GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS
## CONTENTS

**WORDS OF WELCOME** 5  
**SERVICES FOR INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS** 7  

1 **WELCOME TO OLDENBURG** 8  
1.1 Übermorgenstadt Oldenburg 8  
1.2 Culture and Leisure 11  

2 **WELCOME TO THE CARL VON OSSIETZKY UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG** 13  
2.1 Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg: Open to New Approaches 13  
2.2 Research at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg 14  
2.3 The University at a Glance: Facts and Figures 17  

3 **CAMPUS LIFE** 19  
3.1 The Haarentor and Wechloy Campuses 19  
3.2 The International Relations Office (IRO) 20  
3.3 University Dining Facilities 22  
3.4 University Library 24  
3.5 Language Courses 26  
3.6 Internet and IT Services 27  
3.7 University Sports Programmes 29  
3.8 Arts and Culture on Campus 30  
3.9 Shopping Facilities and Health Care on Campus 33  
4 **GETTING READY FOR YOUR STAY** 34  
4.1 Checklist of Important Documents 34  
4.2 Visa and Entry 35  
4.3 Travelling to Oldenburg 38  

5 **ACCOMMODATION IN OLDENBURG** 39  
5.1 Finding Accommodation 40  
5.2 University Guest House 41  
5.3 Renting in Germany 42  
5.4 List of Abbreviations Used in German Flat and House Advertisements 43  

6 **GETTING STARTED IN OLDENBURG** 44  
6.1 Registration 44  
6.2 Visa Extension and Residence Permit 45  
6.3 Bank Account 46  

7 **EMPLOYMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY** 47  
7.1 Employment Regulations 47  
7.2 Employment Contract 48  
7.3 Intellectual Property 49
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>SOCIAL SECURITY IN GERMANY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Pension Scheme</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>Unemployment Insurance</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>Occupational Accident Insurance</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>Nursing Care Insurance</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>Additional Private Insurances</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>TAXATION IN GERMANY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Taxability of Scholarships and Fellowships</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>Taxability of Employment Income</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>Double Taxation Agreements</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>Tax Return and Tax Refund</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Church Tax</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>BRINGING YOUR FAMILY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>Childcare at the University of Oldenburg’s Studentenwerk</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>School Attendance</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>Family Benefits</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>Employment Options for your Partner (Dual Career)</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>LIVING IN OLDENBURG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>Emergency Phone Numbers</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>Getting Around: Public Transport</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>Getting Around: Cycling</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>Getting Around: Carpooling and Car Sharing</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>Getting Around: Your Private Car</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>Radio, TV, Phone, and Internet</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>Public Holidays</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.10</td>
<td>Good to Know</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>BEFORE YOU LEAVE GERMANY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>Before You Leave Germany</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>NEWS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>News</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impressum
We are delighted to welcome you to the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg. You have chosen the University of Oldenburg for your teaching or research and will now be spending either a short or a longer period of time with us here on the campus of Oldenburg University. We hope that your stay is both successful and pleasant, from a professional and a personal perspective.

Our young university, founded in 1974 and named after the critical journalist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Carl von Ossietzky (1889-1938), is known for its cosmopolitan and friendly atmosphere. At the same time we consider it incumbent upon us to address pressing global challenges, whether of a social, political, environmental or economic nature. We therefore attach great importance to pioneering research activities which have an impact at a national and an international level. We gladly assume the role of ensuring that our international guests feel well integrated into this community. All the more so as we are aware that your presence on the campus contributes to the University of Oldenburg developing more into the cosmopolitan and high-performing institution which we are all working to achieve.

Internationality plays a very important role here at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg. More than 1,000 foreign students and doctoral candidates from over 100 countries study and research here. Every year Oldenburg University welcomes more than 200 researchers from all over the world to its interdisciplinary research groups. Our International Relations Office is happy to provide you and your family members who have accompanied you here with competent and warm support on all organisational matters regarding your stay at the university – and also prior to your arrival.

We are sure that you and your family will settle in very quickly at Oldenburg University and we wish you every success with your academic projects, and that you will also find the personal aspects of your stay both enjoyable and enriching.
SERVICES FOR INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS
AT THE CARL VON OSSIEZKY UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG

The University of Oldenburg has established a service for international visiting researchers to make their time here a rewarding and fulfilling experience. We are happy to assist with all the required formalities and any questions you may have about your time in Oldenburg.

Our portfolio of services includes:
- A website in German and English
- Checklists for preparing your stay
- Support in finding accommodation
- Assistance with finding the right kindergarten or school for your children
- Assistance with formalities (visa, registration, health insurance)
- Support in dealing with the authorities
- Interesting excursions and fun events for visiting researchers

Our website features regular updates, with links to information to help you make the most of your stay. You will also receive news about and invitations to upcoming events and services. Please do not hesitate to contact the team at the International Relations Office if you have any questions, problems, requests or suggestions. You can reach us by email or phone, or simply drop by.
ÜBERMORGENSTADT OLDENBURG

Oldenburg is located in Lower Saxony, the second-largest state in Germany, in the Northwest of the country and only 50 km away from the North Sea. With a population of almost 160,000, the city on the Hunte River is a hub for economy, science and research, administration and culture. Small and medium-sized businesses and dynamic industrial services are the key economic features of Oldenburg, but it is also home to small manufacturing companies and industries such as automotive suppliers, food companies, photo development and printing services, and printing houses.

With its wide variety of shops and stores, Oldenburg also offers a wonderful shopping experience. The Fußgängerzone, the city’s pedestrians-only shopping district, is well-known even outside the region. A vibrant city, Oldenburg also has a diverse cultural scene. Every year thousands of tourists from all over the world pay us a visit and enjoy the many sights to see and places to go. The Oldenburg State Theatre, housed in an imposing new Renaissance-style stone building, offers a variety of dance and drama performances. Visitors can also enjoy a wide range of museums, or visit the Palace and its beautiful Palace Gardens. Annual markets, feasts, and festivals include the Oldenburg Culture Summer, the Oldenburg Kramermarkt and the KIBUM, Germany’s largest non-commercial book fair for literature for children and young adults.
While here you may notice the many bicycles. Oldenburg is a bicycle-friendly city with 270 km of (safe) bicycle paths, and cycling is very popular among locals, both as a mode of transport and as a leisure activity.

In 2008, Oldenburg was voted „City of Science 2009“ for its innovations in science and research, which is why it is also called the Übermorgenstadt, or the „day-after-tomorrow city“ to express its forward-looking approach. The combination of a strong economy, a diverse and lively cultural scene and innovative science and research make Oldenburg a great place to live.
Oldenburg offers a wonderfully diverse and extensive cultural programme. You can enjoy provocative art, a collection of paintings that belonged to the Grand Duke of Oldenburg, the Oldenburg Culture Summer, the Oldenburg Christmas Market, opera productions or puppet theatre. The programme ranges from rather traditional institutions to contemporary culture and an independent scene.

Oldenburg has various theatres and theatre productions to offer, from big stage performances to student theatre at the University. The Museumslandschaft, Oldenburg's museum landscape, includes the Horst-Janssen-Museum, the Edith-Russ-Haus for Media Art, the City Museum, the State Museum for Art and Cultural History and the State Museum for Nature and Man.

The Schlossgarten (Palace Gardens), designed in the style of an English landscape garden, is a park close to the Schloss Oldenburg (Oldenburg Palace). It has a total area of 16 hectares and is open to the public all year round. You can enjoy a walk here, go for a run, have a picnic or visit one of the various special events that take place during the summer. In 2014 this beautiful green oasis in the heart of the city celebrated its 200th anniversary. There are many special places to go within the gardens: the Tropical House, the Tea Pavilion and the Reading Pavilion, as well as separate smaller gardens such as the Kitchen Garden. Another place to visit is the Dobbenwiesen, a green space in the Dobben district located between the city centre and the University. This is a great spot for playing football or cricket.

At the Botanical Garden near the University a wide variety of domestic and exotic plants is on display. Unlike public parks and gardens, the Botanical Garden is designed to highlight the particular characteristics and biodiversity of the plants, including the less spectacular ones, rather than their aesthetic value.

The OLantis Huntebad is a great place for swimming, sauna, wellness and aqua fitness. It has both an indoor and outdoor area with an open-air swimming pool that is open in the summer. The open-air swimming pool at the Freibad am Flötenteich is another great destination in the summer.

Experience it all for yourself!

QUICK INFO

www.staatstheater.de
www.filmfest-oldenburg.de/en
www.kulturetage.de
www.casablanca-oldenburg.de
www.horst-janssen-museum.de
www.stadtmuseum-oldenburg.de
www.oldenburg.de/sprachversionen/gb/tourist-information.html
2 WELCOME TO THE CARL VON OSSIETZKY UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG

2.1 CARL VON OSSIETZKY UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG: OPEN TO NEW APPROACHES

Promoting talent, inspiring ideas, and openness towards others – these are the University of Oldenburg’s guiding principles. Founded in 1973, it is one of Germany’s newer universities and takes its name from the pacifist and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Carl von Ossietzky (1889-1938), a well-known and prolific journalist during the Weimar Republic.

The University of Oldenburg considers itself a campus university – something that not every German university can claim to be. This ensures close, open interaction between students and professors and seminars with an optimal number of students.

There are more than 98 degree programmes at the University of Oldenburg, including teacher training, social sciences, IT, business and economics, law, linguistics, cultural studies, human sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences. The University currently has 14,600 students, 220 professors and 2,200 staff members.

A major task for the coming years will be to continue establishing, developing, and achieving top-level scientific performance, as well as outstanding teaching and academic results. The foundations for doing this have already been laid through high-profile, internationally visible interdisciplinary research, competitive PhD programmes and the complete conversion of the University to a Bachelor’s/Master’s track of study.

The University of Oldenburg is an institution that provides the northwest region of Germany with economic and cultural impulses. Naturally, the University is also networked at both the national and international levels and beyond academia through its co-operations and achievements in the fields of research, education, culture, and business and industry. And with 200 partner universities around the world, its activities are undisputably on a global scale.

FURTHER INFORMATION
www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/international/
www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/iro/internationalisation-strategy/
The University of Oldenburg is a research hub with an excellent national and international reputation. Interdisciplinarity and social responsibility are key hallmarks of the “research made in Oldenburg”, fostering scientific excellence and high quality standards. All academic fields at the University have developed and apply concise criteria for research excellence, in compliance with international standards and organised to ensure quality, effectiveness, efficiency and originality. Interdisciplinary research facilities enable intense scientific networking at the University, within the academic realm and beyond it. The University’s comprehensive concept for research-oriented teaching and learning systematically introduces students in Oldenburg to cutting-edge research at an early stage in their academic career.

