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Hochschule Konstanz
Technik, Wirtschaft und Gestaltung

International Office

International Exchange Student Handbook



How the Corona Pandemic may affect your Studies

The corona pandemic and the measures introduced to contain it have had a major impact on life at the University of Applied Sciences Konstanz since March, 2020. These new circumstances will also most likely have an effect on your exchange semester at our university.

The University of Applied Sciences Konstanz must conform to the corona regulations determined by the state of Baden-Württemberg. We can not foresee, how the semester and the courses will look like (online, hybrid, in-person). But we will let you know as soon as possible. Nevertheless the exchange program will take place.

In order to stay up to date, please make use of the following information sources:

1

Please check your **emails regularly** and read them carefully for any key updates.

—

2

Check the International Office website for the **latest campus news**:
www.htwg-konstanz.de/en/the-university/facilities/international-office/about-current-news/

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3

Join our Facebook group to stay in touch with other exchange students:
htwg exchange winter 2021/22

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4

Please participate in all **information sessions offered by the International Office** to make your start at HTWG Konstanz as smooth and as possible.

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5

Please check the current **Corona & entry regulations** regularly:
www.baden-wuerttemberg.de/en/service/aktuelle-infos-zu-corona/corona-information-in-other-languages/

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The whole team of the International Office wishes you a great exchange semester and looks forward to welcoming you in beautiful Konstanz.

And remember: Please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions.

Welcome to Hochschule Konstanz University of Applied Sciences

We are very happy that you decided to study abroad at the HTWG – University of Applied Sciences in Konstanz (Constance), Germany. We at the International Office would like to personally welcome you to our beautiful region. We're sure this is going to be a great and rewarding experience for you.

This handbook was written for you, our international exchange students, to help ease your transition to the HTWG Konstanz (or, if you prefer, the University of Applied Sciences, Hochschule Konstanz or simply HTWG – we have a lot of names here). It contains a lot of practical information about living in Germany, getting settled in Konstanz and getting started at our university. Some of the information would be really good to know before you get here. For this reason, we recommend that you read this handbook before setting off on your trip.

The topics covered in this handbook include information about getting the right visa, traveling to Konstanz, finding accommodations, registering for classes, setting up a bank account, where to hang out on the weekend, and a whole lot more. We also provided a pre-departure checklist in the back to make sure you haven't forgotten anything before you get on the airplane.

We hope that this handbook answers all your questions. But of course, if you still have any other questions, please feel free to contact us.

We look forward to meeting you.

Have a great time in lovely Konstanz, Germany!



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Your Host Institution

Hochschule Konstanz

Welcome to the HTWG Konstanz - University of Applied Sciences! We would like to start by giving you an overview of the place you will be spending a semester or year.

Our university is located in the southern-most part of the Federal Republic of Germany, in the state of Baden-Württemberg. The HTWG Konstanz campus is situated along the banks of the Rhine River in a neighborhood called "Paradise", close to the historic center of the city of Konstanz. It was founded in 1906 as a private college for Mechanical, Electrical and Civil Engineering.

Today the HTWG Konstanz is a state university with 5,000 full-time students, 160 full-time professors and 120 adjunct instructors who work in the business world and teach courses related to their professional expertise. Students can earn practically-oriented bachelor's and master's

degrees in 20 technical and professional fields including Engineering, Architecture, Computer Science, Business and Communications Design. It is even possible to earn a PhD at our university.

The HTWG Konstanz is also an internationally-oriented university partly due to geography. Switzerland is only walking distance from our campus, and you can travel to Austria, France and even Italy within three hours. We have many connections to other colleges and universities across these borders and beyond. HTWG Konstanz students and faculty participate in exchange programs at more than 80 partner universities in 38 countries.

And we welcome students from around the world – like you – to come study in Konstanz. You are one of approximately 550 enrolled students from over 60 countries on our campus.



List of Degree Programs

The HTWG Konstanz offers the following bachelor's and master's degrees:

	BACHELOR	MASTER	
Department of Architecture and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architecture Communication Design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architecture Communication Design 	
Department of Civil Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil Engineering Environmental Engineering and Resource Management Civil Engineering and Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil Engineering / Environmental Engineering 	
Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automotive Information Technology Electrical Engineering and Information Technology Electrical Engineering and Management International Engineering and Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrical Systems International Project Engineering 	
Department of Computer Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied Computer Science Healthcare Computer Science Business Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Information Technology Computer Science 	
Department of Mechanical Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanical Engineering Mechanical Engineering and Management Process and Environmental Engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automotive Systems Engineering Industrial Engineering and Management Mechatronics Environmental and Process Engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering and Management: Civil Engineering Electrical Engineering Mechanical Engineering
Department of Business, Cultural, and Legal Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Administration Business Law Asian Studies and Management: China South-East and South Asia Business German and Tourism Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Management International Management Asia-Europe Legal Management 	

Contact information

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University of Applied Sciences
Alfred-Wachtel-Straße 8
D-78462 Konstanz
Germany

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+49 7531 206-0
Main Fax: +49 7531 206-400
E-mail: kontakt@htwg-konstanz.de
www.htwg-konstanz.de

The International Office and HelpingHand

As an incoming exchange student, the International Office at the HTWG Konstanz will assist you in dealing with bureaucratic formalities, choosing classes, and finding accommodations. We are also here to help you with both academic and personal issues. Please make an appointment with us if you need any help!

Telephone: +49 7531 206-252
or +49 7531 206-378

E-mail: aaa@htwg-konstanz.de
www.htwg-konstanz.de/en/academics/international-office/current-news/



HelpingHand is a student social organization that was designed to help international students feel at home during their studies in Konstanz. The group is made up of local students who have also studied abroad and know how important it is for exchange students to get in touch with locals in order to quickly orient themselves in their new surroundings, make friends, have fun and learn more about the other culture.

They help prepare the Orientation Week and set up city tours, local excursions, movie nights and show you around the local pub scene. It's a great chance to meet and hang out with local students and really get to know what's going on in the area.

For more information, drop them a line at: helpinghand@htwg-konstanz.de

Academics

This section will give you an overview of some of the essentials ...

Academic Calendar

The academic year is divided into two semesters. A semester officially lasts six months; however, lectures are only held four to five months out of each semester. The last month is set up for final exams, writing papers or completing projects –

and of course to give students some time off to travel and relax. The winter semester starts in October and ends in early February. The summer semester starts in mid-March and ends in mid-July.

fall semester											
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2
spring semester											

Orientation Program

The International Office offers an Orientation Program for incoming exchange students in March and September. The program is designed to give you important information about the university and living in Konstanz. Our staff will assist you with bureaucratic formalities, such as enrolling at the HTWG-Konstanz,

registering with the city of Konstanz, signing housing contracts, setting up a bank account etc. During this time you can brush up your German skills in a two-week intensive German language class (winter semester only). And we also have a lot of fun things planned: social get-togethers, cultural events and excursions.

