

Welcome Guide

We are delighted you're here

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en

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FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN



~ 500 professors

~ 4700 staff members

Targeted support for early-career researchers

VERITAS, IUSTITIA, LIBERTAS



~ 3300 doctoral students

International Network University

~ 34000 students

11+1 Departments 4 Central Institutes

Commitment to climate protection and sustainability | Climate neutrality by 2025



Innovation in teaching and learning

Model for gender equality

1948

December 4th 1948: Founding of Freie Universität Berlin with support from the USA, enabling students to learn, research, and teach free from political influence.

1963

John F. Kennedy visits FUB

»This university must be interested in turning out citizens of the world and men who are willing to commit their energies to the advancement of a free society.« John F. Kennedy, 1963

1966

Freie Universität Berlin becomes a center of the student movement.

after 1975

Freie Universität Berlin is developing into a mass university with 65,000 students.

1990s

Reorganization of Berlin's higher education landscape after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of the city

2007

Freie Universität Berlin is recognized as a University of Excellence in the Excellence Initiative of the German federal and state governments. It receives the award again in 2012 and in 2019 as part of the Berlin University Alliance.

2023

Freie Universität celebrates

75 Years of Free Thinking.

Settling In

- FU-Account

Shortly before you start work, you will receive your login details for setting up your FU account from the central IT department FUB-IT. If this does not happen, please contact you HR administrator in the Human Resources department.
Guests of Freie Universität Berlin can request an FU account using this application form.
A personal certificate (email encryption/digital signature) can be requested by email.

- Telephone

As an employee of Freie Universität Berlin, when you create your FU account, you will automatically be assigned a personal phone number with an answering machine and a PIN for logging in to the phone system. This phone number will remain the same throughout your employment and cannot be changed.
If you do not have a telephone at your workplace, please contact the designated IT officer in your department.
Employees also have the option of activating phone number for telephone calls using the Cicsco Webex or Jabber software for PC or smartphone.

- Drives and Printers

When you set up your FU account, you will automatically receive access to your personal drive. Permission to use shared drives and printers must be requested by your supervisor from FUB-IT support.

- FUB-IT Portal

The central FUB-IT Portal provides members of Freie Universität Berlin with easy access to IT services and information. From here, you can access your FU account, email, telephone, and the FU telephone directory. You can submit requests to IT support from here via the service portal. The elSA portal provides access to various administrative applications and a self-service portal for all employees, where personal information, HR-related documents, and certificates can be accessed online.

- Webex

The Cisco Webex chat and video conferencing platform is ideal for online meetings, (teaching) events, online office hours, group work, or project teams. Employees can also use the softphone functions after activating their personal phone number.

- IT-Support

If you have any questions about FUB-IT services or specific problems, please contact IT Support via the service portal or by email at service@fu-berlin.de.
In urgent cases, they can be contacted by phone on +49 30 838-77777.

Further information
FUB-IT
www.it.fu-berlin.de

Settling In

Further IT Services

- Learn@FU (Moodle)

Learn@FU is a central learning platform at Freie Universität Berlin with numerous functions and a wide range of applications for teaching, learning, and research. All members of the university can use it after registering once.

- Content Management System (CMS)

Official websites of university institutions and projects are maintained in Freie Universität Berlin's central content management system (CMS). After registering, the CMS system can be used for everything from website design up to publication.

- Blogs (WordPress)

Blogs are a platform for simple and innovative online communication and publication. In this context, the WordPress blog system is available to all members of Freie Universität Berlin who have an FU account.

- Wikis (Confluence)

Wikis offer a wide range of possibilities for planning and implementing joint projects in teaching, studies, research, and administration. The central Wiki systems are available to all members of Freie Universität Berlin with an FU account and their project partners.

- UniKat – Freie Universität Berlin`s purchasing system

Most everyday items for the office/workplace can be obtained via Freie Universität's catalogue and purchasing system, UniKat. Log into the elSA portal and search for UniKat using the term "Beschaffung" (purchasing).
The system is administered by Subdivision II C - Central Purchasing, based within the central university administration. Members of the Central Purchasing team will be happy to help you with any questions you may have.

Settling In

Regulations

Here you will find a selection of the regulations in place at Freie Universität Berlin. Employees can find further information and amendments to regulations on the website of the Staff Council Dahlem, in the staff circulars (Personalblätter), circulars (Rundschreiben), and other publications of the university's central administration. Forms and information from the Personnel division that are available in English can be found here. For some employment groups, different and/or additional regulations apply. Please refer to the following websites for further information:
Staff Council for Student Employees
Staff Council: Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin.

- Working Hours

On January 1, 2025, the new employment agreement for more flexible working hours and working remotely at Freie Universität Berlin ("Flex" Employment Agreement) came into force. You can find more information here.

