

Dear international students,

Congratulations on your admission! We warmly welcome you to the Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development (HNEE)!

In order to help you organize your arrival in Eberswalde, we prepared an **information sheet with initial advice concerning travel preparations and first steps after your arrival**. Please read the guide carefully!

A welcome package with further information about studying at the HNEE and living in Eberswalde will be given to you directly by our Student Support Service department & International Office by the time of enrolment.

We wish you a pleasant arrival at our small but charming town of Eberswalde!

Your Welcome Centre



TABLE OF CONTENT

CHECKLIST BEFORE ARRIVAL	3
TRAVEL PREPARATION	4
<i>How to apply for a Visa?</i>	4
LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION	5
<i>Student dormitories</i>	5
<i>Shared accommodation in apartments</i>	6
SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS.....	7
COVID-19	7
HEALTH INSURANCE	7
EU-CITIZENS	7
EXCHANGE STUDENTS.....	8
PUBLIC HEALTH INSURANCE.....	8
PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE.....	9
<i>Applying for exemption (Private health insurance, EHIC insurance holders):</i>	9
WELCOME TEAM AT THE HNEE	10
GETTING TO EBERSWALDE	10
BY PLANE	10
<i>Airport Berlin Brandenburg (BER)</i>	11
<i>Frankfurt/ Main Airport</i>	11
WELCOME TO EBERSWALDE	11
CHECKLIST AFTER ARRIVAL	11

Checklist before arrival

Before coming to Germany, please make sure to have organized the following:

Some of the items in this list are explained in more detail in this guide. Please read it carefully!

Receiving the letter of admission from HNEE	
Let us know if the submission of the necessary documents for enrolment will be delayed	
Transfer the semester fee	
Valid Photo ID/ Passport (Renew your passport if it is valid for 6 months or less)	
Apply for a Visa (Inform yourself about the study visa regulations regarding your nation) and organize proof of financial resources for your expenses	
Send 1 passport photo to the HNEE for your student ID	
Organize valid health insurance for your stay in Germany and apply for the exemption to the statutory health insurance obligation if necessary (see “Health Insurance” below for more info)	
Receive confirmation of enrolment at the HNEE after completing the above-mentioned tasks	
Organize long-term accommodation	
Book a flight ahead of time	
Bring approx. 600 € cash to cover the initial expenses - really important (first rent, deposit, food and bureaucratic expenses)	
Suitable clothing according to the season in which you start your studies	
Personal items such as medication and photocopies of important documents	

At the end of this guide, you may find the *Checklist after arrival* for things that need to be done once you arrived.

TRAVEL PREPARATION

Before you set out for Germany, there are a few things that you must arrange in your home country 😊

Visa Requirements

For studying in Germany, and thus also at HNEE, international students often need a visa for the purpose of studying. Citizens of the European Union, the European Economic Area and Switzerland only require a valid ID card to travel to Germany. Citizens of a few other countries like Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand and the USA can obtain the necessary residence permit for the purpose of studying after their arrival.

International students from other countries need to apply for a visa before arrival. Please contact the German embassy in your home country and ask about entry requirements for Germany.

Please note that university enrolment with a tourist visa is not possible.

How to apply for a Visa?

It can take several months to get a visa. So, we urge you to get in contact with the German Embassy in your home country as soon as possible, as processing times vary depending on the embassy or consulate. Therefore, please do not wait until you receive the final admission letter. It is preferable to apply for an applicant visa with the university's / uni-assist's confirmation of application and then convert it to a residence permit for study purposes in Germany.

For further information on current entry regulations and application forms consult the homepage of the [Federal Foreign Office](#).

Financing your studies

When applying for your visa, you must prove that you are able to finance your studies in Germany.

The living expenses for your first year in Germany must be fully covered to receive your visa. In general, 11,208€ of income or assets are required for your application and must be proven again to the foreigners office every year to prolong your stay and complete your studies. The yearly amount can be lowered if you pay less than 360€ rent per month, or if you have a job contract. **However, for the first application the full sum of 11,208€ is necessary.** Evidence of higher amounts may also be requested. The German embassy in your home country will provide more information on the proof that needs to be provided. Depending on your situation, the following options of financing are possible:

- Personal savings secured on a blocked account (Sperrkonto) from which you will have a **limited monthly withdrawal of 934€**
- Scholarship from a recognised scholarship foundation ([DAAD](#), e.g.)
- Sponsorship: a declaration from a company, an organization or private individual (resident in Germany), agreeing to cover all costs during your studies

- In certain countries, it may be possible for your parents to “sponsor” you. Please ask your local German embassy for clarification on this matter

How much money do I need to live in Eberswalde? The exact living expenses depend on your lifestyle and on where you decide to live, in Eberswalde or Berlin. Here you find a short list to orientate yourself:

monthly expenses	rent*, food, health insurance, medical fees, clothing, books and entertainment	700 – 900 €
semester fee	including administration fees, semester ticket for public transport	~ 370 € per semester

*in Eberswalde. Living in Berlin is significantly more expensive.