German Language Courses

You will probably want to improve your German skills during your time in Konstanz. For this reason, the International Office offers **free** weekly German language classes for incoming exchange students.

These German language courses range from beginner's level to more advanced classes and Business German classes.



Choosing your Courses

What classes are you going to take during your exchange program? Here the general rule is that your home university/college needs to pre-approve the courses you take in Konstanz.

First take a look at the courses you would like to take at the HTWG Konstanz. Most courses at the HTWG Konstanz are taught in German.

However, there is a wide range of English-language courses in the Business, Business Law, Engineering and Computer Science programs.

You can find our catalog of English-language courses at: www.htwg-konstanz.de/de/studium/internationales-studium/internationale-studierende/austauschstudierende/studienmoeglichkeiten/courses-taught-in-english/

Types of Classes

There are many different types of classes at German Universities. There are traditional lectures, but also seminars, tutorials and labs taught in smaller groups. These classes often require active student participation (asking and answering questions, making small group presentations) to receive course credits.

Supervised project work with professors (e.g., lab work) can also be done in English. Please get in touch with the International Office first.

After choosing the courses you're interested in, get in touch with your home university for approval. Once you know which classes are accepted by your home university, please notify the International Office at the HTWG Konstanz of your planned course of study.

You will receive your schedule once you arrive in Konstanz. You can change your schedule within the first two weeks of classes (after checking with your home university).

This can be challenging for some students who are not used to speaking in class, but keep in mind that your instructors may expect this (that's their teaching style). Although it may be challenging, it is a great opportunity to experience a different way of learning. Some of your courses may also include excursions, tutorials, guided case studies or group study projects.

Assessment / Grading

Studying at a German university is often a big change for students from other countries, particularly with regard to assessment and grading. Students in Germany do not often receive homework assignments, nor is their work checked regularly by the instructors – except in language classes where you usually have regular assignments. It's also important to know that most courses only have a final exam (no intermediate exams). Students are expected to study independently to prepare for classes and exams. But don't be surprised by this. Just because the professors don't give you homework, doesn't mean you don't have to do any work! Talk to your professors or the staff in the International Office if you need any support. In addition to face-to-face courses, you can also earn credits by carrying out an independent research project for a professor.

There are two grading systems used at the HTWG Konstanz: the traditional German grading scheme and the ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) scheme. You will receive both types of grades in your classes.

The German grading system uses grades from 1.0 – 5.0 to assess student performance:

1.0 - 1.3	Excellent
1.7 - 2.3	Good
2.7 - 3.3	Satisfactory
3.7 - 4.0	Passing
5.0	Failure

Class Size / Materials

The typical class size at the HTWG Konstanz is between 20 and 25 students (depending on the type of class). Most classes use course materials selected by the instructor (often referred to as a "script"), which you normally have to print out yourself.

The ECTS grading system is a standardized system used across the European Union to make grades comparable across different university systems (so you can transfer to a university in another country). It is based on the workload (attending courses, independent studies, project work, examinations etc.) needed to achieve a program's learning outcomes and competencies.

Grades range from A-F and include keywords and short qualitative definitions to allow your home institution to convert the ECTS grade to their own system if needed.

The ECTS grading system uses this scale:

A: Outstanding performance without errors

B: Above average standard but with minor errors

C: Generally sound work with some errors

D: Fair but with significant shortcomings

E: Performance meets the minimum criteria

F: Failure – considerable further work is required

P: Ungraded pass – student receives credit (but no grade) for the class, most often having completed a final exam

Student Facilities at the HTWG Konstanz

Faculty

HTWG Konstanz courses are taught by professors and instructors. All teaching faculty have the required academic qualifications – usually a Ph.D. / minimum of a master's degree. A special feature at the HTWG Konstanz is that all professors must have several years of real-world experience working in business or industry.

Holidays

Many student are happy to learn that Germany – and particularly southern Germany (where Konstanz is located) - has a lot of holidays. There are both national holidays and religious holidays. Classes do not take place on these holidays.

The following is a list of the key holidays:

Winter Semester:

Tag der deutschen Einheit (Reunification Day): October 3

Allerheiligen (All Saint's Day): November 1

Christmas and New Year's Break: Two weeks (late Dec – early January)

Your professors also have weekly office hours where you are welcome to come in and discuss any questions you have about the course. You can also communicate with your instructors via email. Take advantage of this: it is a central part of their job to be available to students!

Summer Semester:

Ostern (Easter) - Good Friday through Easter Monday: usually in April

Tag der Arbeit (Labor Day): May 1

Christi Himmelfahrt (Ascension Day): 40 days after Easter, always on a Thursday, and usually in May

Spring Break – Pfingsten (Pentecost) week: usually in June

Fronleichnam (Corpus Christi): 10 days after Pfingsten, always on a Thursday, usually in June



The ZACK Card (Student ID)

The so-called ZACK card (a mouthful in German: "Zahlungs- und Ausweiskarte Campus Konstanz") is your important, multi-purpose student identification card. Don't lose it. Besides providing identification, you can use the ZACK card to borrow books at the library, buy food and drink in the Mensa (our cafeteria), and make copies or scan documents on the many copy machines on campus.

At the start of each semester, you will need to validate your card at the terminal in the library. You can put money on your card on other terminals (there's one in the cafeteria and library). You need money on your card to pay for lunch in the dining hall, upstairs.

The Library (Bibliothek)

The HTWG Konstanz library is located in the older orange and gray building (in former times a slaughterhouse) directly on the Rhine. It has won a number of awards among German university libraries. Go on in and find out why. Besides offering great places to stare out the window at the river while studying, it has a good collection of books and magazines, CD-ROMs and on-line databanks, as well as Internet access on the computers in the middle of the library.

It's a good place to study and write those papers, while catching up on the latest news in German and English.

Email Accounts / Computer Centers / Computer Support

One of the first things incoming students do is set up their HTWG Konstanz computer account. This not only gives you a new email address (xxx@htwg-konstanz.de), but also access to the Moodle online learning platform and the computer rooms on campus. You will receive an access code from us that you use to set up your account.

If you don't have your own laptop or are tired of staring at a small screen,

In the cafeteria, downstairs, you can buy food and drinks with your card or cash. You also need some money on your card to pay for photocopies, but you can scan documents for free.