Top-level research is conducted at all of the University’s six faculties. Eleven major research areas currently share an outstanding reputation and form part of the ongoing institutional Development Planning process. These research focus areas are defined as:

1. Biodiversity and Marine Sciences
2. Cooperative Critical Systems
3. Diversity and Participation
4. Education and Social Participation
5. Future Energies
6. Health Care Systems and Patient-Centredness
7. Hearing Research
8. Professionalisation Processes in Teacher Education
9. Sensory Neuroscience
10. Social Transformation and Subjectivation
11. Sustainability

The University of Oldenburg has been extraordinarily successful in securing third-party funding to further its
research achievements in the academic fields listed above. Oldenburg is home to

- a Cluster of Excellence on “Hearing4all”
- three long-term Collaborative Research Centres entitled “Automatic Verification and Analysis of Complex Systems”, “The Active Auditory System” and “Roseobacter”
- two coordinated Research Units, “Individualized Hearing Acoustics” and “Horizontal Europeanization”

All these research groups are funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Research at the University also benefits from our excellent research infrastructure, which includes two subject-specific research centres and thirteen scientific centres.

http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/academic-research/

The University has successfully institutionalised its cooperation with supra-regional research institutions by establishing five joint professorships, one each with the Helmholtz Alfred-Wegener-Institute, the Senckenberg Society, the Max-Planck-Institute, the Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Ecology and the German Aerospace Centre. Furthermore, three Fraunhofer Working Groups are pursuing applied research on a) manufacturing technology and advanced materials, b) hearing, speech and audio system technology, and c) wind energy and energy system technology in Oldenburg. A Max-Planck Junior Research Group is also based at the University and focuses its research on marine biogeochemistry, inorganic biochemistry, and the corresponding methods of analysis.

http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/academicinstitutions/
The Graduate Academy, which celebrates its fifth anniversary in 2016, is the central support unit for doctoral candidates, postdocs, and junior professors of all disciplines at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg. A general qualification programme which is open to all early career academics offers transferrable skills courses in four core areas:

• Professional and Career Development
• Management and Leadership
• Communication and Presentation
• English for Academic Purposes.

This qualification programme encourages researchers to develop skills and gather experiences that enhance their career prospects inside and outside academia. Furthermore, two exclusive six-month programmes for (1) postdocs at the start of their career and (2) for established postdoctoral researchers, aim to support members of the University at these stages of their careers by offering the aforementioned workshops and coaching sessions.

The Graduate Academy cooperates closely with the University’s faculties and its two graduate schools: the 3GO Graduate School for Social Sciences and Humanities and the OLTECH Graduate School for Science and Technology. These graduate schools provide room for collaboration, exchange and joint activities among researchers from different disciplines, and offer subject-related training courses close to field requirements. The Graduate Academy also devises and ensures quality standards in academic training and supports the development of university-wide guidelines for doctorate studies.

http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/graduate-academy

The HWK is a non-profit foundation jointly run by the state of Lower Saxony and the cities of Bremen and Delmenhorst. Founded in 1995, the HWK supports outstanding scientists in their research interests and facilitates an intense interdisciplinary dialogue between its fellows and neighbouring universities and research institutions in the region. Its primary goal is to strengthen the Northwest of Germany as a renowned location for science and research. The HWK concentrates on four broad areas of research: energy research, marine and climate research, neurosciences and cognitive sciences, and social sciences.

http://www.h-w-k.de/en/

Oldenburg’s position as a major research location has been consolidated by the successful establishment of several institutes affiliated to the University, including the OFFIS Institute of Information Technology, the Hörzentrum Oldenburg, NEXT ENERGY – EWE Forschungszentrum für Energietechnologie, the Institute for Economic Education and the Federal Institute for Culture and History of the Germans in Eastern Europe (BKGE). In addition, the Karl-Jaspers-Haus offers academics ideal conditions for conducting research on Karl Jaspers, an important historical figure. It also provides the framework for a long-term project aimed at publishing an edition of Jaspers’ works funded by the Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities and other institutions.

http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/forschung/transfer/an-institute/
2.3 THE UNIVERSITY AT A GLANCE: FACTS AND FIGURES

- opened in 1973
- approximately 14,600 students
- of whom about 1,100 are international students
- from around 100 countries
- a network of 200 partner universities worldwide
- almost 2,200 staff members including
  - more than 200 professors
  - more than 200 visiting scientists every year

AWARDS RECEIVED

- Family-friendly University
- EXIST-Initiative of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy to support the culture of entrepreneurship
- ERASMUS-Mundus University
- HRK-Audit: Internationalisation of Universities

FACULTIES

Faculty I
Educational and Social Sciences

Faculty II
Computing Science, Business Administration, Economics, and Law

Faculty III
Linguistics and Cultural Studies

Faculty IV
Humanities and Social Sciences

Faculty V
Mathematics and Science

Faculty VI
Medicine and Health Sciences

RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS

1. Biodiversity and Marine Sciences
2. Cooperative Critical Systems
3. Diversity and Participation
4. Education and Social Participation
5. Future Energies
6. Health Care Systems and Patient-Centredness
7. Hearing Research
8. Professionalisation Processes in Teacher Education
9. Sensory Neuroscience
10. Social Transformation and Subjectivation
11. Sustainability
PhD PROGRAMMES

- The active auditory system
- CRC Roseobacter
- Self-Making: Practices of Subjectivation in Historical and Interdisciplinary Perspective
- Models of Gravity
- SCARE - System Correctness under Adverse Conditions
- Molecular basis of sensory biology
- Lernprozesse im Übergangsraum (LÜP) [German]
- Signals & Cognition
- System integration of renewable energy
- Kulturen der Partizipation [German]
- Interdisciplinary approach to functional biodiversity research (IBR)
- Nano Energy Research
- Safe Automation of Maritime Systems (SAMS)
- Identitätskonstruktionen junger Erwachsener in einer postsozialistischen Transformationsgesellschaft: der Fall Belarus [German]
- Queer Studies und Intermedialität: Kunst - Musik – Medienkultur [German]
- OLCRYPT
- Dimensionen der Sorge [German]
Oldenburg University is an open campus with many campus facilities and activities open to students, staff and international visitors, including their families. Our campus provides you with everything you need to get the most out of your work and research, as well as your leisure time. This guide gives you a first close look at the various facilities and services that might be of interest to you.

The Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg has two campuses in close proximity to each other. The departments and institutes of the natural sciences, mathematics, medicine and the health sciences are located on Wechloy Campus. All other departments and institutes as well as all the main offices and the Central University Administration are located on Haarentor Campus. The University Library, the International Relations Office, one of the two dining halls and sports facilities including a swimming pool and a sauna are also located here. Another dining hall and a cafeteria are located on Wechloy Campus, as well as a sports ground and the University’s Guest House.

CAMPUS MAPS

www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/campus-map/
www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/haarentor-campus/
www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/wechloy-campus/
Registering yourself and your family with the International Relations Office will enable you to take full advantage of the services the IRO offers:

- Before you arrive in Oldenburg you will receive an online package containing all the information you need for your stay (a checklist of formalities, important addresses and contacts and more).
- We can answer questions regarding your stay in Oldenburg before you arrive.
- If you require assistance in finding accommodation, we will be happy to help. We can also assist you with administrative formalities such as registering with the Residents’ Registration Office, the Foreign Residents’ Office or with local schools or daycare facilities for your children.
- We put you in contact with other international visitors currently teaching or doing research at Oldenburg University.

As soon as you have registered with us, you and your family members can benefit from all the services, information and opportunities the International Relations Office provides.

Please register at: www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/iro/current-visiting-researchers/registration
EVENTS

The team at the International Relations Office organises welcome receptions for new guests, information evenings and many other events for international visitors and their families on a regular basis.

RECEPTION

Every semester the International Relations Office, together with the University President, hosts a reception for all international visiting researchers and their hosts.

THE INTERNATIONAL LUNCH

The University holds a monthly International Lunch for international visitors at the Mensa on Haarentor Campus. This lunch, which always takes place on a Wednesday, provides you with the opportunity to spend some time with colleagues and fellows. Visit the IRO’s website for upcoming dates.
3.3 UNIVERSITY DINING FACILITIES

The Studentenwerk Oldenburg operates dining halls (Mensas), cafés and cafeterias on campuses in Oldenburg, Emden, Emsleth and Wilhelmshaven. Students, staff, and visitors can enjoy varied and affordable menus including warm meals, a selection of salads, sandwiches/filled rolls (Brötchen) and vegetarian dishes. The main meals, salads and sandwiches are made fresh every day, with many ingredients and products sourced from small local businesses and from organic farming.

DINING HALLS ON HAARENTOR AND WECHLOY CAMPUS

The dining halls on both campuses offer a wide range of daily menus and side dishes: fish, meat, casseroles, stews, vegetables, salads, soups and desserts. Side dishes such as salads, vegetables, soups and desserts can be selected as desired. At the dining hall on Haarentor Campus there is also a pizza-station and the Culinarium, an area where the food is cooked in front of you, offering great and reasonably priced menu specials including steak, casseroles and fish dishes. For pasta lovers there is a Pastatheke with several pasta dishes at each dining hall. Vegetarian and vegan dishes (meaning free of animal-derived ingredients) are also on offer as an alternative to the regular menus.

THE „CAFETEN” ON HAARENTOR AND WECHLOY CAMPUS

The cafeterias, also known as „cafete“ among students and staff, are popular places for meeting up with fellow students and colleagues. They offer snacks, sandwiches/filled rolls (Brötchen), salads, cakes, sweets, and warm meals, as well as tea (from organic farming), (fair trade) coffee, juices, milk and yogurt. The cafeterias open early so coffee, tea and breakfast snacks are available from 8:00. There are three CaféBars offering various coffee specialties spread across Haarentor Campus, with one of them on the first floor of the Library where the newspaper stands are located (Zeitungsebene).

QUICK INFO

Daily menus at the Mensas and cafeterias:
www.studentenwerk-oldenburg.de/de/gastronomie/speiseplaene.html (in German)
List of beverages at the Cafébars on Haarentor Campus:
www.studentenwerk-oldenburg.de/de/gastronomie/oldenburg/cafebars-uhlhornsweg.html (in German)
Menu at the Eis+Café on Haarentor Campus:
www.studentenwerk-oldenburg.de/de/gastronomie/oldenburg/eis-cafe-uhlhornsweg.html (in German)
OPENING HOURS

MENSA ON HAARENTOR CAMPUS
Food Counter (Essensausgabe):
Mon – Fri  11:30 to 14:15
During lecture-free periods:
Mon – Fri  11:30 to 14:00

CAFETERIA ON HAARENTOR CAMPUS
Mon – Thurs  8:00 to 18:30
Fri   8:00 to 16:00
Sat 12:00 to 14:00
During lecture-free periods:
Mon – Fri   8:30 to 15:30

CAFÉBAR AT THE LIBRARY
Mon – Thurs  9:00 to 19:00
Fri  9:00 to 18:00
Sun 10:00 to 17:00
During lecture-free periods:
Mon – Fri  10:00 to 18:00

MENSA ON WECHLOY CAMPUS
Food Counter (Essensausgabe):
Mon – Fri   11:30 to 14:00

CAFETERIA ON WECHLOY CAMPUS
Mon – Thurs  8:00 to 17:30
Fri   8:00 to 14:30
During lecture-free periods:
Mon – Fri   9:00 to 15:00

CONTACT
Email: mensa@sw-ol.de
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 798 2661
Internet: www.studentenwerk-oldenburg.de/gastronomie
The University Library comprises two library facilities: The larger Central Library is located on Haarentor Campus and houses literature on the humanities, cultural studies, economics, law, computer science and the social sciences. The Departmental Library on Wechloy Campus houses literature on the natural sciences, engineering, mathematics and medicine. The University Library contains approximately 1.4 million printed books and 2,129 printed journals. About 95% of the collection is held in open stacks. The Library also provides access to electronic resources: 31,000 electronic journals, 161,000 eBooks and 52 databases are available to members of the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg.
USING THE LIBRARY

During opening hours the University Library is open to everyone. A library card is required to borrow a book or other resources. The loan period for books from the Central Library is four weeks; the Departmental Library is a non-lending library. Textbooks can be borrowed for a period of two weeks.

