Come in!

Guide for incoming students
Come in! – Guide for incoming students

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1. Introduction

Studying is an important and exciting phase of your life. Therefore it is even more thrilling to see the university life in a country far away from home. We at the West Coast University of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschule Westküste, FH Westküste, abbr. FHW) want you to be able to connect your study in Heide at the North-Sea-Coast of Schleswig-Holstein with beautiful and instructive experiences.

We gathered the basic facts of organization and orientation at FH Westküste in this manual so that you don't have to worry too much in the run-up. Please read the following chapter thoroughly and begin to organize the formalities early. This will help you to have an easy start and an enjoyable stay.

We are your contact persons in case of questions or difficulties and we are looking forward to your arrival.

Have fun and come in!

Antje Korthals & Anna Sophie Tuxen
2. University Application

2.1 Application for a program of study with degree at FHW

Before applying for a study program at FH Westküste you should be sure that you have sufficient German language skills. In programs of study taught in German your documents will be checked for language certificates. But even if you decide to apply for a master study program, which is conducted in English, a minimum of German knowledge is very helpful.

The application period for the winter semester starts at the end of April. From this moment you are able to find the application forms on our website. Please consider the advises during online-application and/or on the application form and read the texts carefully, verify the completeness of the documents and sign the form. You are responsible for the details during entry and therefore we ask you to be careful with your entries. Wrong data can lead to a withdrawal of your acceptance.

Applications for the winter semester have to arrive by post at the latest by July 15th.

The application phase for the summer semester ends on January 15th.

Applications for the first semester in most of our study programs can only be submitted for the winter semester because they start in winter semesters only.

2.1.1 Application requirements

2.1.1.1 General requirements

Required is the qualification that entitles somebody to study at a university or university of applied sciences in Germany (Hochschulzugangsberechtigung - HZB). In Germany the HZB can be received with Abitur or Fachhochschulreife.

If you own school or university certificates from abroad, please submit the following documents with your application for further examination:
• copy of the page(s) of your passport including your name and photo
• school leaving certificate, which gives you the right to study in the country in which it was issued, including the list of subjects and marks
• curriculum vitae with a list of previous trainings (in tabular form)
• certificate of university entrance examination (including list of marks) or matriculation receipt of a university, if available
  OR /AND

• university report with transcript, if available
  OR / AND

• certificate of passed assessment test, so called „Feststellungsprüfung“ including a list of grades, if available

You can take the exam „Feststellungsprüfung“, if your school leaving certificate from your home country is not sufficient for studying in Germany but for applying to a Studienkolleg. More information and application material are e.g. available at the Studienkolleg of the University of Applied Sciences Kiel (FH Kiel):

**Studienkolleg**

FH Kiel
Heikendorfer Weg 93
D-24149 Kiel
Tel. 04 31/2104-830  Fax: 0431/2104-831

If you are applying ONLY to our university, we will examine your documents and tell you if your certificates are sufficient. If you are more GENERALLY interested in studying in Germany you can show your certificate to the Ministry of Education and the Arts (Kultusministerium) of one of Germany’s 16 lands for a general examination. You would then, by the payment of a fee, receive an examination certificate which proves the equivalence with a German high school degree and, if your grade is sufficient, it proves, that your degree enables you to study in Germany.
Please take into consideration the following hints for applicants from the People’s Republic of China and Vietnam and the hints for applications to higher semesters / change of program of studies:

https://en.fh-westkueste.de/international/incoming-students/international-applicants/

If you are refugee, please also check this information:

https://en.fh-westkueste.de/international/refugees/

We will only consider complete applications! Please send us authenticated copies of the above mentioned documents with German or English translations in case the documents’ language is different.

2.1.1.2 Language requirements for German programs of study

Following programs of study require a proof of German language skills:

**Bachelor**
- B.A. Business Administration (BWL)
- B.A. Business Administration – Trial Model (BWL-TM)
- B.Sc. Electronics / Information Technology (E/I)
- B.A. Real Estate Business Studies (REBS)
- B.A. International Tourism Management (ITM)
- B.Sc. Management and Technology (MuT)
- B.A. Business Psychology (WiPsy)
- LL.B. Economics and Law (WiR)

**Master**
- M.Sc. Automation Technology (AT)
- M.Sc. Green Energy (GE)
- M.Sc. Microelectronic Systems (MeS)
- M.A. International Tourism Management (ITM)
- M.A. Business Psychology (WiPsy)
- M.A. Business, Media & Psychology, online, part time

On the following website you can find a list with the language certificates that are approved by the West Coast University of Applied Sciences:
https://en.fh-westkueste.de/international/incoming-students/international-applicants/
Please enclose one of the mentioned certificates to your application.