The ZACK-Card is free of charge. However, you will have to pay a € 10 fee if you lose it. Keep in mind that the ZACK-Card also contains your personal data (such as your name, student number, library number, access codes) as well as the money loaded on it.



You can even borrow current films and documentaries to watch at home. You are unfortunately not allowed to bring your backpack into the library; they have to be stored in lockers (€1 deposit) or on shelves at the entrance.

The German library system may be different than at your home university. Take one of the library tours in order to better understand the system. Good news: we offer a tour of the library during your orientation program!

there are also plenty of computer centers on campus where you can check your email, do research on the Internet, or write those term papers. All enrolled HTWG Konstanz students can use the various computer centers on campus.

If you're having any problems with your computer or laptop, stop by the Help Desk in Building G, room 103b, and they will be happy to help you.

Food and Drink

The Dining Hall (Mensa)

The HTWG dining hall (known as the "Mensa") and the cafeteria are both located in the wood and glass building along the Rhine River right next to the library. Both offer fantastic views of the river. The dining hall is upstairs and serves warm meals at lunchtime (from 11:00 am to 1:45 pm). You can choose from three different meals, one of which is vegetarian or vegan (and surprise: may even be sweet!), or simply try several side dishes. You pay for meals by using your handy ZACK card.

If the food upstairs doesn't suit your palate, head downstairs to the cafeteria for some noodles or a sandwich.

The Beach Bar (Strandbar)

Right in front of the Mensa, on the riverside, is one of the highlights on the HTWG Konstanz campus: our very own beach bar, complete with real sand and cozy beach chairs. This is not only one of the students' favorite spots in spring and summer, but also an insider tip for locals.

Just grab yourself a cold drink, cocktail, ice cream or small snack, find yourself a couple of beach chairs, kick off your



The cafeteria also offers breakfast, snacks and several lunch items. They're open from 7:30 to 4.00 pm. This is a popular place to meet friends for coffee and enjoy the views. Here you have a bit more flexibility: you can either use your ZACK card or pay in cash.

If you're not happy with the Mensa or cafeteria food, leave the Seezeit team suggestions in the feedback box at the entrance. They try to be accommodating.

shoes and relax. There will most likely be some pleasant chill music playing in the background. Enjoy watching the lazy-rolling river flow by. And if it gets too hot, just walk across the street and go for a dip! If you're lucky, they'll even set up the barbecue and start grilling some hotdogs and steaks.

The Strandbar is open every day in the summer. The bar is self-service and only takes cash.

Student Café Endlicht

What would a European university be without its own cozy café, where students can take a break from their heavy work load and meet their friends for a cup of coffee and philosophize about life, the universe and everything?

This café, run by the AStA student union, is located in tiny Building E and is open from Monday – Thursday from 9:30am – 4:00pm and Fridays from 9:30am – 2:00pm. Great atmosphere, and they have the best prices in town!

Coming to Konstanz

So, you're getting ready to start your exchange year or semester. You've decided that Konstanz is the ideal place to experience another culture, language and surroundings. You've received your acceptance letter from the HTWG Konstanz. Now you just need to get a ticket, then pack your things and get over here.

Student Visas

So, first the visa. You should apply for the visa as soon as you receive your letter of acceptance from us. We here in the International Office will try to break it all down for you below and provide you with the most up-to-date information. However: please always check current visa requirements with the German Embassy / Consulate in your home country / country of residence since they are the only institutions that can give you current, legally-binding information.

General Visa Rules:

—
If you are an EU citizen: you do NOT need a visa

—
If you are a citizen of a non-EU country: you will need a '(Nationales) Visum für den längerfristigen Aufenthalt / (National) visa for longer stays'

—
However, there are exceptions: if you are a citizen of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, (South) Korea, New Zealand or the USA, you have two options:

—
Option 1 (strongly recommended!): apply for a '(Nationales) Visum für den längerfristigen Aufenthalt / (National) visa for longer stays'

—
Option 2: you can enter Germany without a visa but, in this case, you'll have to apply for an electronic residence permit in Konstanz upon your arrival.

But before you do that, you should take care of your visa. Let's take a quick look at the visa options to make sure you get the right one and can avoid any unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles. Then we'll look into how to get to Konstanz and the HTWG Konstanz and registering locally.

National Visa Details:

As mentioned above, we strongly recommend that exchange students from non-EU countries apply for the "(Nationales) Visum für den längerfristigen Aufenthalt / (National) visa for longer stays" according to Art 18(2) of the Schengen Convention.

This type of visa costs € 75 and allows you to stay in Germany for a period of 3 to 12 months. Although it is called a "national visa", this visa allows you to freely move within the Schengen Area (currently consisting of 26 countries) for up to three months in any six-month period. The visa is issued by the embassy or consulate in your home country. If you enter Germany with this visa, you do NOT have to apply for an electronic residence permit in Konstanz.

Other Types of Visas:

This whole visa issue can be quite complicated and confusing. What's even more confusing is that there also a number of other visas that may sound good, but are NOT the correct visa for you. For example, you should in no case apply for the "Schengen Visa", "Tourist Visa" or "Visa for Study Purposes".

The "Schengen Visa" and "Tourist Visa" do not allow you to study in Germany. The "Visa for Study Purposes" is only valid for three months. After that, you would have to apply for an electronic residence permit, which would cost you more money (visa fees + at least 100 € for the electronic residence permit), several personal visits to the Konstanz Immigration Authorities and a lot of paperwork. The whole application process for the electronic residence permit takes about three months.

If you are unsure about which visa to select or having difficulties with the application process for your visa, please contact the HTWG Konstanz International Office so we can help you.

And remember: do not apply for any of the other visa types!

How and when to apply:

Please apply for your visa at a German Embassy/Consulate immediately after receiving your acceptance letter from the HTWG Konstanz. Processing your visa may take up to 6 – 8 weeks after you have submitted all of your documents to the Federal Republic of Germany Consulate!

Documents you need for your visa:

All students who need a visa to enter Germany will receive the following documents for the visa application from the International Office at the HTWG Konstanz:

- Formal invitation letter
- Admission letter from the HTWG Konstanz
- A statement exempting you from the prerequisite German language certificate, if necessary.

Please contact us if you need proof of health insurance coverage by a German health insurance provider for the visa application.

Proof of Financial Resources:

Whether you decide to apply for a visa or an electronic residence permit, you will also have to show that you have enough money to cover your living costs in Germany. This currently means that you have at least enough money (now) to cover an average of at least € 853 per month (they're very precise about these things here).