- Vacation

Every Freie Universität Berlin employee is entitled to annual paid vacation leave, calculated on the basis of the calendar year.
Regulations on paid vacation allowance, paid leave, and special/compassionate leave are governed by legislative requirements and the applicable collective agreements. Employees are only entitled to the full vacation allowance after they have been employed for six months.
Both civil servants and employees whose regular weekly hours are based on a five-day work week are entitled to 30 working days' paid vacation leave a year. Working days are defined as all days of the year on which the employee is regularly required to work (even if they do not actually work on that day), with the exception of public holidays that fall on work days and for which employees are not entitled to time off in lieu. If your weekly working hours are worked across more or fewer than five days a week, your vacation entitlement will be increased or reduced accordingly.

- Requesting Paid Leave

Paid leave requests from employees based in the departments, central institutes, central facilities, and other organizational units are approved by the employee's supervisor and/or the head of the department/institute. Requests should be made in advance, and paid leave cannot be taken until the request has been approved. Where it is unclear whether a request has been approved or not, the personnel department will make the decision. Special leave requests should be addressed to the personnel department via the employee's supervisor and the departmental administration. The vacation leave for employees in public service (Tarifbeschäftigte) must be taken within the current calendar year. Otherwise it will expire if it's not taken by September 30 of the following year at the latest (Personalblatt 02/2019).

- Taking Special Leave Instead of Receiving a Christmas Bonus

It is possible to request unpaid special leave lasting up to four weeks in exchange for a salary adjustment for the months of November and/or December. Requests can only be approved as long as your professional responsibilities do not stand in the way. The corresponding payments for the period of special leave shall initially be paid in advance, but the cost will be officially offset in November/December when you receive your annual end-of-year additional payment. This special leave must be taken in full seven-day weeks. Both employees and civil servants are eligible to apply for this kind of leave. Teaching faculty are unfortunately not entitled to it. You can apply for the special leave described above by getting in touch with your personnel office and submitting a statement from your supervisor.

- Sick Leave / General Absence from Work

If you are unable to work because of sickness or an injury, you must inform your office manager/head of office as soon as possible before core working hours begin. If the head of your office is not there, you must inform your supervisor.
If your sick leave lasts longer than three calendar days, including weekends and public holidays, you must submit a doctor's note to your office manager and/or supervisor no later than the day following the third day of sick leave. The note should state the period of time for which you will be unable to work.
In the case of employees with statutory health insurance, this is submitted via the electronic certificate of incapacity for work (eAU), i.e. the FU's HR department retrieves the doctor's note electronically from their health insurance company.

Employees with private health insurance still receive a doctor's note in paper form, which can be sent to their place of employment or directly to the HR department.
Every day of absence due to sickness or injury, including each day of consecutive periods of absence, must be covered by a doctor's note. This still applies even if you are no longer entitled to receive statutory sick pay due to the length of your absence.
Please note: Members of the university, whether civil servants or employees, must always obtain the consent of the employer – here Freie Universität Berlin – in any case of absence from work for whatever reason. Where this consent cannot be obtained in advance, e.g., because of sickness, consent must be obtained as soon as possible, that is to say, without any intentional delay, and if necessary by telephone. If you are incapable of informing your employer yourself, you must ask someone to do it for you. Employees who remain absent from work without permission forfeit their right to continued pay and may be subject to disciplinary procedures or other consequences at work.

- Sick Leave During Vacation

If you should fall ill during your vacation, you may be able to reclaim the vacation days on which you were sick, provided that you notify your work place on the first day of your illness and also submit a doctor's note as soon as possible. You must obtain your supervisor's approval for any extension of your vacation on the grounds of sickness.

- Sick children

If a child who has not yet reached the age of 12 falls ill, there is an entitlement to time off work without pay in accordance with § 45 SGB V and, for employees with statutory health insurance, an entitlement to sick pay from the health insurance for 15 working days per child and parent per calendar year. Single parents are entitled to 30 working days per child per calendar year. If you have several children, each parent is entitled to no more than 35 days, for single parents no more than 70 working days. Civil servants can apply for special leave. Information on this can be obtained from the departmental administration, the office management or your HR officer. If you are voluntary insured with a private health insurance, please contact your health insurance company to find out whether you are entitled to sick pay.

- Caring for relatives

On the basis of the Home Care Leave Act (Pflegezeitgesetz) and the Family Care Leave Act (Familienpflegezeitgesetz), it is possible to take unpaid leave from work if you need to care for a close relative who is incapacitated. For more information, see the notes to the staff circular (Personalblatt 04/2015 of July 20, 2015).

- Remote Working

The "Flex" Employment Agreement (DV Flex) regulates the basic principles of flexible working hours and working remotely at Freie Universität Berlin.
While working on-campus should be given priority, there is also the option of working remotely. Given that operational and/or official requirements do not conflict with this, employees may work remotely for up to 60% of their working days with the approval of their supervisor. The reference value for working remotely is the month. Working remotely is possible on a full-day or half-day basis.

