



Handbook
for International (degree-seeking) Students
(1st Semester)

Summer Semester 2021

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Introduction by the International Office (IO)

Dear international (degree-seeking) student,

Welcome to Bielefeld University! We are thrilled that you have chosen to pursue your studies at our University. We are the **International Student Services Centre (ISSC)** and we want to support you having a good start at Bielefeld University. This handbook will provide you the most important information that you will need following your admission as you begin preparing for your arrival and stay. It advises you on the next steps to take regarding e.g. enrolment, finding accommodation and taking out a health insurance policy and also provides you with information about the central University organizations, associations and programs that support international students during their studies. Each semester the International Student Services Centre (ISSC) organizes **Orientation Days** for international (degree-seeking) students which provides you with important information about the University and the city of Bielefeld. The Orientation Days will take place at the University but also online. We are looking forward to meet you!

If you have any questions or should you run into difficulties, please come speak to us in the International Office.

We wish you a lot of joy and success in your studies,

The International Office Team

Email: io@uni-bielefeld.de

1. Introduction

1.1 Orientation Days (Welcome-Event) by the IO and the faculties

The ISSC will host introductory events for you before the beginning of the lecture period. We strongly advise you to participate in those events, as you will receive important information for your studies.

Because of the corona pandemic we offer our support for the current summer term **both digital and presence**. Our welcome events start at 20th of October 2020 with a meeting at the University for everyone who can make it. There will be different appointments for the first meeting **at March 31st and April 1st 2021**. Everyone else who will not be in Bielefeld in the mentioned time period or who is in quarantine will meet at the same time digital via Zoom. In order that you have a good start in your studies we highly encourage you to attend all the events offered in the Orientation Days. Due to the Corona Pandemic you will have to register with your contact information when entering the University. If you don't have a Student ID, you will have to fill in a contact form. Please note that wearing a mask is obligatory in all University buildings.

You can find the **program for the Orientation Days hosted by the ISSC of the International Office** once it is certain at our [website](#). We kindly ask you to register for the **Orientation Days by the ISSC** via email to: issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de.

- You can find the dates for the faculties' introductory events on the central student advisory's [website](#) (German – if you have trouble with the translation please contact us: issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de)

! Please note that some faculties'/departments' introductory events take place several days before the beginning of the lecture period. Please also take note of the **preliminary courses**, which are offered for some courses of study. They also start before the beginning of the semester (for more information see chapter 4.3).

This handbook uses several abbreviations; the most important ones are listed here:

IO	= International Office
ISSC	= International Student Services Centre
IMP	= International Mentoring Programme (formerly known as Brother-Sister-Program)
BITS	= Bielefelder IT-Servicezentrum (university computer service centre)
AStA	= Allgemeiner Studierenden Ausschuss (General Student Committee/Student Union)
ISR	= Internationaler Studierendenrat (International Student Council)
PunktUm	= Language accompanying programme at Bielefeld University / German Language Learning Centre
SLK	= Department of Teaching, Learning and student Counselling
ZSB	= Zentrale Studienberatung (Student Advisement and Counselling Office)
OWL	= Ostwestfalen-Lippe (Eastern Westphalia, the Region Bielefeld belongs to)
NRW	= Nordrhein-Westfalen (North Rhine-Westphalia, the federal state OWL belongs to)

1.2 Your personal mentor (International Mentoring Programme, fka Brother-Sister-Program)

The International Mentoring Programme offers additional support to international students during their studies. The program aims to help you settle in to Bielefeld by finding a personal mentor for you. This mentor acts as your contact person for all questions which may arise regarding the University, the academic system or life in Bielefeld. By finding a personal mentor for you the International Mentoring Programme hopes to assist you in your everyday life.

Having a mentor means:

- you'll meet experienced students
- you'll know someone who will show you around town and around the campus
- you'll have someone to ask questions about your studies or the university
- you'll be given information on where the post office, the municipality, a good physician, the nearest bank or the best pub in town is
- you'll know where you can go when you get homesick or are bored

If you would like to receive a mentor, please register [here](#) or contact:

Lukas Poppenborg
International Office,
Room D0-138
International Mentoring
Programme
E-Mail: imp@uni-bielefeld.de

Mailing address:

Universität Bielefeld
International Office
International Mentoring Programme
Postfach 10 01 31
D-33501 Bielefeld
Germany

2. Fees and costs

2.1 Tuition fees

Since winter semester of 2011/12 onwards Bielefeld University has not charged any tuition fees. Furthermore, international students do not have to pay any support contributions or selection fees at Bielefeld University.

For more information, please see the [University homepage](#).

2.2 Semester fee / student identity card / public transport pass

Every semester you must pay a social contribution known as the semester fee (*Semesterbeitrag*). This summer term 2021 the fee amounts to **314,04 Euro**.

This fee includes the payment for the public transport card for Bielefeld and surrounding area (semester ticket) and for the whole of North-Rhine-Westphalia (NRW-Ticket). Once you have enrolled (see chapter 3.4 enrolment/matriculation) and have paid the semester fee, you will receive a student identity card. After you have enrolled/matriculated (see 3.4 enrollment matriculation) and have paid your tuition fees you can submit a request for your UniCard (see 2.2.1 UniCard). The UniCard is also your student identity card and your semester ticket. It is, however, only valid in combination with your passport or a photo identification.

It enables you to travel on all public transport, i.e. rail (not including ICE and IC/EC connections), metro and bus lines within the area of validity of the NRW-Ticket of the Deutsche Bahn (also valid on all other transport systems and transport communities in NRW). You can also use the NRW-Ticket on two routes beyond the borders of North-Rhine-Westphalia: 1) to Osnabrück 2) to Haste (close to Hannover). You will receive further information when you enroll. You can also find more information [here](#).

If you have not enrolled yet, you should purchase a 7-days-ticket at the ServiceCenter of “moBiel” by the VOW = transport community East-Westphalia-Lippe (located at the underground station Jahnplatz). One-way tickets are much more expensive if you plan to travel more frequently. The expenses of your week ticket can be refunded at the AStA Transport Group (Verkehrsgruppe) after you get your regular ticket (see refund). The expenses for one-way tickets, 4-way tickets, and monthly tickets cannot be refund.

2.2.1 The UniCard

The UniCard is a visual and electronically readable ID for all services at the University that are bound to a card.

Visually readable identification:

- ID function (student identification card)
- Regional semester ticket

Electronically readable identification:

- Library borrowing (library card)
- Copy, print and scan services at the University
- Access to the University zone
- Cash-free payments at the Studierendenwerk (Canteen and Cafeteria)

You can request a UniCard online [here](#). You will need your access data which can be found on the payment form which you receive after your successful enrolment and a photo. After you have registered with your access data, you can upload your photo and must agree the terms of use.

When you complete those steps the UniCard will be send to you via post. It will come to you prevalidated. You must validate your UniCard again in the following new semesters. If you have further questions feel free to contact the staff at the information centre (unicard@uni-bielefeld.de). Also check out [here](#) (German) for further information.

2.2.2 Reimbursement of weekly tickets

The semester at Bielefeld University begins on April 1st in the summer and October 1st during the winter. Due to preliminary courses and introductory courses the semester ticket (not the NRW ticket) is valid a month before semester starts (this means from March 1st/ September 1st on).