Important notice: The opening and activation of the bank account can take 4 or more weeks. The bank account is necessary for paying your rent, health insurance costs, and semester fees among other things. **Please make sure to have about 600 € in cash by arrival to be able to pay initial costs, such as first month’s rent, food and enrolment.** Even if you will receive a scholarship, you won’t be able to get money transferred to your German bank account right away, so we kindly ask you to bring some money to cover your expenses at the beginning.

Long-term accommodation

It is advisable to look for a place to stay as soon as possible. If you decide to live in Eberswalde, you can apply for a student dormitory or shared accommodation in apartments. You can also live in Berlin but finding a place in the capital can be challenging.

Student dormitories

Student dormitories in Eberswalde are run by the [Studentenwerk Frankfurt/Oder](#). This is a student services organisation that **does not belong to and is separate from the university** but runs the halls of residence and cafeterias and offers advice on various topics. They offer affordable accommodation for over 400 students in [three halls of residence](#) throughout Eberswalde. Some general information:

- Average rental prices vary between 200 – 370 €/month (depending on room size, location, and number of flatmates)
- Deposit: 300 € (must be transferred **before** signing the contract)
- The rooms are furnished and have an internet connection
- **For the internet connection please bring your own LAN cable and WiFi-Router**
 - Help with setting up your internet connection can be found at the end of this document
- Unfurnished rooms can be requested
- Kitchen equipment: electric stove, refrigerator und cupboards.

- Starter package for 65 Euro: Bed linen, blankets, pillows, dishes and cutlery for one person. **We recommend the purchase of a starter package** since the rooms in the dormitory are furnished but will not include other essentials. The starter package can be paid for in cash when you meet the caretaker and sign your rental agreement. A reservation of the starter package is unfortunately not possible.

As you have received your notification of admission (Zulassungsbescheid) from HNEE, you can apply for a room in one of the residences. Please note that the demand of places in the student dormitory has risen sharply in the past years and therefore not all students can get a room. There are no application deadlines, but the earlier you apply, the more likely it is that you will get a room! Should you get a room but decide not to come to Germany, please notify the student housing authority of your plans, so that the room can be given to another student in need.

[Here](#) you find some general information about the dormitory's locations and [here](#) the application form for admission in student halls of residence.

After you have applied, you will first receive a confirmation from the Studentenwerk that your application was received. **This is not a confirmation of a place to stay**, simply a confirmation that you are on the waiting list and Studentenwerk will contact you as soon as they have a fitting room for you. With the final confirmation that you have received a room, Studentenwerk will inform you which documents need to be submitted for final processing. After the deposit has been transferred in due time, the Studentenwerk will send you the rental agreement to sign.

If your arrival in Germany is delayed by several weeks or months due to visa problems, please inform the Studentenwerk. Unfortunately, due to the limited capacity of places in the student dormitory, the rooms cannot be reserved for you for a longer period of time.

Shared accommodation in apartments

Besides the possibility to apply for a dormitory room you can apply for an apartment or a shared flat in Eberswalde. If you do so, we recommend you look for a shared flat (WG), where you live together with one person or more. You will have your own room and only share bathroom, kitchen and living room. Most importantly, you will create great memories with your flat mate(s) and make yourself a home.

- Deposit: depending on flat and type of contract (about 250-400€)
- Rent: 250-450 €/month.

To find a list of accommodation offers, consult following addresses:

[HNEE Facebook forum](#)
www.wg-gesucht.de

[Kleinanzeigen](#)

In case you do not get a room in one of the student residences and cannot find another accommodation via the above-mentioned websites please contact welcome@hnee.de or your assigned Welcome

Teamer. While we can support you and give tips, **we will not be able to find or look for apartments for you**, but we may have more current information regarding apartment offers in Eberswalde.