2.1.1.3 Language requirements for English programs of study
For the program of study International Tourism Management M.A. which is starting in English each summer term, a proof of your English language skills is needed. If you are interested in this study program, please attach a copy of an English certificate, which is approved by the FHW and applicable to the B2-level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). You can find more details about the conditions in the regulations for the conduct of examinations (Prüfungsordnung) for your selected program of study at
https://www.fh-westkueste.de/hochschulprofil/rechtliches/studierende/ (German). If you have questions regarding the contents, you can contact the ITM-office at itm@fh-westkueste.de. An English information sheet is available at: https://en.fh-westkueste.de/international/downloads/.

2.2 Application for an exchange semester at FH Westküste
2.2.1 Students of partner universities
Students, who would like to study for one or more semesters at the FHW, due to the bilateral agreement with their home university, should be nominated by their home university. Afterwards you will be contacted by the FH Westküste to get the application form and more information.
2.2.2 Students of non partner universities

Students applying from other universities, which do not obtain a bilateral agreement with the FH Westküste, have to contact us directly. The students have to apply like regular students and have to fulfil the same requirements.

(See section 2.1 Application for a program of study with degree at FHW)

2.3 Prepare your stay

2.3.1 Formalities

2.3.1.1 Visa

Please gather information at the German Embassy in your country, whether you will need a visa for your stay in the Federal Republic of Germany during your studies and which formalities are required. By doing this at an early stage of your application, you will be able to have the documents of your visa application ready, once you receive your admission approval from the FHW. It is important to already make an appointment at the German Embassy or Consulate before you receive your acceptance letter, because in countries with a high demand for visa waiting times of several months can occur.

Once you received your written admission approval from the FH Westküste, you should organize your visa as soon as possible. Please do not travel with an invalid or tourist visa, because these can neither be extended nor changed to another resident permit!

If you think about working part time during your stay at the FHW, please request about your rights and obligations at the German Embassy or read their website. Working in the Federal Republic of Germany without a working permit is considered a criminal offence!

2.3.1.2 Accomodation

The accomodation during your program of study at the FHW is another thing that you should organize ahead of time. For international students we recommend to stay in student housing or to share apartments with other students.

Here you can find the application form for a room in the dormitory:

Please notice the deadlines which are announced on the website! Applying as soon as possible is recommendable because the places are very popular.

You can find private offers for apartments at the housing market on our website:

http://en.fh-westkueste.de/campus-service/heide-area/

or at private websites like: www.wg-gesucht.de.

All private offers listed on our website are provided without guarantee.

Please don’t come to Heide before having organized a place to stay. It is almost impossible to find a room within one day. Please make sure to inform the International Office (aaa@fh-westkueste.de) about the exact date and time you will arrive in Heide 3 days before your arrival at the latest, so that we can plan a welcome meeting and get help for your first steps. Please also inform your landlord or facility manager about your arrival date.

2.3.1.3 Health Insurance

For the enrolment at the FHW a confirmation of your health insurance is required. Therefore you need to be member of a statutory health insurance before your enrolment date.

With the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) you have coverage in Germany. If you don’t possess an EHIC, you need to apply for a membership in a German statutory health insurance.

In case you understand German, you can find a complete list of available health insurances in our region at https://www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/krankenkassenliste.pdf and choose one according to your preferences.

The reason why you need to be insured with a statutory health insurance is that they protect students in case of necessity:

1. statutory health insurances have no limit, private insurances can just be accepted as equivalent when they have an unlimited amount insured, travel insurances are not accepted
2. when insured by private insurance companies bills from hospitals etc. often have to
be paid in advance which means the students can get bills with high amounts and need to wait until the insurance company refunds them these costs. Furthermore privately insured patients often get more expensive services (sometimes with no substantial advantage for the recovery of the patient in comparison to statutory insured patients, bills can rise very fast, the hospital is still the same).

If you are not sure your selected insurance is sufficient for enrolment you can send us scans of the insurance you want to have before you make a contract so that we can tell you if it is an accepted one or not.

### 2.3.2 Tuition fees

At most universities in Germany you have to pay tuition fees. Since you have decided to study at the FHW, a university in the land of Schleswig-Holstein, you currently do not have to pay any tuition fees. The only fee, that you are required to pay is a semester contribution in a timely manner. The semester contribution is currently €75.00 (€63.00 for the Student Union of Schleswig-Holstein and €12 for the Student Union of the FHW).

This fee contributes to the canteen, student housing and for student counselling as well as leisure programs and sports for students. It is rather an administration fee that benefits the students.

