4 GETTING READY FOR YOUR STAY

4.1 CHECKLIST OF IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Please also check the websites of the German embassy/German mission in your home country or of the German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) for information on the documents required for your visa application. Your application form should be submitted in duplicate. We also recommend making copies of all your documents for your own records.

- A valid (biometric) passport. It must be valid for the entire duration of your stay and for a further three months after your scheduled departure. Your passport must have been issued within the last ten years and must contain a biometric passport photo.
- The fully completed and signed visa application form with two biometric passport photos that meet visa photo requirements. You should apply as early as possible and well ahead of your intended date of travel (see chapter 4.2). If you intend to bring your family with you, an application form must be completed for each member of your family. Copies of your birth certificate and marriage certificate may be required as proof of family relations. The copies must be officially certified and translated into German.
- Information on the purpose of your stay in Germany. If you will be conducting research or be employed at the University, you may submit the invitation letter or your employment contract from the University of Oldenburg stating the name of the institution where you will be working.
- Information on your proposed accommodation in Germany.
- Proof of health insurance coverage (see chapter 8.1).
- Information on and proof of financial resources. Please provide information on your income, your scholarship, or the like.

Other documents needed for your stay in Germany:

- Copies of qualifications gained at university or at an institution of higher education that have been officially certified and translated into German.
- Several biometric passport photos which are required for various documents.
- The University’s Division for Personnel and Organisation requires a certificate of good conduct (Führungszeugnis) if you sign an employment contract. Please also check which other documents you need to submit.
- A valid vaccination certificate/record. Please be sure to undergo a general medical examination (including a dental checkup) prior to your departure.
- A driving licence (see chapter 11.6).
4.2 VISA AND ENTRY

As a general rule, foreign nationals must hold a valid visa to enter Germany. We recommend that you apply for a visa at the German embassy/German mission in your home country/your current country of residence as early as possible and well ahead of your intended date of travel. The embassy/mission will inform you about entry requirements and about the duration of the application process.

In order to simplify the procedure for visa applications you have the option of downloading and filling in visa application forms online for free, and then taking the completed form to the interview at the visa section of the German embassy/mission. In addition, many German embassies and missions have introduced an electronic appointments system to shorten waiting times. For more information, please see the websites of the German mission in your home country/current country of residence.

Entry requirements vary depending on your home country and the duration and purpose of your stay. If you are coming to Germany for employment or research purposes you must apply for a national visa (long-term stay visa or D visa). A national visa may be granted for up to twelve months.

EU CITIZENS, EEA CITIZENS AND SWISS CITIZENS

EU and EEA citizens do not need a visa to enter Germany, and they also do not need a residence permit for an extended stay. A valid passport or identity document will suffice for entering Germany. For an extended stay of more than two months, you need to register with the Bürgerbüro in Oldenburg as it is compulsory in Germany to report your current place of residence/address to the local authorities. Swiss citizens and their family members do not need a visa to enter Germany, but they do need to apply for a residence permit upon entry as it certifies the right to freedom of movement that also applies to them.

CITIZENS OF THIRD COUNTRIES

 Citizens of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea and the United States do not need a visa to enter Germany and may apply for a residence permit upon arrival, though we recommend doing so well in advance as you will not be allowed to work in Germany until your residence title allows you to. Please note that citizens of countries that have a visa exemption agreement (also known as visa waiver agreement) with Germany must also obtain a D visa/national visa if they plan to pursue an economic activity here (see chapter 6.2). You need to submit your application to the German embassy in your home country prior to your arrival in Germany.

VISITS UP TO THREE MONTHS

If you plan to stay in Germany for up to three months, you need to apply for a Schengen Visa (short-term stay visa/C visa). Please note that a Schengen Visa will not be extended and does not allow employment. To be granted a Schengen Visa, a proof of financial resources and of health insurance coverage is required. Both must cover the entire duration of your stay in Germany.
VISITS LASTING MORE THAN THREE MONTHS

If your stay in Germany exceeds three months, you must apply for a national visa (long-term stay visa/D visa). To obtain a national visa, you will have to provide proof of financial support (employment contract, fellowship, proof of own resources), of adequate health insurance coverage, details of your accommodation, proof of your intended activity, and your passport. A national visa may be granted for up to twelve months and/or converted into a residence permit. Upon arrival in Germany you must register with the Oldenburg Residents’ Registration Office (Bürgerbüro) to obtain a residence permit at the Foreign Residents’ Office (see chapters 6.1 and 6.2).

