First Steps at TUM: Prior to Arrival

Congratulations on being accepted at TUM! This guide is the first of a three part series on getting set up. This part is intended only for non-German nationals. There is a lot of bureaucracy, some of which is useful, all of which is - unfortunately - necessary.

Please make sure you read this document thoroughly so you know exactly what you need and obtain documents in the required quantities. Beware: obtaining translations, for example, takes a long time and costs a lot, so not having one to hand when requested can really slow down your process, cause complications and cost you money.

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Registering Residence (Wohnsitz anmelden)

The first thing to do (within a week of arriving) is to register your residence (Wohnsitz anmelden). Every time you change address, and when you finally leave Germany, you need to do this. If it is your first time in Germany, you should go in person to the KVR (Kreisverwaltungsreferat) if you live within the city of Munich, or to the nearest town hall (Rathaus) if your residence is outside the city. Other times, you can register by post.

You will need your address, including c/o if necessary and an social government issue ID (e.g. a passport). Note that you will be asked for your religion. This is to determine whether you will pay Church Tax (Kirchensteuern).

1. The KVR is by the tube stop "Poccistraße" at address Ruppertstraße 11, 80337 München

2. If your name is not on the postbox of your apartment, your mail will be returned to sender. If there is no return address, it will be lost! It will NOT be held at the post oce. Be careful whenever you give your address that you always give c/o <a name on the postbox>.

3. A relic of the old Kingdom of Bavaria, the Church Tax in Bavaria is 8% of your Income Tax, is collected by the state but goes to the Church. For someone on TV OD-13, i.e. paid directly by the University, this is around €40-50 per month. If you declare your religion (Konfession) as Roman Catholic (Römisch-Katholisch), Lutheran (Evangelisch-Lutherisch), Protestant Reformed (Evangelisch-Reformiert), Old Catholic (Altkatholisch) or part of the Jewish Communities (Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden), this amount will automatically be deducted from your salary before you receive it, just like your other taxes and insurances, see next chapter. If you do not declare a religion, or declare one that is none of the above, this contribution is not taken.

Obtaining your Tax ID number (Steueridentifikationsnummer)

At the KVR or the town hall, if you have not lived in Germany before, you must obtain a Tax ID number (Steueridentifikationsnummer). This will allow you to be paid your salary.

Tax is deducted on a 'Pay-As-You-Earn" basis; four bodies are responsible for your salary:

1. Personnel department in FMI building (Personalabteilung) - your rst port of call
2. Central Administration of TUM (ZV)
3. LFF (Landesamt für Finanzen) - this body pays your salary
4. Finanzamt - this body deals with your taxes
The Finanzamt will automatically assign you a tax class (Steuerklasse) based on your family situation, communicate this to the LFF, and your taxes 1 will be automatically deducted before you are paid. If you are receiving less salary than you should be, chances are you have been put in the wrong tax class, usually tax class 6 (Steuerklasse VI). Your first port of call should be the Personnel Department in the 12th finger of the FMI building (Personalabteilung). If they cannot help, you may have to speak to your case worker (Sachbearbeiter/in) in the LFF.

LFF (3).

1. Your Net income (Nettoeinkommen) is your Gross income (Steuerbrutto) minus:
- Income tax (Lohnsteuer)
- Solidarity surcharge, 5.5% of income tax originally levied in 1991 for the costs of German reunification, now also used for international development
- Health Insurance (Krankenversicherung), 7.3% of your Gross income
- Pension contribution (Rentenversicherung), 9.45% of your Gross income
- Unemployment insurance (Arbeitslosenversicherung), 1.5% of your Gross income
- Long Term Care Insurance (Pflegeversicherung), 1.025% of your Gross income
- Church Tax (Kirchensteuer), see footnote 3.

Obtaining Police Certificate of Good Conduct (Führungszeugnis)

The Police Certificate of Good Conduct (Führungszeugnis) is also obtainable at the KVR / town hall. You order it, request it to be sent "von Behörde zu Behörde" to the following address. They will charge you 13.00 EUR for it:

TU München, Zentralabteilung 1 - Personal Referat 12
Walther-Meiner-Str. 2
85748 Garching

It is very important that you specify where it must be sent when you are ordering it, otherwise, they will send it to your home address, in which case it is invalid1.

It is also possible to request the Certificate of Good Conduct remotely by sending a request to Bundesjustizamt2.

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1. Further information: https://www.bundesjustizamt.de/EN/Topics/citizen_services/BZR/Resident BRD/Resident BRD_node.html. There are other ways of ordering the Police Certificate of Good Conduct, but they are only explained in the German version of the webpage: https://www.bundesjustizamt.de/DE/Themen/Buergerdienste/BZR/Inland/FAQ_node.html and require either a card reader, or a notarised copy of your government issue ID and application form.

2. You can find the form in German and English at https://www.bundesjustizamt.de/EN/Topics/citizen_services/BZR/Resident_abroad/Resident_abroad_node.html.

Residence Permit (Aufenthaltstitel) or Blue Card

Foreigners arriving in Germany are classified into two groups: citizens of the EU, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Iceland, and citizens of any other country. Those of the former group, skip to the next section; of the latter group, read on!

