Dienste/Internet/WLAN/eduroam/wlanwelt.htm>

II. Some practical information

Public transport

What kind of public transport am I allowed to take with my semester ticket (Student ID)?

- Your semester ticket allows you to use the following modes of transportation:
- All buses in the city of Osnabrück and its districts.
- Most of the regional trains operated by Deutsche Bahn (DB) Regio Niedersachsen AG, Nordwestbahn (NWB), and Westfalenbahn (WFB) in Niedersachsen. Please note that IC/EC/ICE/FLX trains are not covered.
- For more detailed information and a route map, please visit www.asta.uni-osnabrueck.de/service/semesterticket. You can also download the "Verkehr UniOS" semester ticket app for free from both the Apple Store and Google Play Store.

Deutschland ticket

Since 05/2023 it is possible to purchase an upgrade for your semester ticket to the Germany ticket by paying the difference between the semester ticket and the Germany ticket (WiSe23/24: €24.48).

You can only get this at a reduced price via meinmobiportal.de under the "Deutschland-Ticket Uni (OS/Mobile)" section. To do this you have to create an account.

Note: This is a subscription that must always be canceled by the 10th of the month if you do not want to use it in the following month!

Steps:

- Register on the site and log in.
- Then you can select the Deutschland-Ticket Uni OS under Book other subscriptions.
- After stating that the ticket is for yourself and that you will receive the ticket via the App VOSpilot, you enter the start date and IBAN to pay the remaining amount.
- After checking the data, you agree to the data protection declaration and general terms and conditions and upload a photo of your valid Campuscard with semester ticket imprint.

More detailed information here: asta.uni-osnabrueck.de/service/semesterticket.

II. Some practical information

Bank Account- General information

In order to open a bank account, it is mandatory to register at your place of residence first. In Osnabrück, Bürgeramt (citizen's office) is the authority in charge of registrations. You cannot open a bank account without the registration confirmation (Meldebescheinigung)

- You can open bank accounts with online banks or on site banks such as Volksbank or Sparkasse. However, you will need to make an appointment first, either by telephone, personally or through online appointment systems
- Please note that most banks require that you bring somebody to translate should you not have German skills
- Necessary document:

--> Passport

--> Certificate of enrolment (Immatrikulationsbescheinigung)

--> Meldebescheinigung

--> Tax ID (if already available)

Note:

- After that you will receive the bank account documents, please keep these documents safe! It's very important!
- Your bank card will be ready in about one week after the account opening process. You can choose to pick up your card yourself or leave your address for them to send it to you. (Highly recommend picking up by yourself)
- After the process, you can deposit money into your account(if you want)
- Several common banks: Sparkasse, Commerzbank, Deutsche Bank, Volksbank
- Banks will ask for your German tax ID, if you haven't received it yet, tell them that you will hand it in later

II. Some practical information

(Second-hand) bike

You can purchase a second-hand bike from various sources in Osnabrück, including: Bike shops in Osnabrück that not only sell new bikes but also offer second-hand bikes at affordable prices. Some examples are:

- Johannisstraße 88
- Jonathan Annas Laden, Dielingerstraße 11
- Rower Co Zweirad GmbH, Rehmstraße 2
- Check the notice board ("Schwarzes Brett") of Osnabrück University's website (uni-osnabrueck.de/schwarzesbrett/) or on Stud.IP for listings of used bikes.
- There is also a bike market called "Fietsenbörse". You can find the dates under the following link: fietsenboerse.de .

Household goods

You can purchase household goods (plates, blankets, and cushions,...) at the following places (selection):

- IKEA: You can find almost everything at affordable prices. The Osnabrück branch is located at Rheiner Landstrasse 215. You can reach it by taking bus lines 15 or M4 (Osnabrück IKEA).
- City center shops (selection):

TK Maxx: Kamp 46a

TEDI: Grosse Hamkenstrasse 32-34

Woolworth: 57-60 Grosse Street

- Second hand shops like [DRK Markt für ALLE](#) or [MöWe/Jonathans Laden](#)

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT

International Office:
incoming@uos.de

Student Info point:
studios@uni-osnabrueck.de
studentsoffice@uos.de

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