SPECIAL SERVICES FOR RESEARCHERS

The Media Technology and Production Service offers technical support for digitisation, audio and video production and the recording of lectures or television broadcasts. It provides auditorium and seminar room equipment and event technology.

The University Library offers a wide range of services to assist researchers in publishing their scientific papers. Monographs, proceedings, etc. can be published with the Oldenburg University Press “BIS-Verlag”. The Oldenburg Online-Publication-Server /oops/ is available for open-access publication of scientific results. The University Library also advises researchers on publishing in open-access journals.

The University Bibliography continuously collects and catalogues the details of publications by academics employed at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg. All publications published during their employment here are included in this bibliography and are searchable in the University Library’s ORBISplus search portal.

GOOD TO KNOW

On Wednesday afternoons from 14:00 to 15:00, the Central Library offers a free tour of the facility to anyone who is interested. Registration is not required.

CARL VON OSSIETZKY UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

OPENING HOURS

CENTRAL LIBRARY ON HAARENTOR CAMPUS
Mon - Fri 8:00 to 24:00
Sat/Sun 10:00 to 19:00

Users can borrow, return or renew loans at the Circulation Desk at all times during the opening hours.

DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY ON WECHLOY CAMPUS
Mon - Fri 8:00 to 20:00
Sat 10:00 to 18:00

CONTACT
Kim Braun
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 798 4025
Email: kim.braun@uni-oldenburg.de
Internet: http://www.bis.uni-oldenburg.de/en/bishome/
German language skills are very useful in everyday life. To help you learn or improve your German, the Language Centre at Oldenburg University offers German language courses for beginners to advanced speakers through all levels (A1 - C1), as well as German courses for special purposes such as business German, academic writing, or German in the natural sciences. Courses are free for university members (enrolled students, staff, fellowship holders, visiting researchers) and run from October to January (the winter semester) and from April to July (the summer semester). During semester breaks intensive four-week German language courses are also on offer. International visitors can register for any of the German language courses once they have taken the mandatory placement test organised by the Language Centre twice a year (in April and October), just before the lecture period starts. Please note that the test is not an exam but rather an instrument for assessing your current level of German and which course is best for you. If you are interested in taking one of the German courses, please contact the Language Centre.

Private language schools in Oldenburg also offer German courses, but they charge fees.

Another great opportunity to improve your German is the Sprachtandem project in which you practice your German with German native speakers and they practice your native language with you.
The IT Services at the University of Oldenburg ensure that students, professors, and university staff have access to an optimally running computer and information infrastructure including the internet and the campus management system. In order to access many of the electronic services, university members are given a user account and a personal username (loginID). Visiting researchers who are not employed by the University, such as fellowship holders, can be given a guest user account (Gastkonto), though only upon application by a current university member. Please ask your contact person at Oldenburg University or the International Relations Office to apply for a guest user account on your behalf. Upon application, you will be informed of your username/loginID and password, which you can also use for WiFi on campus. You will be allocated an email address based on the following pattern: firstname.lastname@uni-oldenburg.de.

You can log in to your email account from anywhere and at any time via http://webmail.uni-oldenburg.de. Local workstations and drives, however, are usually only accessible on campus.

The IT Services help desk is the first place to contact if you have any problems using the University’s IT facilities. It is located in the entrance area of the Central Library.

**UNIVERSITY IT SERVICES HELP DESK**

Central Library, Entrance Area
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 798 5555
Email: servicedesk@uni-oldenburg.de
Internet: www.uni-oldenburg.de/itdienste

**OPENING HOURS**

Mon – Thurs 9:00 to 15:30
Fri 9:00 to 13:00

Registration for a guest user account: www.uni-oldenburg.de/itdienste/details-und-hilfe/zugang-zum-campusnetz/gaeste-der-universitaet
STUD.IP

Stud.IP (Studienbegleitender Internetsupport von Präsenzlehre; course-related internet support for classroom teaching) is a campus management system, or open-source learning management system (eLearning), provided by the University and maintained by the IT Services staff. It offers teaching staff the opportunity to provide online access to teaching materials. Web services such as sending messages to and receiving messages from students and discussion forums for lectures and courses are also available. Students have access to all lecture materials that are free from third-party rights and can register for courses, check important deadlines or office hours and take advantage of comprehensive and flexible support. You will also find a list of lectures and classes offered in previous, current, and upcoming semesters at the University, as well as contact information for professors, teachers, students, facilities and institutions.

In order to access Stud.IP you need a user account. You can log in to Stud.IP via https://elearning.uni-oldenburg.de.
Do you feel like taking a break from your work or research to do some sports and be active? Would you like to meet new people? The University Sports Centre offers a programme full of courses and other activities that you can get involved in to keep fit and healthy: aerobics, horse riding, yoga, football, dance, capoeira, belly dance, table tennis, gymnastics and autogenic training, to name just a few of the approximately 100 courses, some of which are for free.

The sports programme for the current semester is available online. Registration is required for some courses. You can do this either online or in person at the University Sports Centre.

CONTACT
University Sports Centre Office
In the foyer of the swimming facility on Haarentor Campus (Uni-Bad)
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 798 2085
Email: hochschulsport@uni-oldenburg.de
Internet: www.uni-oldenburg.de/hochschulsport

QUICK INFO
In addition to the sports facilities on both campuses there are numerous fitness centres, dancing schools, sports clubs and state schools in Oldenburg that offer team sports, courses and activities.

The OLantis Hunetbad is a great place for swimming, sauna, wellness, and aqua fitness. It has an indoor and outdoor area with an open-air swimming pool that is open in the summer. www.olantis.com/

The open-air swimming pool at the Freibad am Flötenteich is another great place to go in the summer.

The Dobbenwiesen, located between the city centre and the University, is a great spot for playing football and cricket.
3.8 ARTS AND CULTURE ON CAMPUS

THE UNIVERSITY CHOIR uniCHOR

The University Choir is open to everyone – students, staff, alumni and residents of Oldenburg and of the wider community. You do not need to have sung in a choir before. It is traditional for the choir to dissolve at the end of the summer semester and reassemble at the beginning of the following winter semester with new members.

Rehearsals for the concerts the choir performs during the season (from February until July) start in autumn. In addition to the choir there are other singing groups and band projects for classic and contemporary music. See the website of the Institute of Music to find out more.

THE UNIVERSITY ORCHESTRA

Founded in 1983, the University of Oldenburg Symphony Orchestra performs a wide spectrum of demanding pieces ranging from classical to contemporary music. Like the University Choir, it has a membership of around 50 students, staff, and alumni from the University as well as residents from Oldenburg and the surrounding area.

Rehearsals for the season’s performances are held regularly during the semester, with a final concert at the season’s closing event. In addition to the Orchestra there is also a University Big Band that performs at official events held at the University. For further information, see the website of the Institute of Music.

CONTACT UNI ORCHESTRA

Email: uni.orchester@uni-oldenburg.de
Internet: www.uni-oldenburg.de/uni-orchester

REHEARSALS

On Thursdays from 19:30 to 22:00 in the Aula (auditorium) in building A11 plus on one weekend per semester

CONTACT UNI CHOIR

Manfred Klinkebiel (Choir Director)
Email: manfred.klinkebiel@web.de
Internet: www.unichor.uni-oldenburg.de
THE STAGES OF UNIKUM

The unikum hosts both professional and non-professional musicians, performers and authors throughout the year and provides an excellent forum for music, comedy, theatre, and reading series. Every year in January and February, a special highlight is the Oldenburg Kabarett-Tage, with both newcomers and professionals performing music, stand-up comedy and theatre on stage.

CONTACT
Email: unikum@sw-ol.de
Internet: www.theater-unikum.de

STUDENT CINEMA GEHENLICHT

On Wednesdays during the lecture period, the student cinema Gegenlicht screens a wide range of classical and contemporary, mainstream and art-house and national and international films. It is located at unikum Bühne 1. The entrance fee is usually 3 EUR but may be slightly higher for special events. For the current programme, please go to www.gegenlicht.net

OLDBURG UNIVERSITY THEATRE (OUT)

The Oldenburg University Theatre project OUT is the only one of its kind in Germany. It is run entirely by students and the Studentenwerk and focuses on all aspects of theatre production, both on stage and backstage. Its productions range from classical to contemporary and improvisational. OUT stages small and large-scale productions on campus throughout the year. The project is open to people from all backgrounds and with all levels of experience in theatre, and to all those interested in acting on stage or working backstage. Various workshops give you the opportunity to exercise and build upon your skills.

CONTACT
Email: unikum@sw-ol.de
Internet: www.theater-unikum.de

BOTANICAL GARDEN

At the University’s Botanical Garden, near Haarentor Campus, you can view a wide range of domestic and exotic plants. Unlike public parks and gardens it is designed to display the characteristics, growth and biodiversity of the plants (including the less spectacular varieties) rather than simply their aesthetic value. For further information see: www.uni-oldenburg.de/botgarten/

THE INTERNATIONAL SUMMER FESTIVAL

The International Summer Festival is one of the annual highlights at the University. Students from around the world introduce their home countries at stands featuring their traditional dress, music, and information materials. Visitors also have the chance to take a culinary trip around the world by sampling homemade food and drink specialities from the different countries represented at the festival. The Summer Festival has a panel of judges that presents an award to the best-looking stand. The event is accompanied by a full musical and performance programme as well as workshops and activities for children. You can find information about previous and upcoming summer festivals on the ISO website.
Haarentor Campus has a good selection of shops that cater to all your shopping needs. The University’s shopping facilities include a bookshop where you can buy textbooks and regular books, a gift shop, an eco-fashion shop, a travel agency and an organic food supermarket (complete with its own bakery). Another supermarket, a bakery and a copy shop are within walking distance. And if all that shopping puts a strain on your wallet there is a Volksbank cash machine on campus.

Haarentor Campus is also home to several medical practices including a dentist, a general practitioner also offering homoeopathy and naturopathy, a chiropractic and naturopathy practice and a pharmacy, as well as several branch offices of health insurance providers.
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

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 (Luftibus). 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.
5 ACCOMMODATION IN OLDENBURG
Our team at the IRO will be happy to assist you in your search for suitable accommodation in Oldenburg. You can take a look at our housing database and make your own pre-selection. As furnished accommodation is scarce and private housing rather expensive, the search may take some time. We therefore recommend that you start looking for accommodation well ahead of your arrival in Germany, i.e. at least 3 months in advance. Please bear in mind that we can only offer you a maximum choice of 3 flats, and that we are not responsible for making final rental agreements. The negotiation and acceptance of a rental contract for a flat is a matter between you and your landlord.

Estate agents may also help, but will charge a fee.

INFORMATION
IRO Housing Database:
www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/iro > Service > Housing database

Real Estate Agency
Home Company:
www.oldenburg.homecompany.de/en/index

SHARED ACCOMMODATION AND/OR FLATS
www.wg-gesucht.de

NORDWEST ZEITUNG HOUSING ADVERTISEMENTS
www.immobilien.nwzonline.de/mieten/oldenburg-oldenburg
The University of Oldenburg has a Guest House with six one-bedroom apartments and three two-bedroom apartments. All apartments have a bathroom and shower, a kitchenette with a refrigerator, telephone and internet connections, TV, tableware, bedding and towels. Due to the limited number of apartments it is important to contact the Guest House well in advance if you would like to rent one. Only in rare cases are rooms available on short notice.