There are two alternatives to live and work legally in Germany. A blue card is the preferred option and can be obtained if your salary is high enough and you work in Informatics (if you are TV• OD-13, i.e. paid directly by the University, that should be sufficient). You can bring dependants to Germany on a Blue Card and live and work anywhere in the EU except Denmark, Ireland and the UK. If, for any reason, you cannot obtain a blue card, you can obtain a Residence Permit.

1. Apply in person at:
- The Foreigners' Office (KVR Hauptabteilung II: Einwohnerwesen, Ausländerangelegenheiten) Ruppertstraße 19, 80337 München, if you are living in the city of Munich, or
- Landratsamt München, Mariahilfplatz 17 81541 München, if you are living outside the city but inside the Landkreis.

You must ask for an appointment (Termin) and you must bring your passport and certificate of residence registration. Time: your appointment will be scheduled for at least one month after you apply.
2. Before your appointment you will need to prepare a letter from the university, confirming that you are employed there, copies of your passport and a biometric photo. At the appointment, you will be required to fill out a form, have your fingerprints taken, and pay a fee (keep the receipt). For the residence permit, this is around 30.00 EUR, for the Blue Card between 110.00 - 130.00 EUR. If you are applying for a Blue Card, you will then wait for confirmation which will arrive in 6-8 weeks, that your Blue Card is ready to pick up. Applicants for the Residence Permit immediately arrange another appointment for at least 4 weeks afterwards.

3. Before your second appointment you will receive a letter with a PIN. This PIN is required to get your Residence Permit and in case you lose your permit, to obtain a new one, and can also be used to confirm your identity from outside of Germany. Bring to your second appointment your PIN and receipt of payment from your first appointment. You will then receive your Residence Permit or Blue Card.

Health Insurance

In Germany, the healthcare provider (Krankenkasse) is paid partially by you and partially by your employer. From your first day of work onwards, you will be covered by a Krankenkasse in Germany. You can choose your Krankenkasse, and apply in advance of your first day, or on your first day as described in Part 2, Section ??.

Information about Krankenkassen is widely available online. All Krankenkassen cost the same (15.5% of your income tax) and offer the same services, but some have some extras like alternative medicine, 24-hour hotline, etc. The Krankenkasse will send you a form to fill in (or a link to do this online) and shortly afterwards, you will receive your card. Keep your card with you at all times, as it will be required when you go to hospital (even Accident & Emergency). If you do not have your card (or have not received it yet) you can still get medical care - the hospital (Krankenhaus / Klinikum) will tell you what to do. Time: a month to get the form, a few weeks to get your card.

Prior to your first day at work, if you are an EU national (or insured in the EU), you are entitled to emergency healthcare. Just remember to bring your EHIC Card. If you are not insured in the EU, you may wish to take out a health insurance policy for the time until you start work.

1. you can compare them at www.gesetzlichekrankenkassen.de

Other Miscellaneous Things to do

To set up a Bank Account you need a valid identification document and a Certificate of residence registration (Anmeldebescheinigung). Be aware that in Germany, you often have to pay for your personal bank account. To avoid this, internet bank accounts are available, for example comdirect.de. You have to fill out an online form, print it out, and bring it with your ID and a copy of your Certificate of residence registration to a Post Office, where it will be sent to the bank. You will receive your card and bank documents by post. The internet bank account process can take several weeks and it is not guaranteed that you will even be accepted in the end. Bank accounts with a non-internet bank such as Sparkasse, Deutsche Bank or Hypovereinsbank are typically ready to use on the same day or within a few days from application.

If you wish to engage in the 21st Century, you will require a phone and possibly a phone contract. Phone contracts with some of the major providers (e.g. O2, Vodafone, T-Mobile) can be expensive, and the minimum length is usually 2 years! Providers such as blau.de, Congstar etc. use the larger providers’ networks, but they have no (or few) shops and everything is done online, so cheaper. Whichever you go for, unless you are on pay-as-you-go (prepaid), you will require a Eurozone bank account for direct debit.

Summary

Before you leave for Germany

- Send in documents to the Personnel Department, read your contract and investigate which public Health Insurance Provider (Krankenkasse) you would like
- Apply for Nostrication and entry onto Doctoral list (Section ??)
- Documents to obtain: Application for contract and all documents mentioned in (Section ??)
- All documents mentioned in (Section ??) for application to Doctoral list
- extra certified copy of degree and transcript, plus translation (if not in German or English) for entry into Graduate School after acceptance on Doctoral List (Section ??)
- extra passport (biometric) photos for various uses (public health insurance provider, residence permit, etc.)
When you arrive in Germany

- Register your address (Section 1), obtain your Tax ID number (Section 2) and order your police certificate of good conduct to the university address (Section 3)
- If you don’t have a Eurozone bank account, set one up, and get a phone contract (Section 6)
- Apply for Residence Permit or Blue Card, if applicable (Section 4)
- Documents to obtain:
  1. Certificate of residence registration (Anmeldebescheinigung)
  2. Tax ID Number (Steueridentifikationsnummer)
  3. Bank account details
  4. Police certificate of good conduct (Führungszeugnis)
  5. Residence Permit or Blue Card, if applicable

Verwandte Artikel

- First Steps at TUM: First Day(s) of Work
- First Steps at TUM: Prior to Arrival
- First Steps at TUM