Short-term accommodation options

In case you do end up arriving a day too early or do not have an accommodation organized ahead of your arrival, here a selection of short-term and transitional accommodation options (this list is not exhaustive):

Hotels (Eberswalde)

[Hotel Yaman](#)

[Haus am Schützenplatz](#)

Couchsurfing or private accommodations

[Couchsurfing](#)

[Airbnb](#)

COVID-19

As of 21.06.2023: There are currently no entry or quarantine regulations for Germany. Please keep yourself informed about any changes [here](#).

Health Insurance

All German and foreign students who would like to study in Germany need health insurance. Without a proof of health insurance, you won't be able to enrol in a German university nor apply for the visa from the immigration office (Ausländerbehörde). **Travel insurance might be valid for your visa but WILL NOT be recognized as valid health insurance for study purposes in Germany and therefore will not allow enrolment. Please take care of insurance issues ASAP, ideally before arriving in Germany, to ensure a smooth start to your studies.**

Without proper health insurance, you cannot enrol at a university, which causes a lot of trouble. Difficulties related to not being able to enrol include

- not getting your GreenCard (the ticket you need for using public transport), hence having to pay the bus, every time you go to class;
- not being able to enrol in classes and exams;
- no access to the schedule;
- having to pay full price for lunches Mensa/cafeteria

Hence, please make sure to get the health insurance sorted as soon as possible.

EU-citizens

If there is a social insurance agreement (Sozialversicherungsabkommen) between Germany and your home country (including the member states of the European Union and the European Economic Area) the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is accepted. **Nonetheless, you still must apply for an exemption from the German mandatory health insurance in order to enroll at the HNEE.** Please

contact any German statutory health insurance office (e.g. Barmer, DAK, Techniker Krankenkasse, etc.) and ask for an exemption from the German insurance obligation (Bescheinigung über die Befreiung von einer gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung in Deutschland). For more information on how to do this see the paragraph titled “Applying for exemption” below.

Exchange Students

Depending on your exchange programme, there is a chance that you have health insurance through the programme. This insurance qualifies as a private insurance and **you still must apply for an exemption from the German mandatory health insurance in order to enroll at the HNEE**. Please contact any German statutory health insurance office (e.g. Barmer, DAK, Techniker Krankenkasse, etc.) and ask for an exemption from the German insurance obligation (Bescheinigung über die Befreiung von einer gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung in Deutschland). For more information on how to do this see the paragraph titled “Applying for exemption” below.

Arranging health insurance in Germany:

You can choose between several public and private health insurance companies:

Public health insurance

German public health insurance companies are obliged to provide discounted student rates for their insurance cover for students until they reach 30 years of age or until the end of their 14th subject-related semester. The membership fee is currently ~ 120 Euros per month. Please be aware that the contract duration is set at a minimum of 12 months (only applies to full-time students). When registering, please have your passport and your admission letter from the university ready. You can register before your arrival in Germany to ensure the smoothest possible start to your studies. After complete registration, the health insurance agency will issue a certificate on the existing insurance coverage which you can use during visits to the foreigner’s office. **Please remind the insurance agency to send the electronic proof of insurance to the university so that we can enroll you!**

Some study programmes start the semester with online classes. If that is the case for you and you are attending these lectures online from your home country/abroad, you still need a health insurance certificate (or exemption) for enrolment. Health Insurance must be paid only as soon as students are in Germany. However, legally it has a retroactive effect from the moment of concluding the insurance contract. Therefore, please ask the health insurance company you choose whether you will face retroactive payments in case you will not make it in time to Eberswalde before the semester starts.

Within the next months, some of the well-established public health insurance agencies offer online talks during which they give information about the German insurance system in general and their products. If you are interested in taking part in one of those, please check online for dates.

Private health insurance

Private could be a good option if you are over 30 years old. Then you can no longer get public health insurance at the affordable student rate. You can still purchase the public insurance, but at a higher rate. Private health insurance, however, often has many disadvantages you should be aware of. See the grey box below for more information.

If you choose the private insurance, **you need an exemption from the German mandatory health insurance**. Please contact any German statutory health insurance office (e.g. Barmer, DAK, Techniker Krankenkasse, etc.) and ask for an exemption from the German insurance obligation (Bescheinigung über die Befreiung von einer gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung in Deutschland). Note that you will only be exempted from the required German health insurance if you prove adequate private coverage that is equivalent to German insurance. It is therefore advisable to ask whether the insurance is recognised before signing the contract.