INFORMATION
University of Oldenburg Guest House: www.uni-oldenburg.de/gaestehaus/
Administration: Karin Dorn
Bookings N.N.
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 798 5100
In German advertisements there are two “types” of rent listed: *Kaltmiete* and *Warmmiete*, or “cold rent” (net rent) and “warm rent” (gross rent). A cold rent is the basic rent you pay for a room, flat, or house while the warm rent includes additional costs that come with tenancy (property maintenance services, waste disposal services, in some cases cleaning services, heating, water, chimney sweeping, etc.). In the end you pay the warm rent to your landlord.

\[
\text{cold rent} + \text{additional costs} = \text{warm rent.}
\]

In Germany, rental payments are made per month and usually by standing order. In many cases a deposit must be paid to the landlord that will be refunded to you when your tenancy ends.

Tenancies are usually long-term with no end date on the lease, but sub-lets (*Zwischenmiete*) and shared accommodation (*Wohngemeinschaft* or *WG*) are also options. Most flats in Germany are let unfurnished, sometimes even without kitchen cupboards and appliances. The size of a dwelling is given as the area in square metres and the number of rooms *not including* the kitchen and bathroom. Tenants and landlords always sign a written tenancy agreement (rental contract) that complies with German tenancy laws and sets out the legal terms and conditions of the tenancy. In addition to features such as location, size and furnishing the contract usually includes the following:

- the rental price
- all additional costs included in the warm rent
- the deposit amount and details of circumstances in which the deposit can be fully or partly withheld (e.g. to be used for repairing damage caused by you)
- all tenant and landlord obligations
- how to end the tenancy

### UTILITIES (ADDITIONAL COSTS)

Additional costs such as heating and water are often, but not always, included in the warm rent. They are calculated on the basis of average household energy usage and living space. In most cases, electricity is not included in the warm rent, so you will need to find an electricity supplier and set up a contract on your own. Payments to energy suppliers are made on a monthly basis and by direct debit, therefore you will not receive a monthly bill. As it is legally required to issue an annual bill that clearly shows actual energy consumption and total payment, your landlord and your energy suppliers must pay you the difference in the event that you paid more than you consumed, or in the event that you consumed more than you paid, you must pay them the difference.

### TENANCY LAW

A notice period of three months applies for both the tenant and landlord when terminating the tenancy. The landlord is required to state why he or she is terminating the tenancy. The notice period that applies for the landlord increases to six or nine months if a tenancy has been running for more than five or eight years respectively. Notice must be given in writing, and the tenant has the right to object to the landlord’s termination of the tenancy. If the terms of the tenancy do not comply with the law, or if your landlord does not adhere to the terms of the rental contract, you can seek legal advice from the German Tenants’ Association (*Deutscher Mieterbund*), although a membership will be required that includes a legal expenses insurance to cover lawsuits.
### 5.4

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN GERMAN FLAT AND HOUSE ADVERTISEMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-Zi-Whg</td>
<td>2-room flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2ZKBB</td>
<td>2 rooms, kitchen, bath, balcony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blk/Balk.</td>
<td>balcony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG</td>
<td>attic flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHH</td>
<td>semi-detached house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU</td>
<td>kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EB</td>
<td>first occupancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBK</td>
<td>built-in kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFH</td>
<td>single-family house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>ground floor / main floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELW</td>
<td>adjoined, self-contained flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWC</td>
<td>guest toilet / second bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HK</td>
<td>heating costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaution/KT</td>
<td>deposit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KDB</td>
<td>kitchen, hallway, bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keine zusätzl. Prov.</td>
<td>no additional fees charged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kalt/KM</td>
<td>(by estate agencies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>cold rent (rent excluding utilities / additional costs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mtl.</td>
<td>newly constructed building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB</td>
<td>utilities / additional costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NK/NBK</td>
<td>non-smoker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>top floor / upper floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OG</td>
<td>parking space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stellpl.</td>
<td>underground parking space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TG</td>
<td>warm rent (rent including utilities / additional costs, though usually excluding electricity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warm/WM</td>
<td>flat share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wfl.</td>
<td>living space (in m²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WG</td>
<td>central heating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All German nationals and foreign nationals moving to Germany for more than two months, or moving within Germany, must report their current place of residence (address) to the Einwohnermeldeamt, the Residents' Registration Office, within two weeks upon entry or relocation and in person. In Oldenburg, you report your current place of residence/address to either the Bürgerbüro Mitte or Bürgerbüro Nord (the "Citizens' Office"; the city administration/municipality), depending on which part of town you live in. If you live in the area surrounding Oldenburg, please inform the local office for the respective area. Upon registration you will receive official confirmation of residence. Family members must also be registered, in person. An identification document is always required to register.

A proof of residential address (Wohnungsgeberbestätigung) has to be submitted when registering at the Residents' Registration Offices. This form must be filled in by your landlord or your landlord's representative (e.g. property manager, Hausverwalter) and serves as proof of your current residential address in Oldenburg. It can be downloaded from the website of the Bürgerbüro.

**CONTACT**

Oldenburg Bürgerbüro Mitte  
Pferdemarkt 14  
26121 Oldenburg  
Telephone: +49 (0) 441-235 4444  
Email: buergerdienste@stadt-oldenburg.de

Oldenburg Bürgerbüro Nord  
Stiller Weg 10  
26121 Oldenburg  
Telephone: +49 (0) 441-235 4444  
Email: buergerbuero-nord@stadt-oldenburg.de
6.2 VISA EXTENSION AND RESIDENCE PERMIT

Please apply in good time for a visa extension or a residence permit. Even if you were allowed to enter Germany without a visa you may need to obtain a residence permit, depending on the duration and the purpose of your stay. Electronic residence permits (elektronischer Aufenthaltstitel, or eAT) issued in credit-card format have been available since 2011. Local Foreign Residents’ Offices can be contacted for further advice and services.

TEMPORARY RESIDENCE PERMIT

As it may take several weeks for your electronic residence permit to be issued, you need to apply for a temporary residence permit (Fiktionsbescheinigung) if your current residence permit is due to expire within the waiting period. This is a temporary document to replace your expired permit until you receive your new electronic residence permit. If you applied in good time for an extension of your residence permit, you will usually receive a Fortbestandsfiktion, as the current permit to reside in Germany remains valid until you receive the new one. Travelling with a temporary residence permit is possible, but we recommend that you contact the embassy of the country you visit regarding entry and departure requirements. Temporary residence permits are subject to fees. For further information please contact the Foreign Residents’ Office.

Although the documents required for a residence permit will vary depending on the circumstances, you will definitely need:

- A valid (biometric) passport that was issued within the last ten years and contains a biometric passport photo.
- A current biometric passport photo.
- Information on the purpose of your stay in Germany (employment, research, etc.). If you are coming to do research or to take up employment at the University, you can submit your invitation letter or your employment contract from the University of Oldenburg stating which faculty/institution you will be working at.
- Proof of adequate financial resources (proof of earnings) to show you can meet estimated expenses for you and your dependants (e.g. contract of employment, scholarship, etc.).
- Proof of valid health insurance coverage for you and for each member of your family accompanying you.
- The confirmation of residence you received upon first registration in Oldenburg.
- A copy of your birth certificate and marriage certificate (if relevant), as well as birth certificates for each member of your family accompanying you. These copies must be officially certified and translated into German.

You can also get in touch with the staff at the Foreign Residents’ Office for more information on what documents you will need to produce. Please note that public authorities often require you to be accompanied by an interpreter. You can ask a friend, colleague or member of the IRO staff to act as interpreter.

CONTACT
Oldenburg Foreign Residents’ Office
Pferdemarkt 14
26121 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 235 2241
Email: auslaenderbuero@stadt-oldenburg.de
6.3 BANK ACCOUNT

We strongly recommend opening a bank account with a local German bank if you stay in Germany for a longer period of time. Set up a current account (Girokonto) with a bank, a savings bank (Sparkasse), or with the Postbank (post office savings bank). Your salary, wages or fellowship/scholarship money can be directly transferred to your account, and living expenses such as rent, bills or insurance can be debited from it by standing order or direct debit.

When you open an account with a local bank, you will receive an Electronic Cash card (EC-Karte) that allows you to withdraw cash from any cash machine (note that withdrawal fees may apply if it is a cash machine from a different bank). You can also pay for your purchases in most supermarkets and shops with an EC card. To open an account with a local bank, you will need your passport or identification document and the confirmation of residence you received upon registration at the Bürgerbüro. Since account maintenance charges may vary, it is worthwhile to compare terms and charges.

If you plan to make transactions to and from an account in your home country, it is a good idea to check with your home bank and find out whether it co-operates with a German bank. This may shorten the time required for international transactions, and in some cases reduce or even eliminate transaction fees.

You will be able to use cash, traveller’s cheques and credit cards for payments. Although credit cards are becoming more common in Germany, everyday purchases and payments of small amounts are still typically made using cash or an EC card.
EU citizens and EEA citizens do not need a residence permit as the freedom of movement for workers applies to you. Swiss citizens, however, need to apply for a residence permit as certification of that freedom. All other foreign nationals who are seeking employment or will be doing research in Germany need a residence title which allows employment (a D visa/national visa or a residence permit if your stay exceeds twelve months).

SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

Scholarship/fellowship holders doing research at Oldenburg University will need a residence permit for the purpose of research.

RESEARCH

A research stay at an approved research institution in Germany may allow you to obtain a residence permit for research purposes. A signed hosting agreement between the hosting institution and you, the researcher, is required.

STAFF MOBILITY

International researchers from a research institution in an EU Member State who are posted at Oldenburg University are issued residence permits not for the purpose of research, but for the purpose of employment.

EMPLOYMENT

A (research) stay in Germany that is not based on a hosting agreement but on a regular employment contract requires a residence permit for the purpose of employment.

INFORMATION

Oldenburg Foreign Residents’ Office: auslaenderbuero@stadt-oldenburg.de

Federal Foreign Office, Education and Work in Germany: www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN > Entry & Residence > Studying & Working

Federal Employment Agency: www.arbeitsagentur.de > English > Working and Job-seeking > Working in Germany

If you come to Oldenburg not as a scholarship/fellowship holder but as an employee, you must sign your employment contract prior to starting work. Oldenburg University’s Division 1: Personnel and Organisation will inform you about the forms and documents you need to complete and submit.

In Germany, many professors are civil servants and appointed to their positions. Salaries for civil servants are stipulated in the Federal Civil Servants’ Remuneration Act (Bundesbesoldungsgesetz) and by regulations issued by the federal state in which you work. The pay regulation „W“ (Wissenschaft) applies to professors, whereas academic and administrative staff are paid according to the „TV-L“, the collective bargaining agreement for the public service of the federal states (Tarifvertrag für den öffentlichen Dienst der Länder). The collective bargaining agreement includes several pay groups (Entgeltgruppen) and pay grades (Entgeltstufen) that are based on the level of education and professional qualifications required for the respective position and job, as well as on the years of employment in that position.

CONTACT AT THE CARL VON OSSIEZKY UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG

Division 1: Personnel and Organisation
Astrid Janssen (Head of Division)
Jörg Sprenger (Head of Section)
Email: astrid.janssen@uni-oldenburg.de
       joerg.sprenger@uni-oldenburg.de
Internet: www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/division1-personnel-organisation/

QUICK INFO

The Division 1: Personnel / Organisation at the University of Oldenburg (Dezernat 1) is located in building V 01 on Ammerländer Heerstraße 114-118.