- Telecommuting

Telecommuting is intended for employees who regularly perform their work alternating between their workplace at home and the place of employment / on campus. The workplace at home is connected to the place of employment on campus by electronic means of communication. Telecommuting workplaces shall be set up primarily in accordance with official interests and insofar as budgetary or third-party funds are available for setting up and maintaining these workplaces.
Telecommuting workstations are set up at the request of the employee and need to be signed off by their supervisor, the Personnel Department the responsible staff council and if applicable the local gender equality officers and the representatives for individuals with disabilities. Further information can be found in the employment agreement on alternating telecommuting at Freie Universität Berlin (DV Telearbeit).

Settling In

- Business Travel

"Business travel" is defined as travel undertaken for work outside of the workplace which is carried out in order to fulfill tasks that form part of the staff member's regular duties at Freie Universität Berlin. Independently of costs and whether these are to be reimbursed, business travel may only be approved or requested if it is necessary in the context of carrying out official activities in the interest of Freie Universität. When a business travel request cannot be approved because it is deemed unnecessary or because it serves some purpose other than carrying out activities in the interest of Freie Universität, it may be possible to grant special leave in some cases, as long as this does not violate any legal requirements and is in accordance with the various ordinances governing special leave at the university.
A staff member wishing to travel for business purposes must submit a business travel approval request form in good time before the trip is due to begin. The form must be submitted whether or not the staff member wishes to be reimbursed for the costs of the trip. Without official approval of the request, the staff member is not insured for potential injuries incurred in the course of business and may not receive any occupational compensation for accident or injury. This means that staff members who undertake business travel without gaining prior permission are doing so at their own risk and may not be eligible for accident compensation, nor will they be eligible for reimbursement of their costs. Those tasked with approving a business travel request must act with strict regard for the basic principles of thrift and cost-effectiveness. They should consider whether the tasks to be carried out could be achieved in a different way, at a lower cost. Private trips, travel undertaken for vacation, and any travel undertaken in connection with other employment, job applications, or otherwise for entirely or mainly personal reasons, do not count as business travel in this context. Travel costs for business travel may only be reimbursed if the person traveling submits their application for reimbursement to the appropriate department within six months following the end of the trip. The six months are defined as beginning on the day after the staff member returns from the trip.

- Secondary Employment

As an employee you are obliged to notify your primary employer if you wish to take on paid secondary employment. Furthermore, civil servants (Beamte/Beamtinnen) have a general obligation to have any secondary employment they wish to undertake pre-approved. In any case, your notification must be submitted before you begin work on secondary employment activities. If you are planning to take on secondary employment, please remember that it has to be authorized or endorsed by the personnel office before you begin. For that reason, you should factor in enough time for everything to go smoothly. University travel requests will not be approved if they involve conducting business for another employer. Please use the designated form to disclose your secondary employment.
Please submit your application to the personnel office via your work office (and the dean's office if necessary) to have it endorsed and/or approved. Your secondary employment will not be approved if said activities could potentially have a negative impact on your primary employment. This obligation to notify your employer also applies if you wish to begin a degree program or further professional training. Please get in touch with the personnel office in this case.

Further information:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/einstieg/regelungen

Settling In

Organization and Structure

- Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct of Freie Universität Berlin is based on the values of “Veritas, Iustitia, Libertas” (truth, justice, freedom) and promotes a culture of recognition, openness, plurality and respect.

- How is FUB actually organized?

Freie Universität Berlin consists of the Executive Board, the Board of Trustees, the Academic Senate, commissions, staff and women's representatives, strategic centers, libraries and digital services, 11+1 departments, 4 central institutes, 7 central facilities, over 150 degree programs, 6 departments of the central university administration, and many other offices and staff units. Our explanatory video on the structure of the FU Berlin provides an initial overview. You can find it on our onboarding platform.

- Employee ID card

As an employee, you will need your ID card to prove that you are a member of the university. This is important, for example, when applying for a job ticket, using central university facilities, or registering for courses with the university sports. The ID cards can most commonly be obtained at the administrative offices of your department/division.

- The Campus of Freien Universität Berlin is actually spread across four campuses:
- Dahlem Campus
- Lankwitz Campus
- Düppel Campus
- Benjamin Franklin Campus

- Mensen und Cafeterien

The student cafeterias, called “Mensa” (pl. Mensen), and coffee bars run by studierendenWERK BERLIN offer a variety of food and snacks on campus.
In the cafeterias and coffee bars operated by studierendenWERK BERLIN, you can only pay with a MensaCard. You can obtain a MensaCard from one of the cafeteria cashiers for a deposit of 1.55 euros plus however much money you want to load onto the card initially. Please have your student registration card or confirmation of your employee status available to show the cashier.