### 2.3.3 Living expenses

The costs of living in and around Heide are rather cheap in comparison to big cities like Hamburg and Munich. On websites like [www.wg-gesucht.de](http://www.wg-gesucht.de) you get an overview of the current prices for shared apartments. You should not forget to calculate the costs for university material, sightseeing tours, the nightlife in Heide and of course for groceries. Getting around in the city is easiest by bicycle or by foot. Once you have accomodated to the daily life in Germany, 700-800 Euro a month should be sufficient.

One cost item, you should know, is the „Rundfunkbeitrag“ which has to be paid by every household in Germany. It is a monthly fee which finances the public broadcasting companies. In certain cases you can file a petition to being excepted from payment. Further
2.3.4 Financing your studies

If you are already living in Germany, you might be entitled to BAFöG, a financial aid for German students and students with an equal status. Here you can find more information about Bafög:

http://www.studentenwerk.sh/de/bafoeg (German).

If you come from a country outside of the European Union, you will have to finance your studies on your own. Under certain circumstances you might be able to work for a short period of time. Nevertheless, once you have found a job you need to get a working permit from the employment agency (Agentur für Arbeit). For this you have to apply at the immigration authorities (Ausländerbehörde). If you are from a country within the European Union you are able to work after consulting the immigration authorities.

For information regarding part-time jobs this website of the DAAD is very informative and helpful:


Moreover, you can apply for a scholarship. The database of the DAAD provides you with scholarship offers.


The information is available in German, English and Spanish. If you would like to apply for a scholarship, please do so in sufficient time. For most of the scholarships you will have to apply from your home country before you travel to Germany. Some programs require one year or more of preparation time.

More information at:
2.3.5 Travelling to Heide

2.3.5.1 By Plane

The closest airport is Hamburg Fuhlsbüttel. The airport is directly connected to the rail network, so that you can reach your train with direction „Heide“ through the suburban line S1 („S-Bahn“). You find the train connections at https://www.bahn.de/p_en/view/index.shtml. You can also buy the tickets already online. When you type in the data for the search of your connection, you need to look „from: Hamburg Airport“ and „to Heide (Holst)“.

The fastest connection to reach Heide from Hamburg Airport by train would be by taking S1 directly to Hamburg-Altona and change to the train to Heide. Alternatively you can take a train connection S1 from Hamburg Airport to Hamburg Hbf and change the train to Hamburg Hbf-Elmshorn regional train and get out in Elmshorn to take the train to Heide. You can also buy the tickets at DB-vending-machines in the airport building or outside on the platform. There are voluntary students in the student union (AStA) who can manage to pick you up from the train station in Heide and help you to get to your apartment. But there is no
guarantee that they will be available at the date you are arriving. To increase the chance that you are going to be picked up you should inform us (aaa@fh-westkueste.de) about your exact arrival date in time at least 3 days before your arrival.

2.3.5.2 By Train

Please read the instructions in „By Plane“. Many travel agencies offer bookings of train connections.

2.3.6 After your arrival

After moving into your apartment, you should attach a piece of paper with your last name written on it to your letter box, so that your mail can reach you. If you receive official mail and you don’t understand it, please don’t throw it away. You should ask someone who understands German well or come to our office as soon as possible. Ignoring official mails is often not recommendable.

Groceries and other daily purchases can be bought in numerous supermarkets in Heide. The opening hours can differ more or less from those in your home country. Usually shops are open from Monday to Saturday. On weekdays smaller shops often close at 6 pm, Saturdays at 1 or 4 pm. Bigger shops or supermarkets are open until 8, partly also until 9 or 10 pm. On Sundays and legal holidays all shops are closed. If you need to go to a public administration or see a doctor on Wednesdays, you need to go there in the morning, because they are often not open in the afternoon. It is recommendable to check the opening hours before in the internet. If you have an urgent health problem outside the visiting hours you can get medical treatment from the A and E department („Notfallambulanz“) of the hospital. Surgery hours take place until 9 pm. You get more information on the website of the hospital („Westküstenklinikum“) at https://www.westkuestenklinikum.de/ (German). Our university is usually open from Monday to Friday.

Mobile cards and internet access (not necessary in the student dorm near the campus, because already existing), can be purchased in electronic stores (Expert, MediaMarkt) or providers’ shops (Vodafone, O2 etc.). Compare prices, some companies offer a tariff for students. If you get offered a contract and you are not sure, if you understood the contents,
ask someone who is fluent in German (e.g. us, fellow students, friends) for help, before you sign. Signed contracts have a high legal relevance in Germany, also internet purchases.