Therefore, it is highly recommended only to buy a 7-days-tickets of the service provider called "OWLVerkehr", „TeutoOWL“, "Westfalentarif" or "moBiel". Only weekly tickets can be refunded. The same accounts for students who get the semester ticket during the semester (in terms of an allowed delay, for example). Again, only weekly tickets can be refunded. This can be done during the whole semester. It is important to note that this option, however, is not valid for one-way tickets, 4-way tickets or a monthly pass. You can purchase weekly tickets at moBiel at the Jahnplatz (located at the underground station Jahnplatz). The expenses of your weekly ticket can be refunded at the AStA Verkehrsgruppe after you get your regular ticket. For this purpose it is necessary to send an e-mail to asta.verkehrsgruppe@uni-bielefeld.de with your name and matriculation number or stop by the AStA transport group personally at L4-128. After having done that you will receive an e-mail from the AStA transport group and can refund the amount of money at mobile Service-Centre at the Jahnplatz. You will need your UniCard and a valid passport or a photo identification.

For further information check [here](#).

2.3 Living costs

Costs for studying in the Federal Republic of Germany are relatively high due to the living expenses. A research study has shown that you can expect the following average costs: rent in a room in the student halls of residence from the *Studierendenwerk* (Student Services) or a private student hall, in a room or flat comes to approximately 320 Euro per month; the expected costs for student health insurance and other medical fees are about 80 Euro per month. Depending on your lifestyle, you might spend about 150 Euro on food each month. Altogether, monthly costs for food, clothes, leisure activities, semester fees, travel expenses, telephone bills and the other mentioned expenses add up to approx. 820 Euro. One must note, nonetheless, that these data are based on a nationwide average. There are several ways for cutting expenses in Bielefeld. For example, it is possible to rent a room in a student residence for about 200 Euro, and a meal at the student canteen (*Mensa*) costs only about 2.70 Euro (the Mensa opening hours are Monday-Friday, 11.30. a.m. – 2.30 p.m.). Due to the pandemic, the opening hours of the cafeteria may change – please check out their [website](#) for current information. Because of strict hygiene regulations the mensa may also only two menus (vegetarian & non-vegetarian). Due to the demands of the course of study and due to the regulations for working permits for international students, it is very difficult for international students to work during the lecture period. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for you to plan your financial budget before arriving.

You can find more information on costs and student finance, also about the possibilities of working during your studies, at the Orientation Days of the ISSC.

2.4 Student financial assistance

Students from the EU (European Union), or with a permanent residence by EC-norm according to the Law on Residence, may be under certain conditions eligible to receive financial support according to the Federal Education and Training Assistance Act (BAföG).

You can receive further information on your Bafög eligibility through the [Student Services Department](#) for Education and Training Assistance or through the General Student Committee/ the Student Union (AStA).

Attention: We don't know of any part time jobs where skills in the German language are not needed.

There are just a few possibilities within the university to work as student assistant without German skills.

Read more on the different possibilities for student finance in chapter 8.

3. Next steps after admission / upon arrival in Bielefeld

3.1 Accommodation

Bielefeld University does not provide students with flats/rooms (ERASMUS students and students coming with the university-cooperation are exceptions).

Students should look for accommodation on their own. Therefore please have a look at the following information. The International Office may provide support, especially to students in English-speaking programs.

Contact:

International Office
Tel.: (+49)521 106-2487
@: wohnen-io@uni-bielefeld.de

There are basically two ways of how to find accommodation. Here they are:

- To apply with Studierendenwerk for a room in students' dormitories, or to apply at private dormitories. Studierendenwerk is an association that provides universities with social service.
- To search a private flat or a room (possibly together with other students - flatsharing).

Halls of residence (provided by the Studierendenwerk):

As soon as you have got the approval for your studies you can apply for a room at the Studierendenwerk. You can send the filled, signed and scanned application form (accessible online) by email to the Studierendenwerk, too. So international students also have the possibility to apply for a room from abroad.

Studierendenwerk Bielefeld
Abteilung für studentisches Wohnen
Morgenbreede 2-4
33615 Bielefeld
Tel.: 0521 / 106 88600
@: wohnen@stwbi.de

Private halls of residence:

Besides those provided by the Studierendenwerk, there are other halls of residence which also offer furnished rooms for students:

Lessor: BGW

Contact:
BGW – Bielefelder Gesellschaft für Wohnen und Immobiliendienstleistungen
Carlmeyerstr. 1
33613 Bielefeld

Tel.: 0521/ 880901

@: info@bgw-bielefeld.de

Residential establishments:

- Wohnheim Lohmannshof
Kreuzbergerstr. 5-13, 33619 Bielefeld
- Wohnheim Roggenkamp
Roggenkamp 22, 33605 Bielefeld
- Wohnheim Teichstraße/Friedrichstraße
Friedrichstraße 64, 33615 Bielefeld
- Wohnheim Lipper Hellweg
Lipper Hellweg 70, 33605 Bielefeld

Further information: <https://studierende-bielefeld.de/wohnanlagen/>

Lessor: Hollensiek GmbH

Contact:

Hollensiek GmbH (Hausverwaltung)

Oberntorwall 13-14

33602 Bielefeld

Tel.: 0521/ 965 170

@: info@hollensiek-hausverwaltung.de

Residential establishments:

- Wohnheim August-Bebel-Str.
August-Bebel-Str. 57 a-c, 33602 Bielefeld
- Wohnheim Luisenstraße
Luisenstraße 12, 33602 Bielefeld

Further information: <http://www.hollensiek.de/Unsere-Verwaltungsobjekte/>

Lessor: Hollensiek GbR

Contact:

Hollensiek GbR

Hollensiek 3, App. 1

33619 Bielefeld

Tel.: 0521/ 9630 2231

@: hollensiek.gbr@gmail.com

Residential establishment:

- Wohnheim Hollensiek
Hollensiek 3, 5, 7, 33619 Bielefeld

Further information: <https://www.studentenwohnung-bielefeld.de/>

Lessor: Sozialwerk Bielefelder Freimaurer e.V.

Contact:

Hausverwaltung Winter

Herforder Straße 237

33609 Bielefeld

Tel.: 0521/ 24389

@: info@winter-hausverwaltung.de

Residential establishment:

- Studentenwohnheim Ostmannturn
Märkische Str.11, 33602 Bielefeld
Further information: <http://www.ostmannturn.de/>

Privat housing market:

Both single apartments as well as rooms in flat-shares with other students are offered. In most cases the rooms are offered by private landlords. The rent for a room in Bielefeld amounts to about 180 to 300€ per month.

Online

Private room offers can be found [here](#) or on the other Online-Portals:

www.wg-gesucht.de

www.studenten-wohnung.de

www.zwischenmiete.de

www.studenten-wg.de

Flat ads in the university.

A multitude of different flat offers in various price categories can be found in the university hall and on floor 1, the so-called gallery.

Newspapers

The local newspapers 'Neue Westfälische' and 'Westfalenblatt' provide many rent offers, especially in the Saturday edition.