- Universitätsbibliothek

The Central Library, Campus Library, Philological Library, departmental libraries and the University Archive together comprise Freie Universität’s University Library.
The Primo library portal provides access to local and external resources such as books, e-books, journals, journal articles, book chapters, and digital objects from the university library's collection. Employees can download their library card from the FUB-IT portal. Student employees should use their student library account to borrow items.

Settling In

- Directory Services

You can use the FUB-IT Portal to access the Freie Universität phone listo in oder to find contact information for people or offices. The directory can also be accessed via the contacts address book in your Outlook account.

- Sending and Receiving Mail

Mail is sent between departments and facilities at Freie Universität Berlin via an internal mail system. If you want to send mail internally, please use the university's reusable manila envelopes or mark your communication "per Fachpost" (internal mail). Make sure you state the department/division and name/job title of the recipient so that the mailroom knows it is to be delivered via internal mail.
Usually, only the intended recipient will open an internal communication. However, if your communication is confidential, please make sure you state this clearly on the envelope with the words "vertraulich" (confidential) or "persönlich" (personal). Please note: Freie Universität's mailing department is required to send external mail (i.e., mail for persons or institutions that are not part of Freie Universität) at the lowest price possible to meet the required delivery time. If your communication is urgent, please make this clear on the envelope/package you wish to send. If you have a bulky package or are sending out a large mailing to multiple recipients, please notify the mailroom of this one or two days in advance. The mailroom staff are happy to help members of the university identify the most cost-effective and suitable way of sending their mail.
Please note that packages weighing more than 20 kg cannot be sent via the Freie Universität mailrooms but must be paid for privately. The sender is responsible for organizing shipping as well as costs. The mailrooms are not permitted to process private communications. Use of the Freie Universität Berlin letterhead for private communications is also not permitted.

- Transponders (Electronic Key System)

You can get a transponder from the person responsible for keys at your office.
After receiving your transponder, you must activate it yourself at one of the central activation points ("readers"). These are located in all Freie Universität buildings near the entrance or in the foyer. Hold your transponder to the reader until the reader flashes green to show that your transponder is activated. For security reasons, access permissions are only stored temporarily on transponders. This means you will need to reactivate your transponder regularly (usually every 7 days) in order to re-confirm your access permissions.

Further information:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/einstieg/organisation-struktur

Settling In

- Diversity at Freie Universität

"Diversity" is a multifaceted concept. Broadly, it refers to our ability and readiness to acknowledge and value the many interlinked differences and commonalities between groups of people, and to dismantle barriers that prevent people from being able to participate equally in society – including study, research, and work here at Freie Universität Berlin. Critical reflection on societal developments and the fulfillment of our social responsibilities are crucial to our role as an institution of higher learning.

The Diversity Mission Statement published in 2013 serves as the starting point for our Diversity Strategy and Action Plan. This mission statement was the catalyst for far-reaching processes that strive for a comprehensively discrimination-free space.

In February 2021, the Executive Board approved Freie Universität's first Diversity Strategy and Action Plan, which bundles, structures, and prioritizes activities. It creates transparency and provides university members with support in their efforts to work toward a non-discriminatory and diversity-friendly study, research, and work environment.

Freie Universität pursues the following interrelated, action-oriented, and overarching diversity goals:

• The equitable participation of all university members regardless of their positioning within various diversity dimensions or social categories,
• An accessible and nondiscriminatory teaching, learning, and working environment,
• An organizational culture that values diversity and fosters mutually respectful cooperation among all status groups,
• The sustainable implementation of structural equal opportunity

If you experience discrimination, harassment or bullying, you have the right to counsel and to make a complaint.

- Nondiscriminatory language

Nondiscriminatory language is of great importance to Freie Universität and is to be promoted, among other things, by strengthening inclusion in language.
The equal participation of all genders and the strengthening of gender self-determination of trans*, inter*, and non-binary (TIN*) university members are goals of the Diversity Strategy and Action Plan and the Gender Equity Strategy of Freie Universität. These goals are also pursued through the university's respectful language and address - language that is inclusive and does not shut anyone out.
To ensure equal linguistic treatment of all genders, Freie Universität uses gender-neutral terms as well as the "Genderstern" *.

Further information, such as the regulation on the use of gender-neutral and inclusive language in official comminication adopted by the Executive Board, can be found on the Diversity and Antidiscrimination website.

Settling In

Organization and Structure

- Sustainability at Freie Universität

Universities—as the core institutions of the academic and educational systems—have a special responsibility with regard to making the world sustainable, and Freie Universität Berlin is committed to this task. It strives to increase sustainability across the university—in research, teaching, knowledge transfer, administration, and on campus.

The university participates in the academic discourse on the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015, and in their implementation in the university's own area of responsibility. The Unit for Sustainability and Energy Management is responsible for the regulation and coordination of sustainability management.