If you have a laptop, tablet or smartphone you can use the free wifi on campus. The access can be obtained from Mr. Hell or Mr. Neumann. Their office is in the building „Wirtschaftsturm“ on the 1st floor. Computers can be used in the library and the pc labs („DV-Labore“). If you want to print something, you can use the printer in the computer labs. You just need to bring your own paper. Cards for the photocopier in the library can be obtained in the ASTA office.

At the latest after having bought the first groceries and articles, you will be asking yourself, how to dispose of packages and remains. The waste management company „Abfallwirtschaft Dithmarschen“ provides a practical poster at

https://www.awd-online.de/fileadmin/media/PDF__s/plakat-dina3.pdf

on which you can have a quick look on how waste must be separated. Returnable bottles can be given back at the same place where you bought them. Bottles and tins with this sign can be put into a machine with the same sign on it. With the receipt the machine prints out afterwards you get your deposit back at the cash desk.
3. First steps at the FHW

In order for you to be able to adapt yourself quickly to the campus life, the International Office will help you with your first steps and will provide a German course for international students at the beginning of the first semester (winter term). For being able to participate, you will have to arrive on time for the beginning of the semester. In your admission papers you will find the exact dates.

Upon arrival in Heide you should take the following steps. The student union of the university (AStA) and the International Office assist you, therefore you should get into contact with the International Office now at the latest.

1. Payment of the semester fee („Semesterbeitrag“)
2. Enrolment at university
3. Registration for health insurance
4. Registration at Town Hall (Rathaus)
5. Registration at the Authority for Foreigners („Ausländerbehörde“) of the administrative district „Kreis Dithmarschen“
6. If necessary, open a German bank account
7. Connect to your course of study to find out more about the courses you wish to attend

In order to take part in courses and exams you need an access to the course management system „Moodle“ and the self-service function of the campus management system „HIS“ (contact persons for Moodle: the administrators of the faculty of economics, HIS: Mr. Neelsen).

A German course is offered before and during the semester. It is recommended to take part in both.

The AStA are introducing themselves on their homepage www.asta-westkueste.de. They organize many leisure activities and services for the students.
4. During your stay

4.1 Sport

There are various sports clubs and fitness centres in and around Heide offering many disciplines. By having paid your semester fee you also have the possibility to take part in the AStA’s sports programme at no charge. You can see the current offer at the AStA’s office on your way to the canteen.

4.2 Moving house

If you move during your studies, it is important, that you change your address in HIS, inform the town hall within one week after the move and keep further organizations, which are sending you letters or need your address for some reason, updated (health insurance, doctors etc.).

4.3 In Case of Emergency

If you need to go the doctor or a clinic, you must take your health insurance card with you.

Phone numbers for emergencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone: 0481 7850</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>Esmarchstraße 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>110*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency call/Fire brigade</td>
<td>112*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* works all over Germany

If you have difficulties with studies or daily life in Germany and can’t solve them alone, you need to talk to someone about it. You can also come to us (the International Office). Even if we can’t help you, we can name the relevant institution or contact to turn to, or explain ways to get further. You shouldn’t ignore these problems, but actively do something. We want you to study successfully at the FHW and to have a wonderful time in Heide.
5. After your stay

When you finish your studies at the West Coast University of Applied Sciences, it is important that you arrange some formal steps before leaving.

To leave the university duly you have to send an application for deregistration to the student Counselling / Admissions office (Studienberatung / Zulassung). There you will get a control slip on which some positions of the FHW have to sign (e.g. course of study coordinator, caretaker, library).

To find more information:
https://en.fh-westkueste.de/students/confirmation-and-deregistration/

Therefore, please make sure that you deal with your exmatriculation within the regular opening times. As soon as you pass in your control slip filled out completely at the student Counselling / Admissions Office (Studienberatung / Zulassung) you will be exmatriculated.

Please note that only afterwards, your certificate or your transcript of records will be generated through the examination office. If you finished your degree studies at the West Coast University of Applied Sciences, you will be issued personally with your certificate at the examination office. If you shouldn’t be in Heide anymore and wish a delivery by post, please deposit the postage at the post office. Exchange students will get the transcript of records sent by post to their home university in connection with the semester abroad. This can take up to 6 weeks.

If you are on the point of leaving you should also sign off at the citizens town hall (Rathaus). If you are moving to another city in Germany you have to re-register at your new residence. In this case a sign off is not necessary. Through the sign off or the re-registration other institutions like the authority for foreigners and the “Rundfunkbeitrag” (licence fee agency for general public access to radio and television) will learn that you don’t live in Heide or Germany anymore. If you leave Germany you should also cancel fee-based memberships like for example the health insurance by a letter of dismissal in written form.