They also want you to be quite precise in showing them you actually have that € 853 per month. You do this by turning in a proof of financial resources, which is checked by both the German embassy/consulate and the Konstanz Immigration Authorities. As strange as it sounds, the Konstanz authorities are actually stricter than the embassies/consulates. We therefore recommend that you only turn in ONE proof with your visa application – one that fulfils the requirements in Konstanz.

The Konstanz Immigration Authorities accepts the following four proofs of financial resources. Important detail: **you only have to turn in ONE of these.**

- Financial guarantee from a parent (original version! Scans and copies are not accepted)
- Formal obligation (Verpflichtungserklärung) – a German citizen who agrees to sponsor your studies in Germany
- Blocked account (Sperrkonto) – a special kind of account that has a specified amount of money per month and cannot be overdrawn. We recommend the bank, Fintiba. You can open a blocked account online. Please note however that US citizens cannot open a blocked account at Fintiba. American students should use the Deutsche Bank instead.
- Confirmation of scholarship

Please refer to our website for more details.

Electronic Residence Permit

As mentioned above, we strongly recommend that exchange students from non-EU countries apply for the "(Nationales) Visum für den längerfristigen Aufenthalt / (National) visa for longer stays". However, students from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, (South) Korea, New Zealand or the USA can enter Germany without a visa – but then have to apply for an electronic residence permit in Konstanz upon arrival. This residence permit can be extended to cover the period of your exchange program at the HTWG Konstanz.

Arrival

Now that you've dealt with the bureaucratic side of your trip, please feel free to start packing your bags and looking into a reasonable ticket to Europe. Since Europe is so compact, you can check prices to a number of fairly nearby airports – and then just catch a train or long-distance bus to Konstanz. Most of our students fly into one of these three airports:

Zurich Airport (Switzerland) – this is actually the closest international airport to Konstanz (about 60 km away). After grabbing your bags from the carousel, make your way to the airport train station (right in the airport). There you can buy a ticket to Konstanz at the counter or from one of the machines – or of course online at www.sbb.ch – for about 30 Swiss Francs. There are direct trains to Konstanz every hour. Recover from your jet lag by enjoying the scenery of rural Switzerland.

Stuttgart Airport (Germany) – this is the second closest international airport. Here you have to first catch a tram (S-Bahn) to the Stuttgart Main Station (Hauptbahnhof). You can buy a ticket from the airport to Konstanz either at one of the counters, one of the red (unnecessarily complicated) machines or online at www.bahn.de. The trip takes approximately two and a half hours and costs about € 45. Trains to Konstanz leave every hour or so and involve changing trains in Singen.

Just keep in mind that choosing this route will mean a number of visits to the Konstanz Immigration Authorities and a lot of paperwork – and it will take up to three months. Our staff at the International Office will of course support you through this long bureaucratic process.

In order to get an electronic residence permit, you will also have to show that you have enough money to cover your living costs in Germany. (See "Proof of financial resources" above).

Frankfurt Airport (Germany) – this is Germany's largest airport, and a little bit further away. But the price may make it worth the longer trip to Konstanz. The good news is that you can catch a train to Konstanz right in the airport rail station – they leave every two hours. It's a five-six hour train trip (enough time to let your jetlag wear off) that involves changing trains, and costs about € 80. You can also buy your ticket at the station or from one of those ubiquitous red machines, or just buy it online at www.bahn.de.

Other Airports – If you're not happy with the prices to the "Big Three" airports above, you can also try to find a better deal to Munich (Germany), Basel (Switzerland). Or better yet: book a flight to one of the Italian or French cities, do a bit of sightseeing, and then make your way to Konstanz.

Living in Konstanz

Location

The HTWG-Konstanz is located in the city of Konstanz (Constance in English), the southernmost city in Germany, directly on the Swiss border. Konstanz is also located directly on the biggest lake in Central Europe, Lake Constance (known as the "Bodensee" in German). This is a beautiful region of gentle hills, water, islands, and old castle ruins – an area that has drawn writers and artists for centuries. There is plenty of nature here as well as many cultural events.

The city of Konstanz is the largest and most attractive city on Lake Constance and a focal point in the "Euregio Bodensee" (the European region that includes western Austria and eastern Switzerland). Konstanz is a well-known tourist destination, thanks to its attractive natural surroundings, extensive recreational opportunities and its historical and cultural riches.

Apart from its beauty, the city is also known for its R & D activity in various fields and its engineering, pharmaceutical, biotech and media companies, not to mention tourism.

Accommodations

You will of course need a place to stay during your studies in Konstanz. Here you have a number of options. Since you're most likely here to get a taste of German culture and language, the best option is probably to live in one of the student dorms. Dorms are definitely the affordable way to go - usually much cheaper and easier to find than private housing.

The Seezeit – Student Union Lake Constance operates 13 dorms in Konstanz with rooms for about 3,000 students.



The HTWG Konstanz has partnerships with many of these companies, giving students ample opportunities to complete an internship semester or doing their theses at the company.

Konstanz is known as a "university town", meaning there are many students (about 16,000) and a rich student life here. In addition to HTWG Konstanz, there is also the University of Konstanz, a separate college, located up the hill. You can find more information about student life in the city at the Studying without Borders website: www.studying-without-borders.com

There are many different types of dorms – from individual rooms to rooms in a shared flat (what the Germans call a "Wohngemeinschaft" or "WG" for short). The dorms here are co-ed (shared by both men and women) and each student has his or her own room. All rooms are furnished with a desk, chair, wardrobe, desk lamp, bed and shelves. Students are responsible for bringing their own towels and room decoration – and of course their own food and all study-related materials.

The rent is very reasonable: between € 260 and € 360 per month for a single room, including all utilities (heat, electricity, and water), use of the kitchen and bedding. Unfortunately, not all dorms provide pots and pans and plates, meaning you will have to organize your own or share with fellow students. Don't worry, though. Students who move out will often sell you their old kitchen utensils for song. If not, please get in touch with us at the International Office.

Health Insurance

We want to make sure you stay healthy during your time in Konstanz. That's why all exchange students – like all full-time HTWG Konstanz students – must have a German health insurance plan. The good news is that student health insurance plans are quite reasonable as far as health insurance plans go. If you are under the age of 30, you can get a subsidized student insurance plan for about € 105 per month. Students over the age of 30 must sign up for a private health insurance plan which is slightly more expensive. Contact us for more information.

There are a number of different health insurance companies in Konstanz, all offering the same premiums. Students are free to choose their own provider. One company we have had positive experiences with is the AOK Health Insurance company which has an office just a five minute stroll from campus. One of the advantages of choosing AOK is that they send the insurance membership certificate you need for your visa application to your home address – without any need for documents or advance payments. You can take care of the rest when you get to Konstanz. Please contact the International Office for their contact details.