The Unit for Sustainability and Energy Management combines the most important cross-sectional tasks of sustainability management at Freie Universität Berlin. The Unit advises the university leadership, creates opportunities for participation for all members of the university, coordinates the DAAD-funded University Alliance for Sustainability (UAS) and participates in regional and international sustainability networks.

On 17th December 2019, Freie Universität Berlin became the first university in Germany to publicly declare a climate emergency. The Executive Board adopted a declaration in which the university acknowledges its responsibility for climate protection while setting far-reaching goals for action.

The self-led Sustainable Campus Tour offers a new way to discover the numerous sustainability-related projects and initiatives at FUB. The browser-based app gives you an overview of the university's most important sustainability activities at a total of 16 stations spread out across the main campus in Dahlem.

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Jobticket

Freie Universität Berlin employees can apply for a Berlin-Brandenburg monthly transit pass or the Deutschlandticket Job at reduced rates. Applications should be made via the online portal. You can find further information here.

- Discounts for Employees

A cooperation with the company Corporate Benefits gives employees of Freie Universität the opportunity to privately purchase products and services from various companies at exclusive discounts.

- One-off annual payment

The collective agreement governing the public sector on the state level (Tarifvertrag für den öffentlichen Dienst der Länder, TV-L) sets out definitions and requirements for special payments. TV-L Section 20 stipulates a one-off annual payment as follows: “Employees who are employed as of December 1 are entitled to a one-off annual payment.” The sole mandatory requirements for eligibility for this payment are that the employee has a contract of employment on December 1 and has not been put on leave for the entire calendar year.

- Capital Accumulation Benefits (Vermögenswirksame Leistungen, VL)

If you already have savings under a scheme that entitles you to capital accumulation benefits, or would like to join such a scheme in the future, you can submit the application form to the personnel department applying for a transfer of capital accumulation benefits. This will allow Freie Universität Berlin to make employer contributions to the scheme. You can obtain further information on the amount of capital accumulation benefits to which you are entitled here.

Further information:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/ansprechpersonen-servicestellen/weitere-vorteile

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

A commitment to professional development is one of the guiding principles of Freie Universität Berlin in its role as employer. Professional development helps staff keep their skills up to date, but is also a way of ensuring that employees have access to ongoing training and development for the future.
Freie Universität Berlin has had a continuing professional development policy since 2002. Each employee has the right to apply to take part in professional development training courses. Their supervisor must then assess whether the training applied for benefits the organization and if so, in what area. Depending on the outcome of the supervisor's assessment, the employee's participation is paid for by the department or section of the university that is likely to benefit most from their participation.
It is important that professional development is tailored carefully to individual needs. For this purpose, various central offices in the university, as well as other departmental teams, offer advice from specialists:

- **Personnel Development, Welcome Service, and Apprenticeships**

Division I PE is home to Personnel Development, Welcome Service, and Apprenticeships. They are happy to answer any questions you might have regarding personnel development, training on the job, knowledge transfer, settling in, and apprenticeships at Freie Universität Berlin.

- **Center for Continuing Education**

The Center for Continuing Education offers professional development courses and training programs for Freie Universität employees.

- **Career Service (for students assistants)**

The Career Service provides information, advice, training, and helpful contacts with the working world.

- **Dahlem Center for Academic Teaching**

The Dahlem Center for Academic Teaching is especially designed for people who teach at the university.

- **Berlin Leadership Academy (BLA)**

The BLA offers a leadership program for university professors

- **Dahlem Research School (DRS) for junior researchers**

DRS provides continuous and systematic support to doctoral and postdoctoral researchers.

- **Toolbox Gender and Diversity**

Information regarding gender- and diversity-conscious teaching at university ranging from introductory information to videos and quizzes.

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Annual Performance Talk

Freie Universität Berlin uses annual reviews as a structured form of communication. They are intended to provide a structured space to better identify the skills and potential of individual employees and to highlight any training or support needs that they may have.
A further aim is to encourage an open dialogue between supervisors and staff based on mutual trust and appreciation of each other's work, improving communication and helping employees and their managers to work together more effectively. Based on each employee's abilities and requirements, they can also be used for career planning and to identify pathways for professional development. The annual review, as the name suggests, takes place yearly and should not be seen as a routine catch-up, but rather as a dialogue covering specific topics. The appraisal asks employees and supervisors to think together about tasks and how they are organized; the supervisor's management style and the working relationship; and individual training and development requirements. To support the process, the university offers informational events for staff along with ongoing training for managers and facilitators. The latter represent an interface between employees and central administration/management. The long-term principle guiding the review process is to encourage a culture of openness and transparency, along with a working environment that facilitates staff wellbeing and development.
You can find more information about the annual review (e.g., the policy and guidelines on the process) on the Occupational Health Management and Personnel Development websites. Their staff are also available to help with any questions you may have.