Applying for exemption (Private health insurance, EHC insurance holders):

Applying for exemption can and should ideally be done before your arrival in Germany. The electronic notification must be triggered by a public health insurance company. Both BARMER and Techniker have websites in English, which you can find by searching for “exemption from public health insurance + the name of a public health insurance agency”. However, any public/statutory health insurance company can send the electronic notification (DAK, AOK, etc.). For that, the public health insurance companies need the following number connected to the HNEE: the "Absendernummer": **H0002016 as well as your insurance policy from the private insurance company or (in case of EHC Card) your insurance policy from your home country**. Always remind the public health insurance company to send the notification to us, as the process is unfortunately not automated.

If you choose the private insurance, please be aware of the following:

- Private insurance can be very affordable in the first year, but fees rise with every passing year.
- The exemption lasts for the duration of your studies and is a final decision that cannot be reversed. Even after completing your studies, you will not be able to obtain German statutory health insurance unless employment with mandatory health insurance is taken. Before you make efforts to be exempted, please consider this and consult one of the public health insurance companies!
- You will need to pay all medical bills in advance. The costs will be reimbursed once you submit the receipts to the insurance company (public health insurance is paid through your insurance card directly).
- Private health insurance for students does not necessarily give you full coverage, so read the contract terms and conditions very thoroughly.
- If your contract has an end-date and you happen to need costly care during this period, it is likely that the private health insurance agency will significantly raise the cost of a contract extension or deny such an extension all together. Other private health insurance providers might also refuse to take you on as a client or ask for a high rate in this case.

If you have any questions or problems that you cannot solve yourself please contact your assigned Welcome Teamer or if you haven't registered for the Welcome Programme yet, contact the Welcome Centre of the Student Support Service Department & International Office at welcome@hnee.de.

Welcome Team at the HNEE

The Welcome Team from the Welcome Centre of the Student Support Service Department & International Office is **free of charge** for all participants. It brings incoming international students and students of the HNEE together. The students are paid for their time helping you. Our aim is to support international students to get integrated into social student life and to promote an intercultural exchange.

Some examples of a team member's tasks:

- Support with finding accommodation and closing renting contract (**Please note:** while the team may be able to give you tips on where to find accommodations, it is ultimately **your responsibility** to organize a place to stay)
- Pick-up service from the train station in Eberswalde & support when moving in
- Assistance in dealing with local authorities, German bank account, health insurance etc.
- First orientation at the HNEE (campus tour, enrolment, introduction to the campus management system and portal (EMMA), explanation of university terms, introduction of student initiatives etc.)
- First orientation with daily routine (shopping, public transportation, consultation etc.)

While friendships can and do sometimes develop between Welcome Teamers and those being helped, that is not the primary function of the Welcome team. Rather Welcome Teamers are there to support you in the above-mentioned situations and primarily at the beginning of your stay. It is important to us that you learn over time to live independently and confidently in Germany without direct support from your assigned Welcome Teamer.

In addition, the Welcome Centre organises some events for all international students during the semester. For example: welcome evening, intercultural buffet, christmas party, walking tours and city trips.

The Welcome Centre of the Student Support Service Department & International Office is located on the ground floor on the right side of Building 5, city campus.

For more information, contact: welcome@hnee.de

Getting to Eberswalde

By plane

Eberswalde does not have an airport; therefore, **the closest airport is in Berlin.**

Airport Berlin Brandenburg (BER)

BER airport is quite far from the city centre; don't be surprised if your journey will take a considerable amount of time.

Check out the [website](#) of the German Railway Company 'Deutsche Bahn' (DB) or download the [App](#) for transportation suggestions by train and/or bus.

- ➔ Enter your departure station and the preferred arrival station, the website will show you the exact departure- & arrival time, train names, platform numbers and costs – you can buy tickets online or at the station.
- ➔ Another option would be to check Google Maps for train and/or bus suggestions

Frankfurt/ Main Airport

The AIRail terminal has a direct connection to Berlin Hbf through the high-speed railway network *ICE*. Trains leave almost every hour and the travel time to the capital takes up to 4,5 hours (costs: about 113€). You might get a cheaper ticket if you book it a couple of weeks earlier or if you decide to travel with other types of trains (*IC* or *RE*). In this case, the journey takes longer, and you will have to switch trains.

We are currently working on a more detailed guide regarding German public transport, which you will receive within the next weeks.