So, how do you get one of these great dorm rooms? It's easy. You first need to fill out the online application at the International Office website (www.htwg-konstanz.de/en/academics/international-office/international-students/incoming-exchange-students-from-partner-universities/application-process/). Then transfer 550 € in advance to Seezeit (€ 500 € security deposit + € 50 Euro administrative fee). The Seezeit bank details can be found on our website. After transferring the money, send us a copy or scan of the receipt. You are guaranteed to get a room in one of the dorms.

All insurance plans are valid for a complete six-month semester (September – February for the winter semester and March – August for the summer semester). If you can't attend the Orientation Program in September and arrive in Konstanz in early October, you will only be charged starting in October (for a total of five months).

Please note: You officially register for your student health insurance at the orientation program or at the start of the semester. If you are arriving in Germany / Europe before the orientation program (to do some traveling for example), we highly recommend that you get a traveler's or international health insurance for that time so that you don't get stuck paying for any expensive medical treatment.

Public Transport

Konstanz is an easy city to get around. A lot of places can be reached on foot. If you're in the dorms near the HTWG campus, you can easily walk to your classes or into town in about 5 minutes.

But Konstanz also has a good public transportation system. An extensive bus system will get you wherever you need to go. If you plan to use buses regularly, it is a good idea to buy a Student Ticket ("Studi-Ticket"), which is valid for unlimited trips on the city buses (and as far as Landschlacht in Switzerland) and even the ferry to Meersburg, which is a cool thing to do on the weekend (you can even take your bike on the ferry). The Schottenplatz stop near the HTWG Konstanz campus is a major hub in the bus network. The Student Ticket is a good deal at € 56 per semester.

Insider Tip: All HTWG Konstanz students pay the so-called "solidarity fee" every semester. This gives you the benefits of the Student Ticket – for free – after 7.00 P.M. (but not including the late night buses). So remember that you can hop on buses to get home in the evening in any case.

Money

Budgeting

As we mentioned earlier in the Visa section, you can expect to need about € 850 a month to live and study in Konstanz. Rent in the dorms will put you back about € 260 – 360 a month, and you will need about € 400 a month for food, clothing, and other expenses. You should also plan on having a little extra money for small indulgences – like that wonderful book in the English Bookstore, or that weekend excursion to hike up the Hohentwiel Fortress in Singen.

Here are some of the typical basic monthly expenses for students:

The easiest way to get around town, though, is by bike. If you live in Konstanz, consider getting yourself a bike. You can get around the city very well on two wheels. 195 km of bike paths in and around Konstanz make this a great biking city. It's no surprise then that Konstanz has one of the highest percentage of cyclists in all of Germany. You can buy a second-hand bike at one of the local bike auctions or by checking the newspaper, Facebook groups, or posters hung around the campus. Expect to pay anywhere from € 20 – 100. Keep in mind that you might need to do some work on the bikes at the cheaper end of the spectrum.

Don't have your own bike yet or only want to use one occasionally? No problem. You can rent a „konrad“, one of the 150 bikes available around the clock from one of the 15 rental stations spread out across the city. And if you need to transport something heavier (like that new sofa or fridge), you can rent one of the TINK transport bikes with the big basket on the front. For more information on these rentals, go to: www.stadtwerke-konstanz.de/en/bicycle/bicycle-rental-system/

One-time costs (estimated):

- Residence permit fee: € 100
- Housing deposit: € 500 (approx.)
- Student dorm (Seezeit) registration fee: € 50
- Student services fee: € 77.50
- Student Ticket (bus pass): € 56 (per semester)

Monthly expenses (estimated):

- Rent for student housing € 260 – 360
- Health insurance € 105
- Food, clothing, extras € 400
- Cellphone plan € 10–15
- ARD / ZDF radio tax: € 17,50

Jobs

In order to have a bit of extra cash (or cover the expenses of studying in Konstanz), some students take on part-time jobs either on campus or elsewhere in town.

Opening a Bank Account

In order to be able to pay your rent or your health insurance or receive your wages from employers, you will need to open a bank account (called a "Girokonto") in Konstanz. Your rent and other monthly expenses can then be automatically debited from your account. This definitely beats paying for these things in cash. You can open an account at any commercial bank in Konstanz or with an online bank.

Credit & Debit Cards

Paying for things with plastic can be a bit of an adventure in Germany. Today, most of us need two cards to navigate the world of commerce: debit cards (connected to a specific bank account) and credit cards (not connected to a specific bank account).

Although credit cards are ubiquitous in most places around the world (including some other EU countries), Germany is not one of those countries. Most restaurants and smaller shops in this country do not accept credit cards. Many of them now accept debit cards connected to a bank account, but some don't take debit cards either – which can be a bit embarrassing if you're sitting in the restaurant and don't have any cash. That often leads to a lot of shoulder shrugging and pointing towards the next ATM, or offers to do the dishes (just joking).

International students from outside the EU are allowed to work 120 full days or 240 half days per year. Check the details of your visa before looking for a job.

Most student bank accounts are free of charge. You will need your passport and HTWG Konstanz student ID to open an account. A few days after you take care of the paperwork, you should receive an ATM (debit) card and online banking instructions and code in the mail. The International Office can assist you in opening a bank account if you do not already have one.

Don't leave your credit card at home, however. They are necessary for making online purchases, buying train tickets, or booking a hotel. Definitely bring your debit card – and remember to always have a bit of cash on hand.

Please note: Despite all of the talk about globalization, sometimes your regular credit card won't work here for the strangest reasons. Check with your bank before you leave to see if your card works in Germany, whether there is a limit on withdrawals, and whether they will charge you any extra fees. And make sure they know you'll be in Europe; sometimes accounts get frozen because of a "suspicious withdrawal" in another country. Last but not least: take your bank's contact information in case you need to call them because of card issues.

Telephones / Cell Phones

Cell phones are generally an important issue for exchange students. They are a great resource for staying in touch with family and friends or keeping up with news from back home. It's probably a lot cheaper to have a local telephone number than to use your phone from back home (unless you have a special international plan).

You have two mobile phone options: you can use pre-paid SIM cards or sign up for a cell phone plan. If you're planning to stay in Konstanz for less than a year, it makes sense to use prepaid SIM cards. These cards are available almost everywhere (supermarkets, phone shops, gas stations). Some offer a monthly flat rate for outgoing calls, internet and text messages. Incoming calls and text messages are free in any case.