- Erasmus+ for Administrative Staff

Training opportunities are also available for non-teaching staff employed in a higher education institution.
There are various formats for training as part of Erasmus+ such as: sitting in on classes or lectures, job shadowing, study visits, attendance of workshops and seminars (no conferences), and participation in language courses and continuing education courses.
The opportunities offered are geared toward administrative staff in the following areas: general and technical administration, libraries, academic departments, accounting, international office, public relations, student advising, technology & transfer, and continuing education.

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Erasmus+ for Teaching Staff

The European Commission's Erasmus+ program for teaching staff is a chance for Freie Universität employees to spend a limited period of time at a partner university in Europe and selected non-European countries. The application process is straightforward, and participants can look forward to broadening their teaching experience and becoming acquainted with new teaching methodologies.
The program is also intended to promote a European perspective at the host university. The visiting staff can share their teaching experience and expertise with students who cannot or prefer not to study abroad. The program is also intended to foster opportunities for developing joint teaching programs with the partner universities, along with the exchange of teaching content and methods. Guest instructors must offer at least 8 teaching hours per week of their stay.
Funding is available for the following staff:

- professors and lecturers with a contractual relationship with Freie Universität
- research assistants
- doctoral students with teaching responsibilities
- staff from non-German organizations and businesses (can get invited to teach at a German university).

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Taking Leave for Further Education and Training (Bildungszeit)

The “Bildungszeit” program in Germany allows you to take paid leave from work to participate in a state-recognized further education course. Anyone who is employed or in a de facto employment relationship can take advantage of this opportunity. Please note that special federal and state regulations apply to public officials (“Beamte/Beamtinnen”). This right is embedded in Berlin’s Educational Leave Law (Bildungszeitgesetz - BiZeitG).

You can apply for educational leave six months after your employment contract has begun at the earliest. The educational program must last a minimum of one day. Employees are entitled to five days of educational leave per year. The entitlement of a current year can be combined with that of a following year if approved by your employer, meaning you can take 10 days of educational leave in one year. This is based on a five-day work week, the entitlement for anyone working more or fewer than five days a week is adjusted accordingly.

You must inform your employer of your wish to take a Bildungszeit and the dates you want to take off well in advance – ideally at least six weeks before you plan to take leave. You can send your application and your “Anerkennungsbescheid” (a document from the educational institution or training organization indicating that the course is recognized by the state as Bildungszeit) to the personnel department via your supervisor.

Educational leave can be requested for recognized educational events in the following areas: political education, professional development, and training for volunteer work.

You can find further information on the websites of the Senate Department for Integration, Labor and Social Services (Senatsverwaltung für Integration, Arbeit und Soziales) and Berlin’s Educational Leave Law.

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- VBL Pension Scheme

All university employees who are liable to pay statutory insurance contributions will also be enrolled by Freie Universität Berlin in an additional occupational pension scheme. This supplementary pension scheme is provided by the public sector insurer VBL. Eligible employees are initially automatically enrolled in the "VBLklassik" scheme. You can find details of the scheme and its benefits on the VBL website (www.vbl.de).
The website also tells you where to get advice on what scheme is right for you, and provides information on how you can add to your occupational pension through fully funded pension contributions on a voluntary basis.
Academic employees at universities or research institutes who are on a fixed-term contract lasting five years or less, and who have not yet accrued any benefits under a supplementary pension scheme for periods in which they were liable for mandatory insurance contributions, can apply for exemption from automatic enrollment in the VBLklassik scheme.
The exemption application must be submitted within two months of the beginning of the employment contract (cf. Section 28 of the VBL Articles of Association). On timely receipt of the application, and given that the employee is eligible for exemption, they will be enrolled in a voluntary insurance scheme with VBL that operates on a points system. Under this scheme, only the employer pays contributions for the duration of the employment contract.

- Occupational health and safety

The Occupational Health Service and the Occupational Safety Service are university administrative departments responsible for advising employees of Freie Universität Berlin on occupational health and safety.

- Phased Return to Work (BEM)

Any employee at the university who has been absent due to sickness or injury for more than six consecutive weeks in any one year, or who has been repeatedly absent from work due to sickness on at least 42 calendar days, can seek help under the university's Phased Return to Work program.
You can choose to attend a counseling session to talk about possible reasons for your incapacity, which may be work-related and/or have to do with personal circumstances. The aim is to find solutions and put measures in place to support you in your planned return to work and reintegration into the workplace, alongside helping you make changes in your life to support your wellbeing. You can find more information about the Phased Return to Work program and FAQs on the BEM website.