Neue Westfälische: [Homepage: https://www.nw.de/](https://www.nw.de/); Tel: 0521-555-0

Westfalenblatt: [Homepage: https://www.westfalen-blatt.de/](https://www.westfalen-blatt.de/); Tel: 0521-585-0

Short-term accommodation:

In case you have not found a room before coming to Bielefeld, please book a room in students' hostel from abroad in order to have time for further search in the city. This may take some time.

Jugendgästehaus (Guest house)

Hermann-Kleinewächter-Str. 1

D-33602 Bielefeld

Tel. +49 521- 5 22 05-0

jgh-bielefeld@djh-wl.de

www.djh-wl.de/jh/bielefeld

Kolpinghaus Bielefeld

The Kolpinghaus Bielefeld in the city-centre is located close to the main station and the light-rail line 4 to the university.

August-Bebel Str. 7a

33602 Bielefeld

Tel. +49 521- 6 03 63

info@kolpinghaus-bielefeld.de

www.kolpinghaus-bielefeld.de

3.2 Registering your place of residence (registry office)

Once you have found a flat or room, you are required to register your place of residence at the registry office (*Einwohnermeldeamt*) of your current town's municipal building. In Bielefeld, the registry office is located at the citizens' advice bureau (*Bürgerberatung*) in the ground floor of the municipal building (Stadt Bielefeld; Bürgerbüro; Abt. Bürgerberatung, Niederwall 23, 33602 Bielefeld).

Students must register in person within two week of moving into a new flat/room. You always register in the citizens' advice bureau/registry office/municipal building of the town where you will live. Since spring 2019 one have to make appointments with the citizens' advice bureau to register. To do so you can use the following [link](#). Unfortunately this webpages are only available in German. If you need help with the translation or if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate contacting the ISSC-Team (issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de) or ask directly at the citizens' advice bureau via the following contact details:

Citizens' Advice Bureau (Bürgerberatung)	
Telephone:	0521/ 51-0 (Availability: Mo – Fri 7.30 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.)
Fax:	0521/ 51 6196
Email:	buergerberatung@bielefeld.de
	Information on registration matters, passports, and identification cards and more

Important information about the broadcasting fee (Rundfunkbeitrag)

Everybody in Germany is obliged to pay the broadcasting fee (Rundfunkbeitrag). This also applies to international students. Get more information about the broadcasting fee – also on the exemption from the fee – [here](#).

You can register by mail at the following address:

**ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio
Beitragsservice
50656 Köln**

or [online](#).

Unfortunately also this webpages are only available in German. If you need help with the translation or if you have any further questions, feel free contacting the ISSC-Team (issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de) or ask directly at the German public service broadcasters via the following contact details:

German public service broadcasters (Beitragsservice von ARD, ZDF und Deutschlandradio)	
Telephone:	01806 999 555 10 (Availability: Mo – Fri 7.00 a.m. – 7.00 p.m.)
Fax:	01806 999 555 01

3.3 Health insurance

You must provide proof of health insurance in order to enroll (see chapter 3.4). To do this, you have several options:

1) The following applies to students from the EU, the European Economic Community (EEC), the European Economic Area (EEA) and all other countries with an agreement on social security with Germany (e.g. Turkey, Tunisia and Switzerland):

- Students with public health insurance are eligible for the form E-111, AT 11, ATN 11, BH6 or a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).
With this proof of health insurance you must go to a German health insurance provider and have them approve your insurance coverage – you need this proof for the enrolment at the university. You must bring this document when you enroll. Some additional information: with this proof of health insurance from your home country (plus your passport) you are able to visit any physician or dentist. Your health insurance coverage is thereby guaranteed in Germany.
- Students with private health insurance: you must pay for your treatment in advance, and then apply for a refund from your private health insurance provider. But even in this case you must provide proof of German public health insurance when you enroll. For this you must go to a German health insurance provider with your proof of private health insurance and be exempted from the public compulsory health insurance.

Please note: **Exemption from public compulsory health insurance is irrevocable (!)** and does not expire in case of changing your course of study or university, or interrupting your studies – not even after a stay in your home country!

Please also note: If you take out private health insurance, you cannot change to a public health insurance provider later (during your studies in Germany). If there are certain benefits that your health insurance does not cover, you will be obliged to cover those costs yourself. Those costs can be very high!

2) The following applies to students from **countries without an agreement on social security with Germany**:

- You must take out a public or private health care insurance in Germany. Public health insurance principally applies to students under the age of 30 and/or who have not yet completed their 14th semester. The monthly fee for students with compulsory health insurance over 23 without children currently amounts around 100 Euro. The monthly fee for students under 23 as well as for students with children usually amounts 1-2 Euro less than the above. All health insurance providers charge the same fee. See a selection of public health insurance providers listed below.

Please note: If you take out private health insurance, you cannot change to a public health insurance provider later (during your studies in Germany). If there are certain benefits that your health insurance does not cover, you will be obliged to cover those costs yourself. These costs can be very high!

In case you are 30 years old, have completed the 14th semester or are enrolled as a PhD student:

- Please seek advice from a German health care provider. You basically have the option of either voluntarily taking out public health insurance, or taking out private insurance (please be aware of the deadlines for the voluntary continuation of public health insurance and note that a pre-existing insurance policy is required).
- For example the Deutsche Studentenwerk offers in cooperation with the Hanse Merkur Reiseversicherung AG a private health insurance. Please find further information [here](#).

The following applies to both groups:

After taking out a health insurance you will receive a health insurance certificate which you must bring when you enrol at Bielefeld University. The University will then confirm your enrolment to your health insurance provider.

Here you can find the addresses of several public health insurance providers. There are many other public health insurance providers; please look for more information on your options (e.g. online):

Heimat Krankenkasse Herforder Straße 23 33602 Bielefeld Tel.: 0800 1060100		Techniker Krankenkasse (TK) Universität Bielefeld Raum D1-121; Uni-Halle Universitätsstr. 25 33615 Bielefeld	
Barmer GEK Nikolaus-Dürkopp-Str. 16 33602 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521/ 3331010	Allgemeine Ortskrankenkasse (AOK) Oelmühlenstraße 57-59 33604 Bielefeld Tel.0521/5980	Deutsche Angestellten-Krankenkasse (DAK) Alfred-Bozi-Str. 15 33602 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521/ 9891110	

3.4 Enrolment / matriculation

You have received admission to study at Bielefeld University. This means that you have been given a place in your chosen course of study. Now you must reply to the University and inform the Student Office whether or not you will accept this place of study – in other words, you must enroll/matriculate. It is only possible to enroll in the course of study in which you are pursuing a degree.

For possible minor subjects and combinations see the study and examinations regulations of your course of study. The central student advisory services as well as student counselling (of your faculty) also provide information on this topic.

Enrolment is administrated by Ms. Dagmar Schätzel and Ms. Aleksandra Rybak (for international **M a s t e r** - students) and Ms. Dawkins (for international **B a c h e l o r** – students) at the Student Office.

Due to the Corona Pandemic Questions and requests for the Student Office should be addressed via e-mail or telephone whenever possible. Please use the service hotline +49 521 106 66 66 or their contact form. [Here](#) you can find further information.

Please bring the following documents listed [here](#) for your enrolment (German – contact us if you need help with the translation: issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de).

After handing in all the documents you receive a payment form by mail delivery which contains your access data for the university portal and the information on paying the student service contribution (semester fee). Once your payment of the fee got registered by the bank account (takes up to 3 days after payment) the university portal will be unlocked and you're free to register using the access data on the payment form.