Post Office

If you prefer to stay in touch the old-fashioned way by sending hand-written letters or want to send a package of German goodies home to your family or friends, you'll need to make a trip to the post office, run by the Deutsche Post. The main post office is located on the Marktstätte square in the center of town. There are also several smaller branches spread out across the city. German postal service is generally very reliable and fast, although they don't always like to deliver on Mondays.

There are also special pre-paid SIM-cards that offer lower per-minute prices for international calls – a great deal for those students who plan on calling home often and spontaneously.

A cell phone plan only makes sense if you're planning to stay in Konstanz for at least a year. Take the time to shop around for the best deal. And keep in mind that many providers only (want to) offer 2-year contracts. Just be a bit insistent. They often come up with better deals if they think you're going to walk over to the competition. You need a bank account ("Girokonto") and valid residence permit to sign a cell phone contract. These contracts generally offer a monthly flat rate for surfing and phoning.

Receiving packages from home can also be a bit tricky. You may end up having to stop by the customs office to clear up any questions they have about the contents. You may even have to pay import duties on some items. So, see if you can buy the item here before getting it sent from home.



Shopping

Besides buying those goodies to send home to your parents and friends, you will also need to do some shopping for yourself. Mainly you will probably be hitting the supermarkets and other food markets regularly. Food is often an important issue for exchange students who enjoy getting to know the local cuisine, but like to have some home-cooked comfort food once in a while. Fortunately things have gotten quite a bit better in this regard in recent years. There are now a number of ethnic supermarkets around town, and even the big supermarket chains have ethnic food sections (though don't expect to find everything your heart desires.)

Store hours:

Most shops in Konstanz are generally open from around 10.00 am to 6.00 or 8.00 pm on

weekdays. Most shops close sometime between 4.00 – 6.00 pm on Saturdays, although some may stay open as late as 8.00 pm. Grocery stores (supermarkets) are usually open on week days until 8.00 or 10.00 pm. A key point for foreign students to remember (and often a shock when they get here) is that all stores are closed on Sundays and public holidays, except for a few bakeries and gas stations that often have small (but expensive) grocery shops. You may be able to find an open supermarket across the border in Switzerland. Just don't get caught food-less on a Sunday – or use it as an opportunity to get in touch with your dorm mates. You can suggest that they invite you to brunch.

Bars and Clubs

The night life in Konstanz is one of the best in the area. There are many nice bars, wine pubs, music clubs and restaurants (about 100 in the city center), and there are regular HTWG Konstanz or University of Konstanz sponsored parties. These parties are often on campus or in the dorm bars. Sometimes they also sponsor parties in local clubs. You'll find plenty of posters around campus reminding you of the parties trying to make you feel some FOMO ("Fear of Missing Out").

Here is a sampling of some of the cool bars and restaurants in the city:

Blauer Engel Cocktailbar: Located in an old cellar with an impressive selection of freshly-made drinks, some consider this the best place in town for cocktails. Wednesday night, with half-price cocktails, is a particularly hopping time. Location: St. Johanngasse

Dom: This is a very trendy bar and restaurant and a great place to sit outside in summer. Well-known for their burgers. Location: Brückengasse

Heimat: This is a traditional European pub, a great place to chill and drink a beer. There are also party nights. Location: Schreiber-gasse

Irish pubs: Konstanz boasts not one, but three Irish pubs: Shamrock in the Bahnhofstrasse, Logan's in the Zogelmannstrasse, and Old Mary's in the Kreuzlinger Strasse. Guinness, Kilkenney, Beamish and Murphy's Stout are on tap, and they often have live music and sporting events (on TV), and even bingo or quiz nights.

Kantine: An alternative club and bar that regularly plays different kinds of music. Cool place to hang out, mainly frequented by students, cheap beer and cocktails. What else do you want? Location: Oberlohnstrasse

Strandbar: And don't forget our very own HTWG Konstanz bar, located directly on the Rhine behind the cafeteria. Grab a beach chair, kick off your shoes, and enjoy a drink in the sun. This is a wonderful place to chill after classes (open from May to mid-October). Location: on campus

Hafenhalle, Brigantinus and Stromeyer: The big three beer gardens in Konstanz, two located directly on the harbor (Hafenstrasse) and one (Stromeyer) located north along the Rhine in the former industrial area called "Stromeyersdorf". Cool place to hang out on a nice day.

Free Time and Leisure Activities

The city of Konstanz and its surroundings are full of attractions that draw many tourists year round. That means the 16,000 students studying at the HTWG Konstanz and the University of Konstanz have lots of things they can do in their free time. This includes a wide range of cultural and outdoor activities.

Let's start with culture. Konstanz, as the largest and most important city in the region, has excellent museums, theaters and its own symphony orchestra. Take a break from your studies, and go take in some culture. Besides being good for the soul, the tickets are incredibly cheap. Either get yourself a normal student-priced ticket in advance, or just show up a half an hour before the show and get one of the leftover tickets. Then go out for a drink afterwards at one of the classy bars and discuss the performance until late at night.

Besides the so-called "highbrow" culture, there are also great movie theaters (both mainstream and alternative), as well as lots of concerts around town. In summer there are musical festivals in the city. There is even one right on the HTWG Konstanz campus!

Discos / clubs: If you're looking to dance the night away, Konstanz also has a number of discos located in the city center and in the industrial areas („Industriegebiet") outside of town – so as not to disturb the neighbors. Check out Berry's, Grey, Kantine and Kula.

If you want to take in the big (or at least "bigger") city atmosphere, just hop on a train or bus to nearby cities like Zurich or Basel (in Switzerland), Freiburg, Stuttgart or Munich. There you will have an even wider range of cultural activities to enjoy. Their museums, theaters, concert halls and opera houses also offer inexpensive student tickets. Go for it! Your books can wait until you get back.



Places to see

And then there are the outdoor activities for which our region is so adored. In Konstanz itself, why not start with a trip to the Insel Mainau, an island just a short bus (or bike) ride from town, famous for its beautiful flower displays. Wander about under the magical old trees, enjoy the gorgeous flowers, visit the butterfly house, and take in a classical concert or play in the evening. The American Drama Group (ADG) comes once a year with their outstanding outdoor Shakespeare productions, performed right in the castle courtyard.

Other nearby excursions include: Insel Reichenau, another island, located on the Rhine River about 15 minutes from Konstanz. Three famous old churches, lots of water, and endless vegetable gardens. A great place to go for a stroll.

Meersburg, an enchanting small town with Germany's oldest inhabited castle, just a short ferry ride across the lake

Travelling

Many international students plan to travel around Europe during their time here while using Konstanz as a base. And why not? Konstanz is located right at the heart of Europe.