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Occupational Health Management

The task of the Occupational Health Management office is to promote and develop optimal working conditions for employee health. It also develops measures to improve employee motivation and wellbeing for Freie Universität staff. These can include ergonomic improvements to the workplace, physical activity, and healthy working structures.
Some of the key areas where the Occupational Health Management office is active include aging and the workplace, addiction prevention, depression, everyday health, working with colleagues, and annual employee reviews.
You can access more information and find out more about resources (e.g., employer-funded sports courses) available to Freie Universität Berlin employees on the Occupational Health Management website.

- University Sports Center UniSport

Every semester, the University Sports Center offers an extensive program of activities. Employees of Freie Universität can register for activities at a reduced price. UniSport currently offers over 120 different sports and as many as 800 sessions each semester.
It's easy to sign up – just complete the online form. Please note that for some courses early booking is recommended as participant numbers are limited.
"Pausenexpress" is a special program designed for employees at Freie Universität Berlin. Small groups (4–8 people) can book their session for a specific time each week. The instructor will come directly to your workplace with a 15-minute program to help staff get moving, strengthen and tone muscles, stretch out any tension, and relax. The exercises specifically target the shoulder, neck, and back, thus combating typical forms of physical stress associated with office work. The 15-week course, which is intended to help employees stay healthy at work, runs twice a year and is offered by UniSport. "Pausenexpress" is supported by Freie Universität's management and is free of charge when booked through the University Sports Center.
As part of its mission to promote health for all, the University Sports Center works in partnership with Freie Universität's Occupational Health Management to provide courses for gentle physical exercise and relaxation. These courses are suitable for everyone, but especially staff who are new to exercise or haven't exercised for a long time, and want to become more active and/or learn new strategies for staying healthy. You will have to pay a fee to take part in the courses. Legally, however, partial funding may be available for employees of Freie Universität through health insurance companies or employers. If your health insurance company does not reimburse the course fees or only partially reimburses them in spite of proven regular attendance, Freie Universität can cover the costs of up to two courses per year in full or in part upon application.

Contacts, Servicepoints, Interesting Facts

- Support Points

Staff members who seek advice on all types of mental stress can get in touch with the team at the support.points of the “Mental Wellbeing” project. It is possible to book an appointment as well as to stop by during their open consultation hours, without long waiting times - Consultations are offered in German or English.

- Peer counseling service (SozAP)

A peer counseling service (SozAP) is available for any member of staff seeking advice on problems and conflict situations. The counselors at SozAP are volunteers who work independently of other services and departments in the university. Any information passed to them in the course of the counseling sessions is treated confidentially. The peer counseling sessions offer a safe space where you can discuss possible solutions tailored to your specific situation. The SozAP counselors are trained in communication and conflict resolution strategies and in recognizing common mental health issues and psychological disorders.
Their training covers a wide range of topics including problems that can arise at the workplace such as bullying, burn-out, or sexual harassment; family problems; depression; psychological problems, such as eating disorders, anxiety disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorders; addiction; suicide; death and bereavement. Although they are trained in counseling, the SozAP counselors are not psychotherapists and do not offer therapy. Their role is that of active listeners. If, in their view, the person seeking help requires more expert support (e.g., referral to medical experts or psychiatric help), their role is also to assist in accessing this support.

- University Social Counseling

Freie Universität`s Social Counseling Service is a voluntary, free counseling service for all university staff and forms part of the Occupational Health Management.
The counseling takes place confidentially, and they take data protection extremely seriously. Counseling is tailored to the specific needs of the employee, which are discussed and identified during an initial meeting. The goal is to support any member of staff who needs help for personal or work-related reasons. The Social Counseling service offers individual, employee-oriented support to find solutions for problematic situations, to help with decision-making, and to take action to change their situation where necessary.

Weitere Informationen:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/ansprechpersonen-servicestellen/gesundheit-vorsorge

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Dual Career & Family Service

Freie Universität has been a certified “family accessible” university since 2007. In 2018, it helped establish a new association “Familie in der Hochschule e.V.” (Family at the University). Freie Universität’s family-friendly policies help its members manage family responsibilities alongside work, study, and research (e.g., if they are working on completing the professorial Habilitation qualification). Dual Career & Family Service can help with questions about maternity, paternity, and parental leave as well as child benefit payments. Students and staff alike can obtain confidential advice by phone, email, or face-to-face on any matters relating to working and studying with a family. They also offer “Care Advisory Sessions” in collaboration with “Pflegestützpunkte Berlin” (the information centers in Berlin that offer help with questions relating to care and old age), while the university’s “General Psychology and Neuropsychology” research team also offers a “Neuropsychological Advisory Session” for caregivers and their families. The guidelines for supervisors on carrying out annual performance reviews encourage managers to include the topic of maintaining a healthy work-life balance as part of the review, so that they can better support employees in combining professional and personal responsibilities. Freie Universität also sends a special welcome pack to new parents with a card from the president, information about support at the university, and a small gift.