3.5 Opening a bank account

If you have not got a German bank account yet, you should open one now. For this you will need:

- Your passport including the valid residence permit
- Your student identity card or the letter of admission from Bielefeld University (so that you will get the student rate)
- Your German address

You can open a transactional account called *Girokonto*. You or others will be able to deposit or transfer money into this account. You can also transfer fees, such as rent, health insurance or the semester fee from this account.

In order to transfer an amount you have different possibilities:

- You can use a terminal in the bank.
- You can transfer the fees via online-banking or
- You can transfer form (*Überweisungsvordruck*), which are available at the bank. You should carefully fill out and sign this form, and then hand it in at the bank (or drop it off in the letter box for transactions).

Some banks offer free transactional accounts for students under the age of 25. Others charge different fees for administration costs. Students prefer banks with special discounts. Therefore, it is important that you inquire about the fees and costs beforehand.

In Germany, you will not receive the bank card immediately; it usually takes up to two weeks after opening the account.

Regular payments which must be met every month (e.g. rent, magazine subscriptions etc.) can be made by standing order (an automatic transfer by the bank) or by direct deposit authorisation (authorisation for a person or an institution to withdraw an amount from your account).

Most banks are open on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Thursdays until 6 p.m. On Saturdays and Sundays all banks are closed in Germany. However, there is 24 hour access to the exterior cash dispensers.

You can open a bank account with the *Sparkasse* in Bielefeld. This is the address from the branch in the city centre:

Sparkasse Bielefeld Stresemannstraße 15 33602 Bielefeld Tel.: 0521/ 294-0 Fax: 0521/ 294 4060 service@sparkasse-bielefeld.de Bank code: 480 501 61 Swift code: SPBI DE 3B XXX
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Important: please do not forget to close your account when you leave Germany after your stay!

3.6 Paying the student services contribution (semester fee)

Upon enrolment, the student services contribution currently in the amount of 314,04 € must be transferred to the University's bank account as soon as possible. For more information on enrolment see chapter 3.4.

The student services contribution can change every semester! Once the fee has been received by the University your account at the University's portal will be unlocked. The bank transfer and mailing can take up to fourteen days.

Please only make the transfer after you have received the form of enrolment in the mail or have enrolled in person at the University. Please use the transaction form which you will receive in the mail!

You should expect to wait for your student identity card and semester/NRW-ticket for up to two weeks! For more information and the exact amount of the semester fee please visit this [website](#).

3.7 Residence permit

You will need the letter of admission (which you should have received by now) in order to apply for your student visa. You cannot enter the Federal Republic of Germany with a tourist visa, as it is not possible to convert a tourist visa into a student visa in Germany. If you have applied for a visa for the purpose of study at an embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany (exceptions see below), you can apply for a residence permit in Germany. For this you will need:

- The letter of admission from Bielefeld University
- Proof of financial resources:
You must provide proof of financial resources of at least 828 Euro per month. For this you can present a document from your bank. It is also possible to hand in a confirmation by your parents which states that they will commit themselves to cover your expenses during your studies. A third possibility is for a person in the Federal Republic of Germany to finance your studies. In this case this person must submit a declaration in which s/he provides proof of sufficient means (Declaration of Commitment).
- Proof of educational qualification from your country of origin
This can be a copy of your diploma, Bachelor's or Master's degree. You only have to hand these in if you have earned a degree.
- A biometric passport photo (the electronic residence permit costs between 65 and 135 Euro, depending on the length of stay.)

Exempt from the visa requirement are citizens from the EU member states, the EFTA states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) and all other states that have negotiated an international agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany (e.g. Honduras, Monaco, San Marino, the USA, Australia, Japan and Korea).

Upon your arrival in Bielefeld you are required to apply for your residence permit at the foreigners' registration office (*Ausländerbehörde*). The registration office grants the residence permit first for two years. Afterwards you should apply for a renewal again.

The address for the foreigners' registration office is:

Bürgerberatung / Abteilung Ausländerangelegenheiten
Neues Rathaus
Niederwall 23
Erdgeschoss, Flur A
33602 Bielefeld

Post address: Bürgeramt, Abteilung Ausländerangelegenheiten 33597 Bielefeld
--

(You can find the municipal building on the city map on page 7)

Due to the Corona Pandemic you have to make an appointment. Please visit their [website](#) to book your slot [here](#). The homepage is in German only so just contact issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de if you have any questions.

Telephone:	0521/ 51-0
Fax:	0521/ 516195
Opening hours:	Mo-Fr 8.00-12.00 am, Th.14.30-18.00pm

3.8 Work permit

With your residence permit (stamp in your passport) you receive a work permit for 120 work days per year. This allows you to work 120 full days (8 hours per day) or 240 half days (up to 4 hours per day).

If your financial means are not sufficient and you need to earn additional money, you can look for work for these 120 days per year. Many students work in restaurants, cafés, shops, offices, agencies, as a newspaper deliverer etc. When you apply for a job you should show the stamp in your passport. This is also necessary when applying for an internship relevant to your course of study. If you have to work for more than 120 days per year, it is possible, under certain circumstances, to apply for an additional work permit at the foreigners' registration office, for which you will have to give reasons. The foreigners' registration office may approve a fixed work permit for a certain occupation of up to 10 hours per week. This occupation must also be approved by the employment office (*Agentur für Arbeit*). The hourly limit does not apply to occupations at the University, e.g. as a student assistant, or at another institution associated with the University. Also in case of self-employment, e.g. in the context of an honorary contract for teaching or consulting activities, you should contact the foreigner's office.

4. Further information for your studies

4.1 The academic year

The academic year is divided into the winter semester and the summer semester. The winter semester begins on the 1st of October and ends on the 31st of March; the summer semester goes from the 1st of April to the 30th of September.

The lecture period during the winter semester usually begins mid-October and ends mid-February; the lecture period during the summer semester goes from the beginning/middle of April until the middle/end of July. The lecture free period, also known as the semester holidays (mid-February to mid-April and beginning of August to mid-October), should be used for writing term papers, preparing presentations, studying for exams and doing internships. The Christmas holidays are between Christmas Eve and New Year's.

You can find the current academic calendar [online](#).

4.2 Course catalogue (eKVV)

The course catalogue lists all lectures and seminars offered by the University. The complete course catalogue is available online, called [eKVV](#), which is the abbreviation for the German term *elektronisches Kommentiertes Vorlesungsverzeichnis*. Here you can also find the latest information on all courses. You can access the eKVV from the University homepage.

As soon as you have enrolled, you should put together and save your timetable, as well as

entering your email address, so you will receive the emails from the lecturers containing information on their lectures and courses. You will receive an introduction to the eKVV in introductory events hosted by the IO, see chapter 1.1.

4.3 Preliminary courses

In order to facilitate the transition between school and university, the faculties for Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Linguistics and Literature, as well as the Faculty of Technology, offer preliminary courses for first semester students.

Registration is not obligatory, however often asked for. You can find the current offers [here](#) (German).

! Please note that the preliminary courses usually begin two to three weeks before the introductory events.