Getting around

... by train: for those who plan to travel a lot by train, get yourself an Interrail Pass for unlimited travel for a month or on a set number of days per month (www.interrail.eu/en). This is an unforgettable way to see Europe.

... by plane: for longer trips, you might want to consider flying. Ryanair, Easy Jet, Air Berlin and Eurowings offer cheap flights from local airports (like Friedrichshafen).

... by long distance bus: there are now a number of long-distance bus companies offering

Affenberg ("Monkey Mountain"), walk through a forested area near Salem where monkeys come and eat popcorn directly out of your hand. You can get there by hopping a train to Salem and then catching a local bus.

Hohentwiel, a former volcano close to Singen with Germany's oldest castle ruin draped over the top. Take the train to the Singen Landesgartenschau stop and hike up through vineyards to the Karls Bastion, then buy a ticket and go to the top for amazing views all the way to the lake and even to the Alps.

This is just a start. There are many other destinations only a short train ride away. The magnificent Rheinfall (waterfall) near Schaffhausen (in Switzerland) is worth a trip. And definitely make a trip to see the nearby Swiss and Austrian Alps. Hike or take a cable car to one of the peaks and spend the day in the mountains. It will be a day to remember.

You can easily reach 4-5 countries in a few hours: Switzerland is just a hop, skip and a jump away; you can get to Austria in about an hour, France in about 3 hours, Italy in maybe 4-5 hours.

bargain basement prices to other European cities. Flixbus (www.flixbus.de) and Eurolines (www.eurolines.de) are two of the more well-known carriers.

... by car: A cheaper way to get around Germany and Europe than planes, trains and buses may be to hitch a ride with another driver. Instead of sticking out your thumb at the side of the road, take a look at these websites that help connect riders and drivers: www.blablacar.de, www.mifaz.de, www.bessermitfahren.de

Fitness and Sports

The HTWG Konstanz and its sister university offer many possibilities to keep in shape. Whatever your favorite sport is, they probably offer it - from basketball, to sailing, rock climbing and, of course, Fussball (soccer). In winter you can add skiing and snowboarding to the list. You can get information about your options at the HTWG Konstanz sports administration office located in building E, room 007. Or go to their website: www.htwg-konstanz.de/hochschule/einrichtungen/hochschul-sport/programm/

Weather

And then there's weather, that most beloved topic of conversation. And Konstanz is no exception. So how is the weather in the area? In a word: mixed. You can have weeks of sunny, warm weather; and you can have a week straight of rain and clouds. Spring and summer tend to be very beautiful seasons here, whereas the winter can be cold and foggy for long stretches, only to be enlivened by a snow storm.

Spring temperatures generally range from 7 – 20°C / 45 – 70°F. Spring is a beautiful season full of blossoming trees and flowers. Yet, it can also be cool and rainy – which helps keep everything nice and green.

If you don't find what you're looking for there, you're sure to find it up the hill at the other university. All HTWG students also have access to the sports facilities and clubs at the University of Konstanz. Check out their website at: www.uni-konstanz.de/en/hochschulsport/hspkn/

Summer temperatures generally range from 18 – 30°C / 70 – 86°F. Summer is the time to be in and around Konstanz. People flock here in summer to enjoy beautiful days on and in the lake.

Fall temperatures generally range from 7 – 20°C / 45 – 70°F. It starts to get cooler here sometime in September (more towards the end in recent years). The hot summer leads to an autumn full of stunning colors.

Winter temperatures generally range from 0 – 7°C / 30 – 45°F. The winters can be cool and foggy with occasional (lately rare) snowfall. For more snow, take a day trip to the Black Forest (Triberg is often nice and snowy) or spend a day in the Alps.

A–Z Important Information

A

AAA – Akademisches Auslandsamt (International Office)

The International Office (located in Building B) will be your first stop after arrival. Our staff is here to help you get started at the HTWG Konstanz: dealing with bureaucracy, registering for classes, etc. We offer an orientation program for all international students. Stop by or get in touch if you have any questions.

Alcohol

Alcohol often plays a big role in German and student culture. Yet is also a privilege and a responsibility. Know your limits. The legal drinking age in Germany (for anything stronger than beer) is 18. It is permitted to drink in some public areas. Keep in mind that there are serious consequences for drinking and driving (cars and bikes).

AStA – Allgemeiner Studierenden-Ausschuss (Student Union)

The AStA is the student union at the HTWG Konstanz, representing students' interests on campus. Their goal is to assist and improve the situation for students at our university. Members are elected by the students. The AStA office is located in Building D.

C

Copies

If you need to copy something, you can use one of the many machines on campus. You can pay for copies using your ZACK (student ID) card. Scanning documents from the machines is free. For bigger printing jobs, try the 'Copy-Shop' on the Rheingutstrasse across from Building G.

E

Electricity

All electrical outlets in Germany are 220 volts, 50Hz alternating current, and use two pin plug sockets. You can buy adapters in Konstanz; however it's probably cheaper to buy one in your home country.

Emergency Numbers

Police – 110
Fire Department and Ambulance – 112

G

Getting Help

Sometimes we all need a little help. Even during a great time in our lives – like studying abroad – we may have some troubles. If you need someone to talk to, you can get help here:

The International Office: Call or email us to make an appointment.

The Student Advising Center on campus is also here to support students struggling with their studies or with personal issues: zsb@htwg-konstanz.de.

The Seezeit Counseling Services: The Seezeit offers psychological counseling for students. The service is free and confidential and they are here to help you with any personal problems you might be having during your studies at the HTWG Konstanz. You can set up an appointment at: pbs@seezeit.com, or tel: +49 7531 - 88 7310

Nightline Konstanz: A telephone service by students for students: www.nightline-konstanz.de/en/

J

Jobs

In order to have a bit of extra cash (or cover the expenses of studying in Konstanz), some students take on part-time jobs either on campus or elsewhere in town. International students from outside the EU are allowed to work 120 full days or 240 half days per year. Check the details of your visa before looking for a job.

L

Laundry

You'll find washers and dryers in all of the student dorms. Some are coin-operated

and some accept your ZACK Card. If you need to dry clean your clothes for that formal party you were invited to, you'll find a few in Konstanz. Check online. Don't be surprised if they're a bit pricey.

M

Measurements

If you are used to using US or English standard measurements, you may want to brush up your metric scale skills. It will definitely help you in day to day life in Germany. See the handy conversion table at the back of our handbook if you need a quick review!