Information on the collective bargaining agreement for the public service of the federal states (TV-L) and on the pay groups and pay grades can be found at: www.academics.com
www.oeffentlicher-dienst.info
www.hochschulverband.de/cms1/english.html

Division 1: Personnel and Organisation (PE/OE) at Oldenburg University offers a wide range of courses to staff members addressing topics as diverse as management issues in academia, service and communication, language courses and computer training. For the PE/OE programme visit: www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/pe-oe
7.3 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

You should ask your host institution or employer as early as possible about all aspects regarding the handling of intellectual property, patents and inventions. The Employee Inventions Law (Arbeitnehmererfindungsgesetz) has changed significantly since 2002, and requires members of higher education institutions to report their inventions to their employers.

Almost all universities and research institutions have an office that is responsible for research and technology transfer. At Oldenburg University, the Research and Technology Transfer Unit will give you advice on how to handle intellectual property and on how to register patents and licences.

CONTACT
The Research and Technology Transfer Unit
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 798 2914
Email: manfred.baumgart@uni-oldenburg.de
Internet: www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/academic-research/knowledge-and-technology-transfer

INFORMATION ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
German Patent and Trade Mark Office: www.dpma.de/english
European Patent Office: www.epo.org
German Research Foundation: www.dfg.de/en
IP Rights in EU Projects: www.ipr-helpdesk.org
German social security (Sozialversicherung) is a national state system that plays a key role in providing coverage for potential risks such as illness or unemployment. It comprises five areas:

- health insurance
- pension scheme
- unemployment insurance
- occupational accident insurance
- nursing care insurance

It is also advisable to take out additional private insurance such as liability insurance.

### SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP HOLDERS

Social security contributions are not mandatory for scholarship and fellowship holders. In some cases, however, health insurance contributions are part of the scholarship or fellowship, but even so you may have to choose an insurance provider on your own. Please contact the scholarship/fellowship provider for further information and read your documents carefully and thoroughly. Also keep in mind that as a scholarship/fellowship holder you will not be insured through the university, which means that you will be responsible for handling all insurance matters yourself. Along with health insurance coverage, which is mandatory in Germany, we strongly recommend that you take out insurance against accidents and third-party claims. There are many insurance providers in Germany that are able to meet all your needs.

### EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

If your stay in Germany is part of an employment contract, you are required to pay contributions to the national social security system. In Germany, the employer and the employee each pay half of the contributions, except for the occupational accident insurance contribution which is paid fully by the employer.

Once your application for health insurance coverage has been approved, your insurance provider will send you a social security number (Versicherungsnummer) and a social security pass (Sozialversicherungsausweis), an electronic health insurance card in credit-card format (Krankenversicherungskarte), as well as an insurance information booklet. Social security contributions are paid to your health insurance provider and automatically deducted from the gross salary. Before you start work your employer will ask to see your health insurance coverage/insurance card and your social security number in order to do the necessary paperwork to register you and your contributions with the social security scheme.

### INFORMATION ON GERMAN SOCIAL INSURANCE

www.deutsche-sozialversicherung.de/en

### TRANSFER OF RIGHTS

As an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen, you are covered by an EU regulation stipulating the rights and transferability of social security within the EU. These regulations contain two basic principles:

1. You are insured in the country you work in.
2. Individuals are subject only to the laws and regulations of one state.
8.1 HEALTH INSURANCE

Germany has two different health insurance systems, public (state) insurance and private health insurance. The occupational group (for example civil servants or freelancers) and annual employment income determine whether a person is eligible for private health insurance. If the income is below the upper income limit (Jahresarbeitsentgeltgrenze), which is fixed on a yearly basis, employees are covered by statutory public health insurance; if it is above that limit employees can opt for private health insurance.

In Germany, health insurance coverage is mandatory for all visiting researchers and family members accompanying them. We strongly recommend that you contact the insurance provider of your choice in good time to clarify any questions and issues you may have in advance and to ensure that you are insured from the very first day of your stay in Germany.

SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP HOLDERS

If your scholarship or fellowship does not include health insurance coverage, you may only apply for private insurance. However, if your stay in Germany exceeds 12 months you may also apply for voluntary statutory public health insurance, i.e. you have the choice. At Euraxess you can find various insurance providers with special services/schemes for international scientists, scholarship holders, etc.

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

If your stay in Germany is based on an employment contract, you will automatically be covered by statutory public health insurance. Under the laws and regulations of social security insurance, employees are insured in the country of employment even if they live abroad, for example in a neighbouring country. Exemptions apply to workers posted from an EU member state who live and work in another EU member state on a temporary basis. They can complete an A1 form (formerly E 101) to apply to remain insured in their home country. Further information can be found at Europa.eu.

INFORMATION

Euraxess Germany, Health Insurance:
European Union:
www.europa.eu
Contributions to statutory public health insurance are legally stipulated and uniform rates that apply throughout Germany. They are deducted from an employee’s gross salary by the employer. As of 2015, the contributions are 14.6% of income with 7.3% paid by the employer and employee, respectively. The range of medical services this insurance comprises hardly varies from provider to provider, differing only in terms of customer service, additional (voluntary) services or optional services for an additional charge.

You have free choice of health insurance provider. Before signing up with one it is important to compare terms and benefits carefully to find the health insurance provider that best suits your individual needs. If you wish to bring your family with you to Germany (spouse, children), they can be covered by your health insurance at no extra charge (Familienversicherung, family health insurance). Even if your spouse and children do not live with you in Germany you can still obtain family health insurance for them if they live in a country with which Germany has a social security agreement.

Unlike with private health insurance, it is your health insurance provider that will be billed for any medical treatment you receive (unless it is a medical service that is not covered by your health insurance provider). All you need if you go to a doctor is your electronic Health Insurance Card (eHealth Card, or elektronische Gesundheitskarte), with the words European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) printed on its reverse. This insurance card is issued only by statutory health insurance providers. It is valid not only in Germany but can also simplify the process for receiving treatment during temporary visits abroad within Europe. You will be eligible for medical treatment in any EU member state as well as in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland, and to the same extent as residents of those countries. The costs will be paid at the same rate as they would if incurred at home, but if the costs exceed that amount you must pay the difference.

Examples of statutory health insurance providers:
AOK: www.aok.de
Barmer GEK: www.barmer-gek.de
DAK: www.dak.de
Techniker Krankenkasse: www.tk.de
PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE
(PRIVATE KRANKENVERSICHERUNG, OR PKV)

Unlike contributions to statutory public health insurance, contributions to private health insurance are not based on income level but on age, gender, profession, current health status and the range of services you wish to receive. The more services, the higher the contributions are.

As a private patient, you will receive a bill for medical costs from your doctor. You pay the bill first and then submit the invoice to your health insurance provider, who will then reimburse you. Unlike statutory public health insurance, private health insurance does not include free family health insurance but will require contributions for each family member (spouse, children).

INFORMATION
List of private health insurance companies: www.pkv.de > Verband > Mitglieder
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR EU, EEA AND SWISS CITIZENS

SHORT VISITS (CONFERENCE, VACATION, BUSINESS TRIP)

If you need to consult a doctor or need medical treatment while travelling within the European Union or in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland you will initially have to pay the costs of the treatment in your host country. After having submitted the receipts to your insurance provider, whether private or state insurer, the costs will be reimbursed to the same amount they would if they had been incurred for treatment at home; you must cover any costs in excess of that amount.

It may be advisable to take out additional private travel or international health insurance. To facilitate treatment during temporary visits abroad, every health insurance provider is obliged to issue its members with a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

EXTENDED VISITS

An extended visit abroad is a visit that lasts a semester or an entire year. For extended stays within the EU as well as in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland, the following applies instead of the European Health Insurance Card for insurance:

As the European Health Insurance Card covers short visits only, it is important that you apply for German health insurance to receive full medical care. Citizens of the European Union, of the European Economic Area and of Switzerland who are employed in one country but live in another, so-called frontier workers or cross-border workers, are insured in the country of employment rather than in the country of residence. In order to receive medical care in your country of residence, you may apply to your health insurance provider for a S1 form (formerly E 106, E 109 and E 121). This document will entitle you and your dependants to receive medical services in the country you live in, but not work in, and in which you would otherwise not be insured.

QUICK INFO

See www.europa.eu for useful information on social security rights and the forms you need when moving around within the European Union.
8.2 PENSION SCHEME

The German statutory pension insurance scheme (Gesetzliche Rentenversicherung, or GRV) is part of the statutory social security system. It mainly serves as provision for old age upon retirement, but also protects those insured and their families in case of reduced earning capacity or death, with payments to surviving dependants. It also covers medical and professional rehabilitation to help employees recover or improve their earning capacity. Contributions to the statutory pension scheme are deducted directly from your gross salary. Generally, employers and employees each pay half. Your employer will automatically register you for this scheme via your selected health insurance provider.

RECOGNITION OF PENSION RIGHTS

If you have been employed in one or several member states of the EU, EEA, or in Switzerland, you may have acquired pension rights in each of these states. This means that when you return to your home country, or stay in Germany, periods during which you were employed in Germany or in your home country and during which you paid contributions to their statutory pension scheme will be recognised for pension rights. The pension authorities in each EU member state in which you were employed will check the contributions you have paid into their system, how much you paid in other member states, and for how long you have worked in different states.

If you have never worked in the country you currently live in, your host country will forward your pension claim to the country in which you were last employed. Germany has social security agreements with some states outside the EU, the EEA and Switzerland to improve social security protection for people who work or have worked in these countries and are thus eligible for identical or similar benefits. Please check whether Germany has such a social security agreement with your home country and what insurances are included in the agreement. It is very important to obtain as much information as possible on exactly what your entitlements will be from these countries’ respective pension schemes.

Please keep in mind the different retirement ages in each country you worked in. It may be the case that if you have acquired pension rights in another country, you will only receive that part of your pension once you have reached the legal retirement age in that country. Until that point any contributions you paid into the national pension scheme will remain with the pension authorities of the respective country, and will be paid to you according to national legal regulations.
PENSION CONTRIBUTION REFUNDS

If you return to your home country and would like the contributions you paid into the German pension scheme to be refunded to you, you must submit an application. However, this application will only be approved under certain conditions. Refunds of contributions are available if there is no obligation to pay compulsory contributions, if there is no entitlement to make voluntary contributions, and if a waiting period of two years (24 calendar months) has elapsed. Please visit the website of the Deutsche Rentenversicherung to find out more about which contributions are eligible for a refund and about national regulations.

OCCUPATIONAL PENSION SCHEMES

If your employment contract in Germany classifies you as a public servant paid according to the TV-L, you will be included in the Pension Institution of the Federal Republic and the Länder, the Versorgungsanstalt des Bundes und der Länder, or VBL for short. The VBL is an occupational pension scheme and the contributions paid by visiting researchers under this state scheme are fixed at a certain percentage.

If you are employed at the University on a short-term academic contract, you can be exempted from the VBL pension scheme. In this case your employer will be required to sign you up for the VBL’s voluntary insurance scheme. Only your employer pays contributions into this scheme, at a reduced rate. You can apply for an exemption at the University’s Division 2: Finances, Section 2.5 Payroll Accounting (Personalabrechnung) within two months of starting work.