4.4 Credits / examination administration

Each course has its own regulations regarding the amount of semester periods per weeks and credit points which should be accomplished. Credits are earned through presentations, term papers, exams, assigned written papers, partial exams and active participation.

Students in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes based on the Bielefeld consecutive model academic structure receive certification of attended lectures through the examination administration at the eKVV. Students can also print out their own hard copy of all certified, attended lectures via the eKVV after each completed semester. After completion of the degree, or in case of a change of universities, the University issues a transcript of records, which lists all attended courses and certified examination results.

4.5 Re-registration / Renewal of matriculation

If you want to continue your studies at Bielefeld University after completion of a semester, you need to re-register for the next semester. Re-registration is only secured through payment of the semester fee. You will receive the necessary information (e.g. University account data, reference, amount etc.) in timely manner to the email address which you have saved in the online course catalogue/eKVV. This email will also contain information on deadlines (usually end of January for the summer semester and end of June for the winter semester) and procedures; this information is also announced per bulletin board notice. Also keep in mind to re-validate your UniCard at the blue vendors at the InfoPunkt (see 2.2.1 for more information). Additionally don't forget to print out your new NRW-ticket, which you can print out from the [online portal](#) of the Deutsche Bahn company.

Please notify your new address [here](#) in case of any changes.

5. Main facilities at the University

5.1 Library

Due to the Corona Pandemic the opening hours of the library have changed. You also must book your workspace online. Please find all current information [here](#).

The library is very user-friendly. All library departments in the main building of the university (Unihauptgebäude) are connected with each other (located on level 1) and are accessible for all.

The libraries of Sociology, Theology, Women's and Gender Studies, Earth Sciences, Philosophy, History, Art and Music are since May 2014 in the building X. It is also possible to lend books, which are not available at Bielefeld University, from other (University) libraries in Germany via intra-library lending. A specialised computer system makes it very quick and easy to search the inventory of books. At the beginning of every semester the library offers introductory events for the usage of the library.

Most books can be borrowed. The loan period is up to four weeks. If the borrowed books have not been booked by someone else, it is possible to extend the loan up to five times. After that the books need to be submitted at the library and can be borrowed again.

5.2 Bielefelder IT-Servicezentrum (BITS)

The [Bielefelder IT-Servicezentrum](#) (BITS) offers access to multiple computers (with word processor and data processing systems, as well as internet access) for all students. The BITS offers introductory events for working with different computer programs every semester. For logging on to the computers you need the password which is mentioned on the payment form you receive after enrolment.

Please pay attention to the majuscule and minuscule letters. Additionally, all faculties have their own terminals, which are connected to the BITS.

5.3 Sports program

Every semester, the University offers a range of sports courses. Students of all faculties have free access to the indoor swimming pool and the gymnasiums, as well as the outdoor facilities, within the duration of certain hours. You can enter the sports centre with your UniCard by holding it up to the sensor next to the door. The current sports program is available for download [online](#).

Due to the Corona Pandemic the sport program will take place in smaller groups, which means there will be less registrations available. There are also Online Sports courses which you can find [here](#).

6. Student councils / counselling

Due to the Corona Pandemic and strict hygiene regulations all counselling services at the University will (for now) be online or via telephone. Please visit the [websites](#) for amended consultation hours and further information.

6.1 General Student Committee / Student Union (AStA)

The Student Union (abbr.: AStA = *Allgemeiner Studierenden Ausschuss*) deals with the concerns of all students. The Committee is voted into office for one year by the student parliament (abbr.: StuPa) and is divided into separate thematic departments. The AStA's range of duties varies from the political representation of interests to the organisation of cultural events. The most important and major aspect in the AStA's work is the implementation of students' concerns in all relevant University committees. Most political efforts take place in the AStA's departments. One of these departments, for instance, is the department for social issues. It offers support for social concerns such as finances, family issues and other related topics. You can receive further information by contacting the department directly: Referat für Soziales, Tel: 106-3437, soziales@asta-bielefeld.de. The department for international issues and peace serves, amongst other things, as a contact point for international students. The AStA as well as the department for international issues and peace is located on the gallery. For more information go to the [ASTA website](#).

The AStA's information brochure on studying in Bielefeld ("Studieren in Bielefeld") is available [online](#).

6.2 International Student Council (ISR)

Within the AStA there is a representation of international students, the International Student Council (ISR), who represents your interests. The ISR is made up of several foreign students (spokespersons) who are elected every year. International students can turn to the ISR at all times with their questions, concerns or suggestions.

Every semester, the ISR organises information events on important current topics, an international party, as well as leisure activities (e.g. swimming classes, table tennis evenings etc.). Newspapers are on display in their office (C1-172 on level 1, next to the AStA). You can also find adverts for flats on offer on their homepage. For this, and further information on the ISR visit their [website](#).

7. Information centres / Advisement

7.1 International Student Services Centre

The [International Student Services Centre](#) (ISSC) is located in the International Office and offers international degree-seeking students a wide-range of advisory services. The ISSC advises on an array of topics such as student orientation, financial aid and grants, registering for dorms and finding apartments, residency permits and the many diverse questions and challenges that pop up in the daily life of international students such as paying the fees for public radio or opening a bank account. As part of its advisory services the ISSC offers students applying for or renewing a residency permit an application and documentation check to make sure applications are complete and correct before students go to the city's residency office.

(Please note that all questions regarding application, admission and enrolment should be addressed to the Student Office).

Further services provided by the ISSC include various short-term financial aids and various awards to successful international students, a full programme of cultural and leisure-time activities (Day trips and weekend excursions, museum visits, film nights and meetings in the international welcome centre (IBZ)) and organizes an International Mentoring Programme every semester for freshman international students.

Advisory:

Contact: Pia Tiemann-Riedel

Email: issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de

Phone: +49 521 106-4078

Advisory on course and exam registration

Contact: Lea Faulhammer & Thorsten Pieper

Email: issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de

Skype: [issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de](https://uni-bielefeld.de/issc-io)

Culture and leisure-time Programme

Contact: Lea Faulhammer & Thorsten Pieper

Email: issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de

Skype: [issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de](https://uni-bielefeld.de/issc-io)

Visit the [ISSC website](#) for further information.

International Mentoring Programme (IMP)

Contact: Lukas Poppenborg

E-Mail: imp@uni-bielefeld.de

Find more information online [here](#).

7.2 PunktUm: German Language Learning Centre

While the language examinations *Test-DaF* and *DSH* certify sufficient language proficiency for entering university, the linguistic demands during the course of study go beyond those competencies. Especially the German academic language must continually be further developed. This is an important prerequisite for the active participation in lectures and seminars as well as in exams, writing term papers and theses; it is therefore inevitable for successfully achieving a degree.

PunktUm is the main institution at Bielefeld University that provides counselling on and training in the foreign language German for international students. All PunktUm offers are regular study programs. They are modularised and can therefore be easily combined with other modules from all courses of study.

For BA and MA students, PunktUm offers the following seminars and workshops (amongst others):

- Academic work in the library
- Reading and analysing academic texts
- Taking notes during lectures
- Giving presentations
- Writing term papers and final theses
- Vocabulary and grammar training

Courses on language for special purposes are offered for international law students.

All offers are complimented with an **individual writing consulting**.