Medication

If you're taking medication for a condition, please inform yourself about the German laws about bringing medication into the country – and if you can get prescriptions for this medication filled in Germany. Keep in mind that sending medicine by mail is illegal in Germany, and any sent medication will most likely get stuck at customs.

R

Recycling

Germany has the highest recycling rate in the world. Last year Germans recycled 56.1% of their waste. If you're used to tossing everything in one garbage can, you're in for a bit of culture shock. Germans have a lot of different colored garbage cans:

The black can for general waste ("Restmüll")

The brown can for organic, biodegradable waste ("Biomüll")

The blue can for paper ("Blaue Tonne")

And then there's the yellow bags ("Gelber Sack") for recycling packaging with the so-called – don't laugh now – green point ("Grüner Punkt").

It takes a bit of getting used to, but it's all about taking care of our environment.

S

Safety

Konstanz is a relatively safe city and the crime rate is low. However, as always, use common sense when you're out and about, especially at night.

Seenachtsfest

The Seenachtsfest is the biggest festival in Konstanz and takes place every year on a Saturday at the beginning of August. There are a lot of events going on in the city during the day. The highlight of the festival, however, takes place at night, when Konstanz hosts the largest lake firework display in all of Europe. This event should not be missed!

However, there are over 60,000 additional tourists in the city that day. Also here, use common sense.

Seezeit Studierendenwerk (Student Services)

This organization works behind the scenes for the German universities and colleges.

The Studierendenwerk provides and maintains services for students, such as the dining hall (Mensa), residence halls, and sports facilities. They also offer psychological counseling. All students pay a € 55 fee to this organization every semester that helps pay for these facilities and services.

The Seezeit Studierendenwerk (Student Services) is located at the University of Konstanz in wing K3.

T

Taxis

Taxis in Germany are generally expensive. You pay a fixed base rate plus a per kilometer price. You can find a number of taxi companies in the Internet. One of the most popular taxis among students is the Seeteufel (Tel.: +49 7531 44944).

Tipping

Another important thing to learn about Germany is the tipping culture, which is different than other countries. If you're eating in a restaurant or meeting a friend for a cappuccino in a cozy café, you tip your waiter or waitress by rounding up to the next Euro or two if you're happy with the service. So if the total bill is €11.20, you might round up to € 12 (or € 13, if the service was particularly good).

Train Travel

One of the least expensive – and most spectacular – ways to get around Germany (and Europe) is to take the train. If you want to do a day trip around the lake or to other parts of Baden-Württemberg, you can find all sorts of reasonable tickets. One good option is the Bodensee Ticket (www.bodensee-ticket.com) that can be used in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

If you want to travel to other nearby cities in Germany, try the "Baden-Württemberg Ticket" or the "Bavaria Ticket".

You can purchase them online or at one of the red (complicated to use) ticket machines at the train station. They start at € 24 (with each additional person – up to a total of five - paying € 6 more). If you want a real adventure, you and your friends can get a "Quer-durchs-Land-Ticket". This ticket, which costs € 15.20 per person, can be used on all regional and local trains in all of Germany. It might take a whole day, but you could end up in Berlin at midnight!

V

Visa and Study Permits

Please see the section on visas in the "Coming to Konstanz" section of this handbook, or go to our website at: www.htwg-konstanz.de/exchange

Z

ZACK-Card

The ZACK card ("Zahlungs- und Ausweis-karte Campus Konstanz", if you want to be exact) is your multifunctional student ID, library card and campus debit card. You can use your ZACK card to get lunch at the cafeteria, buy a drink at the beach bar, make some copies, pay those overdue library fees, or even do your laundry in the dorm.

Student Exchange Checklist

Pre-departure

Before leaving home for a wonderful semester or year at the HTWG Konstanz, there are a number of things you need to take care of. Here are the most important:

- Obtain a valid passport.
- If needed: Obtain a visa issued by the German embassy or consulate in your home country. See our visa section in this handbook.
- Inquire about the visa requirements for any other countries you plan to visit.
- Book a flight and notify the International Office in Konstanz of your travel plans.
- Obtain information about any immunizations that you may need.
- Get yourself an International Student Identification Card and possibly a Youth Hostel Card. Both are very useful if you plan to travel in Europe.
- Apply for credit and debit cards early enough to get them before you leave home. See the section on credit / debit cards in this handbook.
- Inform your bank that you will be spending a longer period of time in Germany, so they do not freeze your account and you can still get money at ATMs.
- Plan a budget to cover all expenses while abroad (about € 855 per month) plus additional spending money.
- Photocopy or scan all important documents, including your passport, rail passes, credit cards and other forms of identification. Bring one copy with you, and leave one with your parents or relatives.
- If you're taking medication for a condition, please inform yourself about the German laws about bringing medication into the country – and if you can get prescriptions for this medication filled in Germany.

After your Arrival in Germany

Try to take care of the following during your first week here:

- Enroll at the HTWG Konstanz (Immatrikulation).
- Open a German bank account
- Register with the city of Konstanz.
- (If needed) Apply for your electronic residence permit and obtain biometric photos for your application.
- Sign up for a student health insurance plan from a German insurance company – or, for EU citizens, confirm that you are already insured.
- Buy a Studi-Ticket (semester bus pass) if you plan to use buses regularly or you live on the outskirts of Konstanz.

Before leaving Germany

- Deregister from the HTWG Konstanz (Exmatrikulation).
- Cancel your health insurance.
- Deregister with the city of Konstanz.
- Close your bank account or change your address there.
- Make an appointment with the Hausmeister of your dorm to inspect the room.
- Get back the deposit you paid for student housing.

Metric Conversions

Converting Temperatures

Fahrenheit to Celsius:

1. Subtract 32 from the amount
2. Multiply by 5
3. Divide by 9

Celsius to Fahrenheit:

1. Multiply the amount by 9
2. Divide by 5
3. Add 32

Quick Conversion Chart

Degrees Fahrenheit °F	Degrees Celsius °C
100	37.8
90	32.2
85	29.4
80	26.7
70	21.1
60	15.6
50	10.0
40	4.4
32	0.0

Converting Weight

Pounds to Kilograms

Multiply pounds by 0.4535925

Kilograms to Pounds

Multiply Kilograms by 2.205

Converting Volume

Gallons to Liters

Multiply Gallons by 3.7853

Liters to Gallons

Multiply Liters by .2642

Converting Length

Feet to Meters

Multiply Feet by 0.3048

Meters to Feet

Multiply Meters by 3.2808

Miles to Kilometers

Multiply Miles by 1.609347

Kilometers to Miles

Multiply Kilometers by 0.6214



Map of Konstanz



Map of HTWG



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Amtlicher Stadtplan Konstanz 2003*

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