CONTACT

Deutsche Rentenversicherung Oldenburg-Bremen
Huntestraße 11
26135 Oldenburg
Telephone: 0800 - 100 048 028
Internet: www.deutsche-rentenversicherung-oldenburg-bremen.de
Fremdsprachen > English

Division 2: Finances
Building V01
Ammerländer Heerstraße 114-118
26129 Oldenburg
Internet: www.uni-oldenburg.de/dezernat2/

INFORMATION

Deutsche Rentenversicherung:
www.deutsche-rentenversicherung-oldenburg-bremen.de>
Fremdsprachen > English

QUICK INFO

Advice for EU citizens: europa.eu/index_en.htm
8.3 UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Unemployment insurance (Arbeitslosenversicherung) is also part of the German statutory social security system. It provides unemployment benefits paid by the government to people who are (currently) unemployed so that they have a secure income while searching for new employment. You are entitled to receive unemployment benefits if you worked in Germany before becoming unemployed, paid into the German statutory social security scheme for at least 360 days or 12 months during the past two years, and are available for recruitment into new employment. You must submit an application for unemployment benefit to the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit). Employment periods in other EU and EEA states and Switzerland during which you paid social security contributions may be recognised and taken into account. However, the usual requirement is that your last employment was in Germany and subject to social security contributions.

Unemployment insurance contributions are deducted directly from your gross salary. Scholarships and fellowships are usually exempt from compulsory social security contributions. Whether and to what degree unemployment contributions made in Germany can be recognised by other countries depends on whether these countries have a social security agreement with Germany and what insurances are included in the agreement.

INFORMATION

8.4 OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Occupational accident insurance (Unfallversicherung, or Berufsunfallversicherung) is also part of the German statutory social security system. It insures employees against injuries or illnesses that occur at the workplace as well as during the commute to and from the workplace. Work-related illnesses and diseases are also covered. It does not, however, cover accidents that occur during leisure time. Benefits that are not covered by occupational accident insurance will be covered by health insurance, though health insurance providers may refuse to pay benefits or may only grant partial benefits if medical expenses are particularly high.

Visiting staff who are employed by the University are entitled to occupational accident insurance, which is provided by private-sector employers’ liability insurance associations (Berufsgenossenschaften) and by public-sector accident insurance associations (e.g. accident insurance funds, state accident insurance funds, municipal accident insurance funds). Contributions to occupational accident insurance are fully paid by employers.

INFORMATION
The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs: www.bmas.de > English > Our Topics > Social Security > Statutory occupational health insurance
Nursing care insurance (*Pflegeversicherung*) is part of your health insurance, private or statutory, so when you sign up for health insurance with a health insurance provider you will be automatically registered for nursing care insurance. It helps people who are in need of care and dependent on assistance from others, and provides coverage for domestic and in-patient care. Contributions to nursing care are deducted from your gross salary along with contributions to health insurance. Employers and employees each pay half of the contributions.

You may also purchase supplemental insurance in addition to the mandatory insurances that Germany requires. There are a number of private insurances that cover you against all kinds of potential risks.

Personal liability insurance (*Haftpflichtversicherung*) is common in Germany. Anyone in Germany can be held liable for damages to a third party. Parents are always liable for any damage caused by their children under the age of 18. We therefore strongly recommend that you sign up for private personal liability insurance for the entire family to cover payment for any unintentional damage you or your family members may cause.

*Alexander von Humboldt Foundation offers additional information on health insurance, personal liability insurance and accident insurance: www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/insurance.html*
9 TAXATION IN GERMANY

The question of whether your income is subject to taxation in Germany and, if so, how you pay tax depends on the purpose of your stay, i.e. whether you are employed or have been awarded a scholarship:

9.1 TAXABILITY OF SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

If your research visit to Germany is part of a fellowship, you may be exempt from paying German income tax. You should definitely contact the institution that is providing your fellowship for more information. Also check whether the fellowship being awarded to you for work in Germany is taxable in your home country.

9.2 TAXABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT INCOME

If you are employed in Germany for research and/or teaching purposes and stay here for more than six months, your (globally-earned) income will be taxable in Germany:

WAGE TAX

The wage tax (*Lohnsteuer*) is deducted from your gross salary. The tax rates differ from those in other countries and depend on your *Steuerklasse* (taxation class), which in turn depends on the level of your income and on your marital status. Residents in Germany who register at the *Einwohnermeldeamt* (Residents’ Registration Office) receive an 11-digit Tax Identification Number (TIN, in German: *IdNr.*) to ensure their identification within the tax system. This Tax Identification Number remains valid for life. It is issued within a few days of (first) registration and sent to you by mail. By the end of the calendar year your employer must submit an annual electronic record to the tax office providing information on your wage, taxes, benefits, contributions to (social) insurances, etc. The record will also be forwarded to you.
In order to avoid employees paying taxes both in Germany and in their home country, Germany has signed double taxation agreements (Doppelbesteuerungsabkommen), sometimes also known as a Double Tax Treaty or Double Taxation Convention, with many countries. These agreements determine in which country you are required to pay taxes.

If you reside in Germany for less than 6 months (183 days), work for a foreign employer and the double taxation agreement places the taxation rights with your home country, your income/wage will be taxed in your home country. If any of these terms does not apply, your income/wage will be taxed in Germany.

**INFORMATION**

List of countries that have double taxation agreements with Germany:

www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/Web/EN/ Home/home.html

> Issues > Taxation > Double Taxation

---

You have the opportunity to submit an annual income tax return to your local tax office (Finanzamt), and also to get a tax refund. You may do so either by using the official forms or by forwarding the forms online/electronically using specialised software such as ELSTER. The official forms for an income tax return (Einkommenssteuererklärung) are available at your local tax office or online. You may file your income tax return up to 4 years after the year in question. Self-employed persons must submit an annual income tax return for the previous calendar year by 31 May of the following year. Upon receipt of your income tax return, the tax office will send you a tax assessment (Steuerbescheid) clarifying whether you are eligible for a refund. It may be a good idea to consult a tax adviser (Steuerberater) regarding your income tax return.

**INFORMATION AND CONTACT**

Oldenburg Tax Office
91er Straße 4
26121 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 238 1

Email: Poststelle@fa-ol.niedersachsen.de

Internet: www.finanzamt-oldenburg.de

Online Database of Tax Accountants: www.dstv.de/suchservice

An unusual feature of the German tax system is the state-collected church tax (Kirchensteuer). In some instances churches can have their tax collected for them by the tax office. With major churches, church tax (about 9% of your annual income tax) is collected together with the wage tax and automatically deducted from your monthly salary (check your payslip). If you are not a member of a church there is no obligation to pay church taxes and you will be exempt from paying them, which will be indicated on your payslip.
If you wish to bring your children to Oldenburg, you should find out about daycare options and facilities prior to your arrival. The kindergarten year usually starts in August, and only in exceptional cases is it possible to get a place in a facility on short notice.

**STATUTORY RIGHT**

Children between the ages of three and six years have a statutory right to a place in a kindergarten, though kindergarten attendance remains voluntary. As childcare provisions and care times vary from facility to facility we recommend that you contact these facilities prior to your arrival. In addition to kindergartens, there are *Kindertagesstätten* (daycare centres or nurseries) that provide all-day care, often including lunch, and *Krippen* (crèches) that provide childcare for babies and toddlers.

**REGISTRATION**

There is a signing up period in January of each year. Many facilities have an Open Day (*Tag der offenen Tür*) for parents who would like to see the facility and meet the staff before signing up. In Oldenburg, places in childcare facilities are assigned in a centralised procedure. Details on the procedure can be found on the website of the City of Oldenburg. Parents fill in a form and name their preferred childcare facility. The City’s *Amt für Jugend, Familie und Schule* (Agency for Youth, Family, and Schooling) is in charge of assigning places and will inform parents some time between the end of February and the end of April of its decision.

**CHILDMINDERS**

A childminder (*Tagesmutter*) is a more individualised, flexible childcare option. Childminders generally look after several children during the day in their own home. Childminders are required to hold a valid state certificate and a licence from the child protective services (*Jugendamt*). They are also required to update their paediatric first aid training every 2 years. You can find *Tagesmütter* in the classified ads sections of newspapers or through the child protective services. If you are looking for a babysitter to look after your children for a few hours a day, it is a good idea to ask your colleagues and neighbours for recommendations.

**QUICK INFO**

A fee based on the parents’ income level, on the range of services the respective facility provides and on the number of siblings is charged for places at childcare facilities.
10.2 CHILDCARE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OLDENBURG’S STUDENTENWERK

CRÈCHE (KINDERKRIPPE) ON HUNTEMANNNSTRASSE

The Studentenwerk offers 44 places in the crèche on Huntemannstraße for children aged between around eight months and three years. Childcare is provided in the morning and/or in the afternoon, from 7:30 to 16:00. The crèche has an Open Day (Tag der offenen Tür) every year in January for parents to view the facility and meet the child carers.

DAYCARE CENTRE/NURSERY (KINDERTAGESSTÄTTE) ON HAARENTOR CAMPUS

The Studentenwerk also has a daycare centre (“Kindertagesstätte Uni-Campus”) directly on Haarentor Campus. 45 places divided among three groups of 15 children each are available for children aged three or younger, and 25 places for kindergarten-aged children (between the ages of three and six). Like the crèche on Huntemannstraße, every January the Kita Uni-Campus has an Open Day for parents.

FLEXIBLE AFTERNOON CHILDCARE

Flexible afternoon childcare is an additional service offered by the Kita Uni-Campus. From 1 October to 15 July it provides afternoon childcare for children aged one to six. Please note that this service is not intended as a supplement to regular childcare in childcare facilities. It is meant to help parents who need childcare on short notice, for example when a babysitter or childminder cancels at the last minute. You can register either in person at the Kita Uni-Campus or by phone.

INFORMATION

Kinderkrippe Huntemannstraße
Director: Barbara Wübbens
Huntemannstraße 2
26131 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 56 00 783
Email: kinderkrippe.huntemannstrasse@swol.de

Kindertagesstätte Uni-Campus
Director: Gerta Kutter
Uhlhornsweg 47b
26129 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 217 197 72
Email: kita.uni-campus@sw-ol.de

OTHER CHILDCARE FACILITIES NEAR THE UNIVERSITY:

Studentenselbshilfe – Kindertagesstätte e.V.
Küpkersweg 91
26129 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 764 34
Email: info@kindergarten-kuepkersweg.de

Evangelischer Kindergarten
Schützenweg 40
26129 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 / 729 67
Compulsory school attendance (Schulpflicht) in Germany requires that all children between the ages of six and fifteen attend school. The German general school system has two stages of school education: primary and secondary. Primary education runs from years 1 to 4. Secondary education (Sekundarstufe I) runs from years 5 to 10 with three different tracks of schooling: Hauptschule, Realschule (in Lower Saxony, these two tracks are combined into Oberschulen) and Gymnasium. Students receive an intermediate-level qualification once they have successfully completed year 10. Students who are eligible to take Abitur exams continue secondary education until either year 12 or 13 (Sekundarstufe II), depending on the school they attend. The German school system also has Gesamtschulen (GS) and Integrierte Gesamtschulen (IGS). These schools combine all three tracks of schooling and allocate students to different course levels according to performance: remedial, basic, and advanced. Kooperative Gesamtschulen (KGS), on the other hand, keep the three tracks of schooling separate and teach students separately even though they all attend the same school.

As each federal state has its own school holiday dates, the school year starts in either August or September. In the past, part-time education was more common in Germany than full-time education, with the school day ending early, between 13:00 and 14:00. In recent years, however, full-time education has become increasingly prevalent and many schools now offer full-time education until 15:00 or 16:00 and provide lunch at cafeterias and/or dining halls (Mensas).

Most schools in Germany are public and do not charge tuition. Parents do, however, have to pay for learning materials and school trips and outings. Private schools are less common in Germany. You can consult the school administration (Schulleitung) and go and see the schools for yourself before choosing one for your children.