Information on all offers can be found on the eKVV under “Fachsprachenzentrumskurse” > “Deutsch als Fremdsprache” or on the [PunktUm homepage](#).

Year-round office hours: weekly Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-4 p.m. (no pre-registration required!) via telephone or Skype only; Tel: 0521/ 106-3616; Email: punktum@uni-bielefeld.de

7.3 Association for Support of International Students in Bielefeld (ViSiB)

The Association supports international students at the Universities in Bielefeld in order to facilitate their integration in their study location.

For this the association offers several services:

- Varied program of leisure activities with a focus on NRW
- Help in financial emergencies
- Weekly counselling

You can find more information [online](#).

Tel.: 0521/ 106-2482

E-mail: visib@uni-bielefeld.de

7.4 Student Advisement and Counselling Office (ZSB)

The Student Advisement and Counselling Office (ZSB), which is located in the Component E of Building X, offers information and counselling on all questions regarding your studies, including offering you the opportunity to seek out psychological help and counselling. All counselling is fully confidential. On request, counselling can also be given in English, French, or Spanish. During the open consulting hours one can obtain information, discuss personal issues and arrange separate appointments or the participation in a group workshop. No pre-registration is necessary for the consulting hours.

Visit the [ZSB homepage](#) for current consulting hours and further information.

7.5 Career Service (Counselling on Studies, Instruction and Careers)

The Career Service gives students the possibility to prepare themselves for their professional life. Besides offering workshops on career entry, the staff at the Career Service provides counselling on professional orientation, planning one's studies and career, internship and job search, job application and entry into professional life.

Visit the [Career Service Homepage](#) for current consulting hours, offers and further information.

7.6 Equal Opportunities Office

Removing the structural discrimination of women is the essential, statutory goal of the Equal Opportunities Office at Bielefeld University. The Equal Opportunities Office offers advice and supports the University in this task. Steps towards gender equality are not exhausted simply in human resource management, but must aim to induce fundamental changes so that women can study and work at Bielefeld University according to their ideas. The Equal Opportunities Office has varied offers concerning studying with children, and provides counselling and support in cases of sexual discrimination and violence.

The Equal Opportunities Office and the Office for Women are glad to offer counselling, help and support, and are thankful for any suggestions toward creating gender equality in all living and working conditions. For further information on the Office for Women and their offers, please visit their [website](#).

Tel.: 0521/ 106-4202/03

Email: gleichstellungsbuero@uni-bielefeld.de

The women's emergency call counsels and supports women and girls who underwent sexualized violence such as sexual assault, harassment, (attempted) rape or stalking.

Women's emergency hotline at the University: 0521/ 106-4208.

Women's emergency hotline in Bielefeld: 0521/ 124248.

7.7 Family assistance with the Family Service

Since 2006 Bielefeld University has made many important steps towards becoming a family-friendly university. The University was rewarded the Certificate "Family-oriented University" by the foundation berufundfamilie gGmbH for the first time in 2006 and again in 2009. The Family Service has played an essential role in this development.

The following consulting and support services are available for families:

- Parental benefits and parental leave
- Possibilities for child day care
- Organising your studies
- Financial support
- Maternity leave
- Initiatives for parents
- Counselling, information materials and contact points for care-giving relatives

Contact: Ulrike Piplies

Tel.: 106-4208

Email: ulrike.piplies@uni-bielefeld.de

Visit the [Family Assistance Homepage](#) for current consulting hours, offers and further information.

7.8 Department for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses (RSB)

The RSB is the first contact point for students at Bielefeld University who have a disability or chronic illness. Furthermore, the RSB helps students return to their studies after an absence due to illness.

The RSB's focus is on:

- Encompassing integration into student life
- Helping students to help themselves in case of any kind of problems which can occur during their studies. Besides integration in Bielefeld University, support is offered during events and leisure activities.
- Legal advice and advice on special regulations
- Contact point for exchanging ideas with each other, and with other universities and institutions
- Acquisition of funds for the financing of building alternations and special facilities (e.g. lifts, door openers, computer assistance etc.)
- Press and public relations

Contact:

E-mail: rsb@asta-bielefeld.de

Tel.: 106-67096

Visit the [RSB Homepage](#) for current consulting hours, offers and further information.

7.9 Protestant Student Congregation (ESG)

The ESG is the Protestant church at the University and is open for students of all faiths and religions, as well as irreligious students. Alongside church services and bible studies, the ESG also hosts cultural events in the comfortable ESG-building. The International Evening takes place every second Thursday evening starting at 7 p.m.: after a shared meal, the participants hold a discussion on development policy in a particular country.

Pastoral care and counselling are possible at any time. You can find more information in the programme brochure and [online](#).

Contact:

Email: esg@uni-bielefeld.de

Tel.: 0521/ 881140;

Address: Jakob-Kaiser-Straße 26; 33615 Bielefeld (metro station *Bültmannshof*)

7.10 Catholic University Parish (KHG)

The Catholic University Parish (KHG) is a union of Christian students who meet once a week for a mass and fellowship. International students can turn to the students' parish priest, Mr Lars Hofnagel, or another co-worker at the KHG, should they encounter difficulties of any kind. Regular events during the semester are: a mass at the KHG and every Thursday during the semester a table with a Catholic and a Protestant priest for the questions of the students in the University's main hall. A program of events is publicised at the beginning of every semester. You can find more information [online](#).

Contact:

Tel.: 0521/16398264;

E-Mail: juliawinterboer@khg-bielefeld.de;

Address: Katholische Hochschulgemeinde, Klosterplatz 3, 33602 Bielefeld

7.11 German-speaking Muslim Student Union (DMS)

The DMS aims to strengthen the consensus, communication and sense of community within the group of Muslim students, as well as to exchange ideas and enter into dialogue with other religions and University groups.

The association wants to contribute to the mutual understanding between different cultures and rejects any form of nationalism, racism and sexism. In order to fulfil these goals, the association organises monthly meetings, lectures, as well as information and discussion events.

For more information, visit their [website](#) or stop by their stand.

8. Financial support

8.1 Scholarships and grants

A scholarship is a financial grant for students by an institution. Scholarships are usually tied to certain requirements and are given according to need and achievement in the course of study.

Bielefeld University is not able to give out any scholarships for the financing of students' studies. The University also does not take responsibility for any student whose financing has been interrupted for whatever reason. However, there are several possibilities for receiving financial support.

For further information take a look at this [brochure](#) or contact the ISSC: issc-io@uni-bielefeld.de.

9. University terminology

In the following, several terms belonging to the university terminology will be explained, which you will frequently encounter during your studies and should therefore know. The German term will also be provided alongside, so that you will be able to look it up:

Academic quarter (*Akademisches Viertel*)

The academic quarter means that researchers always begin a quarter of an hour later, if not determined otherwise:

c.t. (cum tempore) e.g. 11 c.t. = 11.15 a.m.

s.t. (sine tempore) e.g. 11 s.t. = 11.00 a.m.

AStA (General Student Committee)

-> see chapter 6.1

Bachelor (B.A.)

The Bachelor's degree is achieved after finishing a Bachelor's programs; the addition in the title depends on the subject studied.