Please note that if you intend to stay longer than three months, under no circumstances should you enter Germany on a Schengen Visa as you will not be able to convert this type of visa into a national visa. Do not under any circumstances overstay your visa, as the Schengen law is very strict about entry and exit.

HIGHLY QUALIFIED EMPLOYEES

Highly qualified employees with specialised knowledge and skills who can provide proof of employment may be granted an EU Blue Card, which is a temporary residence title (permit) that entitles the holder to take up gainful employment. It is issued for the duration of the employment contract with a maximum validity of 4 years, though it can be extended or replaced by an unlimited settlement permit after 5 years. If you enter Germany with a national visa that allows employment, you may submit the application for an EU Blue Card to the Foreign Residents’ Office (Ausländerbüro) in Oldenburg. Highly qualified employees may be academics with expertise, teaching staff or research assistants in prominent positions.

QUICK INFO

ONLINE APPLICATION FORM

Online application for a short-term Schengen visa at https://videx.diplo.de/videx/?3

Foreign nationals who may enter Germany without a visa and plan to stay here for up to three months: www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN > Entry & Residence > Visa regulations > Overview of visa requirements and exemptions – list of countries.

TRAVELLING TO OTHER SCHENGEN COUNTRIES

Both the Schengen Visa/C visa and the national visa/D visa allow you to travel to the 26 countries of the Schengen Area for up to three months within a six-month period. However, a separate visa will be required if you intend to travel to EU member states which are not Schengen states, namely the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania.

MORE INFORMATION ON VISA AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

EURAXESS: www.euraxess.de/en > Services > Incoming researchers > Visa and entry
Federal Foreign Office: www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN

QUICK INFO

EXEMPTION FROM FEES

As of 2008, the visa application fee is 60 EUR (for all types of visas), though a reduction or exemption from visa application fees may be granted. Holders of a publicly-funded fellowship from a German funding organisation (AvH, DAAD) do not have to pay visa application fees or fees for a residence permit. The same applies to researchers travelling for the purpose of carrying out scientific research.
Please inform your contact person at the faculty level about your flight schedule and time of arrival.

The nearest international airport is City Airport Bremen, 50 kilometres east of Oldenburg. You can take Line 6 of the tram service BSAG, Bremer Straßenbahn AG, the local tram and bus service. The station is opposite the airport’s entrance hall. This tramline goes directly from Bremen Airport (Bremen Flughafen) to Bremen Central Station (Bremen Hauptbahnhof) and takes about 20 minutes.

Tickets to Oldenburg can be purchased at automatic ticket machines operated by BSAG. These machines are located at the airport (exit), at the tram station and on the trams (cash only). There are different fare zones and fares between Bremen and Lower Saxony. Please select fare „F“ for a ticket that is valid on trams to Bremen Central Station, on trains to Oldenburg, and on buses in Oldenburg! Trains from Bremen to Oldenburg leave several times an hour. For train schedules, please see Deutsche Bahn at www.bahn.com.

Additionally, there is a shuttle service between Bremen Airport and Oldenburg (Luftbus). Within Oldenburg, VWG (Verkehr und Wasser GmbH) operates several bus routes, including three routes between Central Station and Oldenburg University (306, 310, and 324). Please note that the website of VWG is available in German only.

INFORMATION

City Airport Bremen: www.airport-bremen.de/en/


Deutsche Bahn AG: www.bahn.com/i/view/GBR/en

VWG Verkehr und Wasser GmbH: www.vwg.de

Directions to the University of Oldenburg: www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/contact

Luftbus (Airport Shuttle Service): www.luftbus.de/airport_transfer/