INFORMATION

www.oldenburg.de > English > City Administration > Families > Schools

For further information: www.landesschulbehoerde-niedersachsen.de

School holiday dates in Lower Saxony: www.holidays-info.com/School-Holidays-Germany/Lower-Saxony.html
10.4 FAMILY BENEFITS

Family benefits vary greatly within the European Union. Your economic status and your place of residence determine which country is responsible for providing your family benefits:

- If you live in a European country and pay contributions to the (national) social security system, the country you live in is responsible for your family benefits.
- If you live in a European country temporarily (i.e. for less than two years) and continue to pay contributions to the social security system of your home country, your home country remains responsible for your family benefits.
- If your family lives in a country other than the one where you live, your family could be entitled to family benefits from different countries. The relevant national authorities will then take account of both parents' situations and decide which country has primary responsibility for paying the benefits. You will not receive benefits twice.

The following family benefits are statutory in Germany:

- Parental leave and parental benefit (Elternzeit and Elterngeld)
- Maternity protection (Mutterschutz)
- Child benefit (Kindergeld)

For more detailed information, please go to: www.uni-oldenburg.de/en/iro > Visiting Researchers > Bringing your Family > Family Benefits

CONTACT

CHILD BENEFIT
Visiting Address:
Familienkasse Oldenburg
Federal Employment Agency Oldenburg
Stau 70
26122 Oldenburg
Postal Address:
Familienkasse Niedersachsen-Bremen
30131 Hannover
Telephone: 0800 - 4 5555 30
(nationwide and free of charge)
Email: Familienkasse-Niedersachsen-Bremen@arbeitsagentur.de

PARENTAL BENEFIT
Elterngeldstelle of the City of Oldenburg
(Amt für Jugend, Familie und Schule)
Bergstraße 25
26122 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 235 4444
Email: familie-schule@stadt-oldenburg.de
Telephone advice service:
Mon to Fri 7 to 18
Personal consultation on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 to 12 and in the afternoon after making an appointment by phone; on Fridays from 8 to 12

INFORMATION
Employment Agency, Kindergeld: www.arbeitsagentur.de
> English> Benefits > Child Benefit

EUROPEAN UNION
europa.eu/youreurope/index.html > Citizens > Family > Children > Family benefits
If your partner is accompanying you to Oldenburg and would also like to work during his or her stay here, you should find out about the employment regulations as soon as possible. The Ausländerbüro (Foreign Residents' Office) of the City of Oldenburg is your contact for such inquiries and can inform you about whether you are allowed to be gainfully employed in Germany and how to apply for jobs. Current job offers are listed in daily newspapers (generally in the weekend editions) and online, on the University's noticeboard or at the Federal Employment Agency in Oldenburg.

INFORMATION AND ADVICE
EURES – European Job Mobility Portal: www.ec.europa.eu/eures
German Federal Employment Agency website: www.arbeitsagentur.de

EMPLOYMENT AGENCY IN OLDENBURG
Agentur für Arbeit Oldenburg
Stau 70
26122 Oldenburg
Telephone: 0800 - 4 5555 00

USEFUL ONLINE JOB PORTALS
www.euraxess.eu > Jobs
www.zeit.de/jobs
www.academics.com
www.academics.de
http://jobsuche.monster.de

QUICK INFO
Job offers at Oldenburg University:
www.uni-oldenburg.de/stellen
11 LIVING IN OLDENBURG
If you need to see a doctor in Germany, it is a good idea to first ask friends or colleagues for a recommendation. In the phone book (or yellow pages) you can find a list of doctors sorted by medical field and by name. If you need to see a specialist, we recommend that you go to a general practitioner first, who can then refer you to a specialist.

To avoid long waiting times at a doctor’s practice you should make an appointment by phone in advance, though you may have to wait some time for an appointment with a specialist or dentist.

Germany’s medical services are of a high standard. Hospitals have Accident & Emergency departments, but you can also go to a local doctor’s surgery for urgent medical care (Notdienstpraxen, or Ärztlicher Notdienst) or a pharmacy (Apothekennotdienst) in case of sudden illness or minor injuries that are urgent but not life-threatening. These services are mainly provided in the evening and on weekends when most medical practices are closed. The doctor’s surgery for urgent medical treatment is on Auguststraße, near the Evangelisches Krankenhaus.

Pharmacies offer an emergency service outside normal business hours and at weekends (Apotheken-Notdienst). See the website below for a list of which pharmacy is on duty. Please note that eye specialists (ophthalmologists), ENT specialists (ear, nose, and throat - in German Hals, Nasen, Ohren or HNO), surgeons and paediatricians also provide urgent medical treatment, but usually only at hospitals. To find out where you need to go, dial 116 117 (free of charge and without area code).

QUICK INFO

Apotheken-Notdienst:
http://www.oldenburger-apotheke.de/notdienst.html
11.2 EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS IN AN EMERGENCY

Police                          110
Fire Service                  112
Ambulance                                                            112
Poisoning (Poisoning Information Centre in Göttingen)                                    +49 (0) 551 / 19 240

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS IN AN EMERGENCY

Police                          110
Fire Service                  112
Ambulance                                                            112
Poisoning (Poisoning Information Centre in Göttingen)                                    +49 (0) 551 / 19 240

HOSPITALS IN OLDENBURG

Evangelisches Krankenhaus
Steinweg 13-17
26122 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 236 0

Klinikum Oldenburg
Rahel-Straus-Straße 10
26133 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 403 0

Pius-Hospital Oldenburg
Georgstraße 12
26121 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441 - 229 0

OTHER IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

For breakdown services (recovery, repair) on the roadside and at home provided by the automobile club ADAC (Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil-Club e. V.):                      0180 - 222 22 22
by the automobile club ACE (Auto Club Europa e. V.):                      0180 - 234 35 36
Public service number to identify car holders and car insurance companies in case of damage to a vehicle: 0800 / 250 26 00 (free of charge)

LOST OR STOLEN BANK AND CREDIT CARDS

Visa (International):                          0800 - 811 8440
MasterCard (International):           0800 - 819 1040
American Express:                          069 - 97 97 20 00
(Electronic) Cash Cards (Maestro):                      01805 - 021 021
Diners Club (International): 01805 - 07 07 04 or 069 900 150 - 135/136
To report and lock lost or stolen bank or credit cards:  (+49) - 116 116

DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY DEUTSCHE TELEKOM (SUBJECT TO CHARGES)

For German phone numbers:                          11 8 33
In English:                                                                    11 8 37
For international phone numbers:                   11 8 34
11.3 GETTING AROUND: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Germany has a dense and modern public transport network. Most travel destinations can be easily reached by railway, bus, tram or underground train.

*Deutsche Bahn* operates the main railway network throughout Germany with long-, medium- and short-distance services. Tickets can be purchased at ticket machines, at ticket counters or online at www.bahn.com. You can save a lot of money by taking advantage of special offers, e.g. Saver Fare (*Sparpreis*) for advance bookings, several *BahnCards* (rail cards) that include discounts of 25, 50, or 100 % on the regular price (especially for frequent business travellers), regional day tickets, or regional tickets with temporary validity such as the Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket or Niedersachsen-Ticket (the *Weekend Ticket* and *Lower Saxony-Ticket*) that give you one day of unlimited rail travel across Germany on weekends or unlimited travel throughout Lower Saxony on any day for up to 5 persons, i.e. the more people, the lower the price.

As of 2013, *intercity buses* operate throughout Germany and connect many larger cities. With a fast-growing national network, intercity bus services are less expensive than rail travel. Many providers offer a seat guarantee and free WiFi (aka WLAN). Some intercity bus services also operate in Oldenburg and Bremen. Tickets can be purchased online or, in some cases, on the bus.

The *Oldenburg bus network* (VWG) covers the entire city, the outskirts and the surrounding areas. It has a service office at *Lappan* (bus stop of the same name) in the city. Another sales point is located at ZOB (Zentraler Omnibus-Bahnhof), at the northern exit of the central station. Tickets can be purchased at the service office, at the sales point, at ticket machines located at certain bus stops or on the bus.

Taxis are rather expensive in Germany, and generally used only when absolutely necessary. The total price is made up of a basic fee plus mileage. Tipping etiquette for taxi rides includes rounding up to an even number.

**INFORMATION**

*Deutsche Bahn*: www.bahn.com

*VWG*: www.vwg.de
As everything in Oldenburg is within easy reach, cycling is possibly the best (and most popular) mode of transport in the city. It is also an effective and eco-friendly alternative to public transport or taxis. Cycling can even be a faster way of getting around than taking the bus, as Oldenburg offers an unusually extensive network of safe cycle paths and designated cycle lanes on roads and cycle routes in its surrounding areas, and flatness is luckily a typical feature of the land in Northern Germany. You may be able to hire a bike from your host or you can hire one at the University’s Do-It-Yourself bicycle repair shop (6 € per week, 20 € per month), which also offers free assistance with repairs and inexpensive spare parts. If you would like to purchase a second-hand bicycle, check the advertisements in the Nordwest Zeitung (NWZ) every Tuesday and Saturday, try ebay, go to a local bicycle dealer or ask the staff at the DIY bicycle repair shop.

INFORMATION

Do-It-Yourself Bicycle Repair Shop at Oldenburg University
http://asta-oldenburg.de/fahrradselfhilfe/fahrradselfhilfe
CARPOOLING

If you prefer to travel by car rather than by public transport, carpooling may be a great option. Car owners register online with a car-sharing network and offer empty seats in their cars to people travelling the same route as they are. As a passenger you pay the driver in advance or upon departure. The amount you pay will be agreed between you and the driver, but is usually based on mileage. Please note that terms and conditions are agreed solely between the driver and the passenger, so you use carpooling services at your own risk. The networks assume no liability.

INFORMATION

Car sharing:
www.cambio-carsharing.de/oldenburg
www.asta-oldenburg.de/service/cambio-car

CAR SHARING

Car sharing is a smart way to get around and a great addition to bus, railway, bicycle, and cars. You join a car-sharing company or club and apply for membership. You can choose the vehicle according to your own requirements, e.g. for a few hours in the city, a trip over the weekend or a long journey. Rental rates include a monthly rate or a charge for single trips based on the duration and mileage of your journey. Members of the University staff receive lower rates with Cambio CarSharing Oldenburg.
11.6 GETTING AROUND: YOUR PRIVATE CAR

Many visiting scientists and researchers come to Germany by car or purchase one upon arrival. Temporary stays of up to 6 months do not entail much bureaucracy; your driving licence, car registration plates, car documents, car tax and car insurance remain valid in Germany for that period (as your car remains registered in your country of residence), though your documents may need to be translated. However, if you stay here for more than 6 months or change your place of residence there are a few things you need to be aware of.

EU/EEA CITIZENS

In January 2013, a new European driving licence was introduced as a standardised alternative to the various driving licence models in EU Member States with their different categories and validity periods. For the time being all driving licences issued in an EU member state remain valid in Germany even upon change of residence.

CITIZENS OF OTHER COUNTRIES

If you change your place of residence, or stay in Germany for more than 6 months, you need to exchange your national driving licence for a German one. After six months your national driving licence will lose its validity in Germany. If you stay here for only 7-12 months, the validity may be extended by the local vehicle registration authority, but this requires proof of residence duration (e.g. an employment contract, scholarship). Please note that some foreign nationals need to take a full or partial driving test (theory and/or practical) due to different procedures and requirements for passing a driving test in their home country. We recommend that you contact the local authorities ahead of your arrival.

If you have obtained an international driving licence, it is only valid in combination with your national driving licence, so make sure you always carry both documents when driving. Please also note that international driving licences are valid for only three years.