The exact title varies between the courses of study, and is dependent on the individual focus of the course. BA stands for Bachelor's of Arts, and is attained in the humanities and social sciences. BSc stands for Bachelor's of Science and is attained in the scientific and technical faculties. There are also several other specific Bachelors' degrees, such as the Bachelor's of Science in Health Communication (BHC), which is awarded by the Faculty of Health Sciences.

The duration of studies encompasses 6 semesters, including the examination period. Exams usually take place during the course of study. Credits are given according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS, see explanation below). In most cases the Bachelor's programs comprises a major and a minor subject.

BAföG (Federal Education and Training Assistance Act)

The BAföG (*Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz*) is the financial funding of education and training for pupils and students. It is a combination of an interest-free loan (which students pay off by

installments after finishing their studies) and a grant, which need not be repaid. The amount depends on the students' assets and income, and on that of their guardians. International students may be eligible for BAföG, for example if they have German nationality (so-called educational residents or ethnic German emigrants). Moreover, students from the EU member states are eligible for BAföG under certain conditions. For more details, please visit the Student Union, Department for Education Financing (*Abteilung für Ausbildungsförderung*) on level 2, section C.

Career Service

-> see chapter 7.5

Dean (Dekanin/Dekan)

A dean represents a faculty and is elected by the faculty conference.

Dean's office (Dekanat)

The faculty administration (in the main University building is always on level 3).

Diploma (Diplom)

Before the implementation of the consecutive Bachelor/Master system, a number of degrees were awarded with a diploma (with an addition to the title according to the subject, e.g. Dipl.Biology).

Diploma examination (Diplomprüfung)

The diploma examination is a professionally qualifying degree. It is conducted by the examination board from the respective faculty, and consists of a diploma thesis and a written and/or oral exam.

Double degree (Doppelstudium)

A double degree is different from a second degree (for an explanation see further below), and means that two or more courses are studied at the same time. Enrolment in another course is possible (e.g. if one has chosen to pursue an additional degree, or if the benefits of an additional qualification seem preferable or necessary). Limitations only exist for courses with a Numerus Clausus, for which the places are given through a selection procedure; in these courses a double enrolment is only permitted if a professionally qualifying degree is achieved only through a course combination.

As a double degree results in a higher workload, one should not take it up without a previous consultation.

ECTS (Credit Points)

ECTS stands for European Credit Transfer System and is a synonym to the term credit points. Credit points describe the workload taken on by the students during the semester. Their calculation consists not only of the actual attendance in the lectures, but also of the expenditure of time taken for the course assessments and for the exam preparation. One credit point equates to 30 work hours. The Bachelor's programme is designed so that students are able to finish their degree after 6 semesters (3 years): this means a workload of 40 hours per week and 45 weeks per year.

ERASMUS-Initiative

The ERASMUS-Initiative is integrated into the International Office and serves as a contact point for all ERASMUS-students who wish to study at Bielefeld University. Furthermore, the ERASMUS-Initiative organizes regular meetings, as well as excursions and trips, besides coordinating the mentoring programs for ERASMUS-students and their mentors.

Exmatrikulation / de-registration

Exmatrikulation (de-registration or withdrawal) is possible after the end of the semester as well as during the semester. Students are required to de-register at the end of their studies. The necessary form is available at the student registrar's office as well as at the International Office at Bielefeld University.

Student Council (*Fachschaft*)

Most faculties each have a student council. A student council is an organized representation of students' interests within the faculty. In the week before the beginning of the lecture period the student councils usually conduct the introductory events for the first semester students, alongside offering student counseling.

The student counselors, who are students themselves, are located in the student councils. They offer consultation on topics such as study structure, timetables, examination regulations, and are also the contact persons for all questions and difficulties regarding one's studies.

You can find information on the introductory events before the beginning of the semester on the following [website](#).

Faculty (*Fakultät*)

Bielefeld University is divided into 13 faculties. These are:

Faculty of Biology, Faculty of Chemistry, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Linguistics and Literary Studies, Faculty of Mathematics, Faculty of Physics, Faculty of Psychology and Sports Sciences, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Sociology, Faculty of Technology, and Faculty of Business Administration and Economics. The faculties act as the first contact persons for students regarding the contents and organization of their studies, and for the transfer of credits attained in studies abroad.

Higher Education Act (*Hochschulgesetz*)

The Higher Education Act (HG) defines the functions and legal status of scientific universities, regulates their structure and organization, as well as the rights and responsibilities of the university members (university staff and students).

***Klausur* (Written exam)**

A *Klausur* is a written exam taken under supervision. It serves as a verification of students' performance level.

Colloquium (*Kolloquium*)

A colloquium is an assembly for presentations and discussion with higher academic demands.

***Kommilitonin/Kommilitone* (fellow student)**

The word *Kommilitonin* (female) / *Kommilitone* (male) is the academic German term for fellow student.

Master (M.A.)

A Master is a post-graduate degree, which builds upon a first graduate degree (usually the Bachelor's degree). The duration of studies encompasses two to four semesters, including the examination period. Just as in the Bachelor's programs, exams (including the Master's thesis) take place during the course of study. The exact title varies between the courses of study:

E.g. the Master of Arts (M.A.), the Master of Science (M.Sc.) or Master of Education (M.Ed.)

Magister/Magistra Artium

The Magister/Magistra Artium (abbreviation: M.A.) is a final exam and degree in certain liberal arts. The exam is taken in front of an examination board and consists of a thesis, a written and an oral exam.

Mentor

-> see chapter 1.3

N.C. (Numerus Clausus)

The N.C. is an admission restriction for a course of study. The maximum amount of students is determined by the respective training capacity.

N.N.

N.N. is the abbreviation for "Nomen Nominandum". This means that the name of the teacher for a lecture/seminar is not yet known.

NRW-Ticket

With the NRW-Ticket you can use all public transportation, metro and bus lines, as well as commuter trains within in the valid zone of the NRW-Ticket by the Deutsche Bahn (the German railway authority; also valid on all other transport systems and transport communities in NRW). You can also use the NRW-Ticket on two routes beyond the borders of North-Rhine-Westphalia: 1) to Osnabrück 2) to Haste (close to Hannover).

The NRW-Ticket is only valid in combination with your student identity card/semester ticket and your passport or photo identification. The fees for the ticket are included in the semester fee (see chapter 2.2). You will receive more information after your enrolment or [online](#).

Practicum/work placement (*Praktikum*)

A practicum is a course, especially in the sciences, in which the students work on experiments in small groups.

Another form of a practicum, also known as work placement, is a part of students' training in which they are given the possibility of practical application of their academic knowledge in a company, school, or other organization.

PhD (*Promotion*)

The doctorate's degree (PhD) consists of a thesis (dissertation), which proves an exceptional academic competency. The dissertation also includes an oral exam (disputation or doctoral viva).

Examination regulations (*Prüfungsordnung*)

The examination regulations provide the legal basis for the conducting of examinations; it regulates the composition of the examination board and the execution of the exam. Thus the examination regulations determine the prerequisites for the registration for an exam (duration and volume of the course of study, type and amount of performance records), the procedure of an exam (thesis, written or oral exam), the extent to which the separate topics are assessed, and how the evaluation/grading takes place. It also states when the registration can be withdrawn, and whether the examination can be interrupted or repeated.