Welcome to Eberswalde

You probably managed a lot of bureaucracy and trips to the authorities until now. Going abroad is not easy and it requires independence, courage, and self-organization. The weeks since your arrival might have been full of new impressions and perhaps, a bit confusing sometimes. But we are here to help!

Checklist after arrival

Please consult the table below to see what other arrangements must be made once you arrived in Eberswalde. These can be resolved individually or with the assistance of your Welcome Teamer or fellow students. For more information about our Welcome Programme, please visit our [website](#) or contact welcome@hnee.de.

Registration at the Student Support Service Department City Campus: House 5 ground floor, room 5.016	If you have not completed the enrolment already from abroad. Please bring along the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• letter of admission from HNEE• proof of health insurance (and the electronic notification)• passport or ID card• passport photo (if not already sent before your arrival in Germany)• residence permit (from immigration office) or visa	
--	---	--

<p>Payment of semester fees</p> <p>City Campus: House 2 3rd floor, room 2.310</p>	<p>If you have not done so from home, you can pay your semester fee in cash upon arrival. Please note that the cashier's office is only open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.</p>	
<p>Signing the rental agreement</p>	<p>Student dormitories: Sign the rental agreement with the caretaker of the student dormitories – ask your assigned Welcome Teamer for support if needed.</p> <p>Required documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certificate of enrolment from HNEE • bank account details for direct debiting authorization • completed inventory list (+ remarks) <p>Shared flats: Your new flat mates can get you in touch with the owner of the apartment and assist in signing the contract.</p>	
<p>Register at Municipal Registration Office</p> <p>Town hall Eberswalde Breite Str. 41-44</p>	<p>Required documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rent contract and passport/ ID <p>As a new citizen of Eberswalde, you will be granted a welcome benefit of 100 €. However, this only applies to students who stay in Eberswalde for more than one semester (i.e. not for exchange students). For every following semester students can receive 70€. The form and the conditions can be found here.</p>	
<p>Registration at the immigration office (for non-EU citizens)</p> <p>Ausländerbehörde (Immigration Office) Eberswalde Am Markt 1 Paul-Wunderlich-Haus</p>	<p>Required documents for a residency permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirmation of registration from town hall • passport photo • letter of admission or enrolment certificate • proof of health insurance • proof of financial resources and/ or scholarship • confirmation of your standard course length issued by HNEE • 100 € for the issue of the electronic permit ID <p>Opening hours: Tuesday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. For individual appointments call: 03334 / 214 142 6</p>	
<p>Opening a bank account</p>	<p>You will need a bank account from the beginning of your stay in Eberswalde to transfer money for your rent, health insurance, etc. Ask for the special student's account (Girokonto für Studierende) which is available for a small fee at most banks.</p> <p>Required documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passport • certificate of enrolment • confirmation of residency (Meldebescheinigung) • tax-number (which you will get by post after registration at Municipal Registration Office) • Note: It is important to tape your name to your mailbox in front of your apartment. Otherwise your tax number and other important documents may not be delivered 	

	<p>If you have already opened a blocked bank account in order to get a visa you just need to activate it in the next branch bank. The account activation can take 4 weeks or more.</p>	
<p>Getting information about your program and lecture times</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit HNEE homepage and find your study programme, lecture dates, exam periods and holidays etc. • Contact your respective study programme coordinator • Please note: some study programmes offer an orientation week at the beginning of the semester, for more information check here • At the beginning of the winter semester the faculty of Forest and Environment always offers preparatory courses for students of the study programmes Forestry and International Forest Ecosystem Management 	
<p>Get to know your university</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register at the university library (free of charge) • Visit our cafeterias (forest and city campus) • Explore the functions of your GreenCard • Join the introductory week at the beginning of the winter semester • Join events organized by the Welcome Centre • Activate your HNEE e-mail account • Visit computer pools in houses 2, 5, 11 • Log in and explore EMMA+ and Moodle 	
<p>Get connected (SIM-card, internet, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students buy a pre-paid SIM-card from the supermarket (e.g., Lidl or Aldi) that can be topped up each month. However, it is also possible to organise a monthly contract with a telecommunications company. • Internet set-up in the student housing can be notoriously tricky. Even the members of our team cannot always help. It is best to ask your neighbours or flatmates for help or to consult the following link: Telta CityNetz • Instructions for setup of WiFi for your devices while at the university can be found here: WiFi Setup. If you are having trouble, please contact our IT-Team (itsz@hnee.de) 	