CAR REGISTRATION

If you change your place of residence, you need to register your car at the local vehicle registration office and get a German registration plate. If you are staying in Germany for less than 12 months you will not be required to get a German licence plate. In Oldenburg, you need to go to the Bürgerbüro Nord, which you can also contact for further information, for example on motor vehicle tax. You need to provide valid proof of car insurance coverage, including third party liability car insurance, as well as a valid certificate confirming that your car passed the test for vehicle safety, roadworthiness, and exhaust emissions (you may need a Certificate of Conformity).

CONTACT
Oldenburg Bürgerbüro Nord
Stiller Weg 10
26121 Oldenburg
Telephone: +49 (0) 441-235 4444
Fax: +49 (0) 441-235 3185
Email: buergerbuero-nord@stadt-oldenburg.de

QUICK INFO
Information on car purchase, validity of driving licences in EU countries and more at:
RADIO AND TV LICENCE FEES

A television licence fee is charged in Germany. As of 2013, a blanket contribution must be paid by all households regardless of equipment or actual usage. The fee is billed monthly or quarterly and used to fund public broadcasters that operate national and/or local television channels and radio stations. Exemptions or reductions may be obtained upon application.

INFORMATION
Rundfunkbeitrag:
www.rundfunkbeitrag.de

TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Apart from Deutsche Telekom AG, which operates the German telecommunications service and network in large parts of the country, there are other providers that may be less expensive. Most providers offer various deals for landline and internet services (WiFi is usually called WLAN in Germany). As charges for telephone calls vary it is worthwhile to compare prices. There are also many different mobile phone providers offering a variety of deals. Before signing a contract, please note that many providers stipulate a minimum contract period of 24 months, so you may want to check for deals with shorter contract periods.

Alternatively, you can get a prepaid SIM card. Again, different providers offer different deals, so comparing terms and charges is advisable. Prepaid SIM cards and top-up cards can be purchased at drugstores and supermarkets (at or near the checkout), at media and electronic stores, convenience stores and, of course, at the providers’ stores too.

ONLINE PHONE BOOKS
Phone books: www.dastelefonbuch.de
www.dasoertliche.de
Yellow Pages: www.gelbeseiten.de

DIRECTORY INFORMATION PROVIDED BY DEUTSCHE TELEKOM (FEES APPLY)
For German phone numbers: 11833
In English: 11837
For international phone numbers: 11834
11.8 RELIGION

Freedom of faith, conscience, and creed, including the unhindered practice of religion, is guaranteed by Article 4 of the German Basic Law (Grundgesetz). There are more than 160 different religious communities in Germany which all contribute to the country’s religious diversity. The City of Oldenburg has a variety of churches and houses of worship including Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, free churches, Islamic, Jewish, and New Apostolic places of worship and other religious communities. Around 48% of religious group members in Oldenburg are Lutheran-Protestant (evangelisch-lutherisch), making it the most common religion in the city, followed by Roman Catholics at 15%. The remaining 37% are members of other religious communities or are not affiliated with any religious group.

INFORMATION ON CHURCHES IN OLDENBURG
www.oldenburg.de > Kultur & Freizeit > Kirche und Glaube

11.9 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

German national public holidays are declared by statute and celebrated throughout the Federal Republic. This includes paid leave for most employees (some are required to work on public holidays), as well as businesses staying closed on these days. The same business and opening hours apply on public holidays as on Sundays. Other holidays such as Epiphany (Heilige Drei Könige or Dreikönigstag) on 6 January or All Saint’s Day (Allerheiligen) on 1 November vary from state to state but are not public holidays in Lower Saxony, where only the national public holidays are celebrated.

Public Holidays in Germany:
- New Year’s Day: 1 January
- Good Friday: Friday before Easter
- Easter Sunday & Easter Monday: end of March/beginning of April
- International Workers’ Day: 1 May
- Ascension Day: May/June (40 days after Easter)
- Whit Sunday and Whit Monday (U.S.: Pentecost): May/June (50 days after Easter)
- Day of German Unity: 3 October
- Christmas Eve: 24 December (starting in the afternoon)
- Christmas: 25 and 26 December
- New Year’s Eve: 31 December (starting in the afternoon)
Sometimes it is the little things that count when it comes to living in Germany. In this section we provide some tips and general information.

BUSINESS AND OPENING HOURS

In Germany, shops and stores are usually open from 9:30 to 20:00 Mondays to Saturdays, while shopping malls may close at 21:00 or 22:00. Supermarkets open at 7:00 or 8:00 and close between 20:00 and 24:00. Small shops may close earlier, around 18:00 or 19:00, and on Saturday afternoons. Please note that on Sundays shops and supermarkets are closed. Petrol stations, corner shops/convenience stores (Kioske) and bakeries open on Sundays and on public holidays, although bakeries generally close before noon.

SMOKING BAN

According to Germany’s non-smokers protection law (Nichtraucherschutzgesetz), smoking is banned in all public places, including shops, public transport stations (where it may be allowed in designated smoking areas), airports and sports and leisure facilities. As the federal states each have their own smoking laws, smoking may be permitted in cafés, bars and restaurants. In Lower Saxony, however, smoking is usually only permitted in clearly designated separate rooms.

ELECTRICITY

The national electric power transmission network (grid) in Germany uses the standard electrical voltage of 230 volt AC, 50 Hz. European standard plugs, or Europlugs, usually fit all sockets. However, depending on your home country, a plug adapter or transformer (voltage converter) may be needed to connect your electronic devices to German sockets.

WASTE SEPARATION

You may have heard about waste separation in Germany. Germans attach great importance to environmental protection. We separate and recycle waste using a waste separation system that includes different coloured waste bins: blue for paper, yellow for plastic, black for general waste and green for organic waste. Waste separation is a serious issue in Germany, so please be careful about what you put in which bin. Plastic and packaging materials are also collected in yellow recycling bags (Gelber Sack). You can pick up these recycling bags for free at some supermarkets or city authorities. Sometimes, however, it is required to use coupons (vouchers) for the exchange of recycling bags. You can order these coupons by calling 0800 – 4842900 (free of charge) or do so online. You can then exchange the coupons for the bags at a supermarket, for example.
Supermarkets often provide small boxes for the disposal of packaging materials and non-rechargeable batteries. Public containers for disposal of waste glass and old clothes can be found at various locations in Oldenburg, as well as recycling depots for harmful substances, garden waste or electronic waste. The City of Oldenburg has a Waste Collection Calendar that shows the weekly and monthly waste collection times in your street.

THE DEPOSIT SYSTEM

A deposit of up to 25 Cents per bottle/can is charged for most beverages at supermarkets and convenience stores. When you return bottles or cans at reverse vending machines, labelled Pfandrückgabe or Leergutannahme, you get your deposit back in the form of a coupon which you can either use to pay for your groceries at the respective supermarket or simply exchange for cash at the till.

WEATHER

Oldenburg has a temperate climate with warm summers and mild winters.

TIPPING

Tipping in Germany is slightly different to some other countries, where tipping may be higher or not common at all. Germans usually tip 10%, which may be rounded up to an even number. We generally give tips at restaurants, cafés, bars and hairdressers and for taxi rides or (food) deliveries. It is also very common to pay cash rather than by credit card, even at restaurants, and also to pay separately. Waiters will ask you „Zusammen oder getrennt?“, which means „together or separately?“, and if the answer is „separately“ („getrennt“), they will figure out the sum for each customer separately. Again, this is very common, so there is no need to feel uncomfortable about causing any inconvenience. Please note that waiters and waitresses often stay at your table while you pay.

CINEMA

Though dubbing is standard on German television, cinemas often show films in their original language. They are labelled either „OV“ (Originalversion - original version) or „OmU“ (Original mit Untertiteln - original version with [German] subtitles).

QUICK INFO

Waste Collection Calendar for the City of Oldenburg at services.oldenburg.de/index.php?id=45

Enter the name of the street you live in (do not remove the check marks) and click on „Weiter“. The Waste Collection Calendar will be displayed and can be downloaded.

Find out how to order coupons and where to get yellow recycling bags in exchange for them:
www.gelber-sack-ol.de/
If your stay in Oldenburg is drawing to an end there are a few things you should take care of before you leave. To help avoid last-minute stress we have put together a checklist for you:

### 12 BEFORE YOU LEAVE GERMANY

#### 12.1 CHECKLIST

If your stay in Oldenburg is drawing to an end there are a few things you should take care of before you leave. To help avoid last-minute stress we have put together a checklist for you:

**AT LEAST THREE MONTHS BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

- Cancel your rental agreement (*Mietvertrag*) now at the very latest, and check with your landlord whether renovation work or repairs need to be carried out before you move out.
- Cancel the contracts with your electricity and gas providers now at the very latest.
- File your tax return (if necessary a tax adviser can take care of this for you).
- Make an appointment with an adviser from the German Federal Pension Fund (*Deutsche Rentenversicherung*) and find out what pension claims you have as regards reimbursement of pension contributions or pension payments when you retire. This is only necessary if you worked for the University on an employment contract (rather than on a scholarship, for example), and paid into the German Federal Pension Fund.
- Check with the University’s Personnel Division or your scholarship provider whether you will receive your final salary payment or the final instalment of your scholarship before you leave.
- Cancel any contracts with telephone companies or mobile network and/or internet providers, in accordance with the respective period of notice.
- Cancel any newspaper or magazine subscriptions.
- Cancel any club or society memberships.
AT LEAST ONE MONTH BEFORE YOU LEAVE

• De-register from your Oldenburg address at the Citizens’ Office Oldenburg (Bürgerbüro).
• If you have children who have been attending a childcare facility or school in Oldenburg, inform the facility so that they can be de-registered.
• Inform your insurance agents that you will soon be leaving Oldenburg.
• Make arrangements with your landlord about how and when your security deposit will be reimbursed.
• If you want your post to be forwarded to a new address, fill in and send off a Deutsche Post change of address order form (Nachsendeauftrag).
• If you have been paying the compulsory radio and TV licence fees (Rundfunkbeitrag), de-register with the ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio Beitragsservice.
• If you wish to have luggage conveyed to your new address, make the necessary arrangements with a shipping agent.
• If you opened a bank account in Germany we recommend that you wait until a few days prior to your departure before closing it.

ON THE DAY OF YOUR DEPARTURE

• Make a note of the readings on the electricity, gas and water meters in your flat and have your landlord confirm and log them.
• Check the flat and stairway for any damage that may have occurred in the course of moving out.
• Leave the apartment clean, as agreed with your landlord.
• Check that you have not forgotten anything inside the flat and that you have taken care of everything. Then return the keys to the flat to your landlord.
IMPRESSUM

Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg
D-26111 Oldenburg

Telephone: +49 (0) 441/798-0
Email: praesidium@uni-oldenburg.de
www.uni-oldenburg.de

Publisher
Präsidium der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg

Conception, text and editing
International Relations Office

Texts and text passages in chapters 2.2, 2.3, 3.4, 7.2 and 8.2 were contributed by the respective institutions at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg.

Print
flyerheaven GmbH & Co.KG

Photo credits
Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg, Stadt Oldenburg, AOK-Mediendienst

Please note that the information we provide is not legally binding and no substitute for professional advice, consultation, or services. We strongly recommend that you consult authorities such as the German Embassy in your home country or your local Foreign Residents’ Office.

January 2016
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE
Building A5, Room 0-072
Telephone: +49 (0)441-798 2468 or 4628
Internet: www.uni-oldenburg.de/iro

Postal Address:
International Relations Office
Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg
Ammerländer Heerstraße 114-118
26129 Oldenburg
Germany