For state law exams, such as the state law exam for the teaching profession or for lawyers, the examination regulations are established in the federal law or federal state law. The examination regulations for university degrees (B.A., M.A., Diploma, PhD) are issued by the individual universities and authorized by the federal state ministry. The examinations regulations are available at the examination offices and the examination boards, as well as online. It is important to know the examinations regulations when preparing for an exam.

PunktUm

-> see chapter 7.2

Re-registration (*Rückmeldung*)

Whoever is enrolled at Bielefeld University and wishes to continue their studies in the following semester must re-register. The exact deadlines are made public via notice boards. Re-registration is ensued by paying the Student Service Contribution (Semester Fee). The necessary documents will timely be sent via email. After your payment got registered you're able to download and print out your new semester enrolment through your account with the University's Portal. Do not forget to validate your UniCard for the new semester again at the information center (InfoPunkt) (see UniCard).

Soft skills (*Schlüsselkompetenzen*)

Soft skills are competencies which students should acquire besides the professional expertise in their course of study, such as preparing presentations and term papers, or teamwork.

-> For this look up PunktUm chapter 7.2.

Semesterwochenstunde (SWS) (lecture hours per week)

The examinations and study regulations quantitatively define the duration of required work in lecture hours per week (*Semesterwochenstunden/SWS*). SWS define the amount of time a lecture encompasses within the timeframe of a week (in the semester). For example, a lecture has 3 SWS when it is held three times per week, e.g. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, for one hour. A seminar, which is held once a week from 2-4 p.m., encompasses 2 SWS (calculated in full hours, even though a lecture only has the duration of 45 minutes). After adding all the SWS of the lectures visited in one semester, you will have the amount of SWS for this semester.

Examinations and study regulations state the total number of required SWS for a course of study; by dividing this total with the minimum amount of semesters will give the amount of SWS which should be studied each semester. However, this number is only an average; it is possible to study more or less SWS depending on your schedule.

Semester ticket

The semester ticket is the public transportation ticket for students from all Universities in Bielefeld. It consists of the OWL semester ticket and the NRW-Ticket. The OWL-Ticket is valid 24 hours on all public transportation in the region of East-Westphalia-Lippe (OWL); the NRW-Ticket is valid on all metro and bus lines, and commuter trains by the transport communities in North-Rhine-Westphalia (see also -> **NRW-Ticket**).

Seminar

A seminar is an instructional class for a limited amount of participants, in which an academic topic is presented and looked at in detail.

State law exam (*Staatsexamen*)

A state law exam is a national examination for the graduation from a course of studies (cf. also examinations regulations).

The exam is conducted by the members of the state examination administration and by university professors.

Student Union (*Studentenwerk*)

The Student Union is an institution of the public law. Its task, in collaboration with the university, is to supervise the students from this university in social (e.g. accommodation) and economic (e.g. student canteen) regards.

Course of study (*Studiengang*)

A course of study is the study of a field or subject which leads to a certain and defined degree. Depending on the degree (B.A., M.A., Diploma, state law exam), a course of study consists of only one subject or a combination of a major and a minor subject.

A course of study is regulated by the examinations and study regulations, and is successfully completed by a university or state law exam.

Study regulations (*Studienordnung*)

Based on the requirements of the examination regulations, the study regulations determine the compulsory progression of the respective course of study.

The study regulations define the aim, content, and volume of the studies. They contain the regulations regarding the structure and organization of the course, including the regulations of the academic requirements and credit points (-> see ECTS).

The subject-specific requirements (*Fächerspezifische Bestimmungen*) state the contents and requirements of the individual subjects in the Bachelor's and Master's programs. It further lists the possible major and minor subject combinations.

Tutorial (*Tutorium*)

A tutorial is a small class which compliments a lecture, seminar or practical course. It serves to prepare and evaluate the content of the lesson. The tutorial is lead by a tutor (assistant or experienced student).

Practical course (*Übung*)

A practical course is a lesson with a limited amount of participants, in which students learn and apply academic work methods in a subject area.

Lecture (*Vorlesung*)

In a lecture, professors present the lesson content in the form of a discourse. The students are essentially expected to listen and take notes. The content of a lecture must later be acquired independently (or in a lecture accompanying tutorial).

Course catalogue (*Vorlesungsverzeichnis*)

-> see chapter 4.2

Student Advisement and Counselling Office (*Zentrale Studienberatung*)

-> see chapter 7.4

10. Further information

Postal address	Address (for arrival) and contact details
International Office	
Universität Bielefeld Postfach 10 01 31 33501 Bielefeld	Universitätsstraße 25 Section D, level 0, room 120 33615 Bielefeld Tel.: +49-(0) 521/ 106-4088 Fax: +49-(0) 521/ 106-6439 Email: io@uni-bielefeld.de https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/studium/studieninteressierte/international/
Student registrar's office (for international students)	
Universität Bielefeld Postfach 10 01 31 33501 Bielefeld	Universitätsstraße 25 33615 Bielefeld Find contact information here .
Student Advisement and Counseling Office (Zentrale Studienberatung)	
Universität Bielefeld Postfach 10 01 31 33501 Bielefeld	Universitätsstraße 25 Building X E1-224 Secretary's office Building X E1-226 33615 Bielefeld Tel.: +49-(0)521/ 106-3017, 3019 Fax: +49-(0)521/ 106-6460 Email: zsb@uni-bielefeld.de https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/zsb/index.xml/
PunktUm	
Universität Bielefeld Postfach 10 01 31 33501 Bielefeld	Universitätsstraße 25 Section C, 3. floor, room 210 33615 Bielefeld Tel.: +49-(0)521/ 106-3616 Email: punktum@uni-bielefeld.de www.uni-bielefeld.de/Universitaet/Studium/StudienbegleitenAngebote/Punktum/
Career Service	
Universität Bielefeld Postfach 10 01 31 33501 Bielefeld	Universitätsstraße 25 Building X, Section E, 1. Floor, Room 100 Tel.: +49-(0)521/ 106-4912 33615 Bielefeld https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/career-service/

10.1 Travelling to the University

Arrival by train

from *Hauptbahnhof* (main train station) - metro line 4 in direction of *Universität/Lohmannshof*
from *Jahnplatz* (city centre) - metro line 4 in direction of *Universität/Lohmannshof*

Arrival by car

Motorway exit *Bielefeld-Mitte* or *Bielefeld-Sennestadt*, then follow the signs in direction of *Zentrum* (city centre). As soon as you arrive at the *Jahnplatz* (at the city centre) you will find the University well sign-posted.

The municipal utilities of Bielefeld issue a pocket timetable every May and September, which includes all timetables and connections for all bus and metro lines. You can also find free timetables for each bus and metro line in different locations (e.g. at the Citizens' Advice Bureau in the new municipal building), as well as [online](#). Ticket prices are graded by distance/zone. It is better to buy multi-trip tickets than one-way tickets, as these are cheaper.

As soon as you have received your student ID, you will be able to use all public transport for free with your NRW-semester ticket.

Bielefeld has many bicycle pathways which run alongside the pavement. You can buy a cheap used bicycle (advertises in the newspapers and at the University) or borrow a bike through [Siggi Bikesharing](#) which is free for all students of Bielefeld University (find more [infos](#) here) and enjoy riding through the city.

The International Office at Bielefeld University wishes you a successful semester start and hopes you will enjoy your study!



Impressum

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