The student union organization studierendenWERK Berlin has 180 daycare spots available at Freie Universität Berlin and is open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The spots are open to children of university members from the various universities and colleges around Berlin, but the families of students and employees at Freie Universität Berlin are given priority.
One focus of the Dual Career & Family Service office lies in networking with daycare centers and schools. These networks help when it comes to finding spots for the children of visiting researchers, scholarship recipients, and newly appointed professors who are moving to Berlin. The Family Service office does its best to help all members of Freie Universität Berlin find a place for their children in daycare, whether they are students, researchers, or administrative staff members. It also provides information about the mobile childcare program – MoKiS, a model program supported by the Berlin Senate Department for Education, Youth, and Family, that helps parents with special working hours. Freie Universität employees can request emergency childcare at home if something unexpected happens and other options are not available.

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

At Freie Universität Berlin, there are various options that can be used where employees need to be able to work more flexibly. These include part-time working, flexitime, alternating telework, and mobile working. The project “LEON – Learning Environments Online” was set up as a response to the fact that traditional models of working and family life have changed considerably in recent years. It allows teaching staff to use blended learning options to complement their on-site teaching with online activities.

Together with the Center for Continuing Education at Freie Universität Berlin, the Family Service offers a broad range of informational and development opportunities in relation to families, including courses on “Being a Single Parent,” “Getting Ready to Be a Caregiver,” “Stress Management,” and “First Aid for Children and Infants.” The Family Service also works in partnership with the University Sports Center to create a variety of family-oriented sports classes as well as the vacation childcare program, “Kids’ Camp.” The Dual Career & Family Service has regular updates on regional vacation childcare offers for children and teenagers.

The Freie Universität Berlin service for dual career couples is intended to make the university more attractive to researchers and is also an important factor in the university’s commitment to equal opportunities, as it signals the university’s support for partners and spouses as they adapt to the new circumstances of their lives in Berlin. Partners and spouses can get in touch to arrange individual meetings, where they can find out more about the job market and professional opportunities in Berlin, and, if applicable, childcare options. The service has a range of contacts and partnerships that it can use to help individuals find the right career or job for them. The Dual Career & Family Service is a combined service that brings together a number of different measures supporting dual career couples and families, including childcare. As a result, it is able to respond quickly to the needs of new employees, offering them help that is specifically tailored to their situation and thus assisting them in managing their academic career(s) and personal responsibilities. For example, the daycare center of the studierendenWERK Berlin (the student union association) reserves 13 of its spots specifically for the children of newly appointed professors, offering a fast, unbureaucratic process for new professors looking for childcare options.

You can find further information on the Dual Career and Family Service's website.

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Chief Gender Equality Officer (Gender*Equality Team)

The Chief Gender Equality Officer of Freie Universität Berlin and her team support the university management and central committees of Freie Universität Berlin in implementing legislative requirements in relation to gender equality. Together with other officers and representatives responsible for gender equality, the gender equality office develops strategies and measures to promote gender equality at Freie Universität in order to dismantle long-term structural inequalities and to promote the equal status and participation of all genders at the university.
A key element of this concept is integrating gender equality using the instruments available to university management, especially in the context of recruitment and professional development at Freie Universität. The equality officer aims to end discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender, and to foster an organizational culture distinguished by gender awareness and gender competence. One of its goals is also to promote a culture of teaching and learning that integrates an awareness of diversity and gender at all levels, and to promote gender studies research at the university.
The Local Gender Equality Officers should be contacted in the first instance for any questions or issues relating to specific areas of the university. They help to implement gender equality strategies and the university's gender equality objectives in the departments, central institutes, central facilities, in the central university administration, and the University Library.
The Chief Gender Equality Officer and her team, as well as the Local Gender Equality Officers, can advise all female employees and staff of the university in personal and professional matters, and specialize in offering advice in cases of sexual harassment, stalking, and bullying.

- Staff Councils

The staff councils represent the interests of Freie Universität Berlin's employees, provide information about applicable legislation, including amendments, and advise on questions relating to working conditions and the rights and obligations of the employees they represent.

- Staff Council: Dahlem
- Staff Council of Student Employees
- Staff Council: Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum

The Staff Council: Entire Freie Universität Berlin is responsible for matters affecting staff at the university as a whole. It is not superordinate to the local staff representatives.

- Staff Council: Entire Freie Universität Berlin

www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice/ansprechpersonen-servicestellen/weitere-ansprechpersonen

Contacts, Service Points, Interesting Facts

- Representatives for Individuals with Disabilities

The representatives for individuals with disabilities are responsible for promoting the integration of people with severe disabilities in the workplace. They represent their interests and offer counseling and support for individuals.
They also monitor the implementation of legislation affecting people with disabilities at work and request measures that are helpful for people with disabilities, especially preventive measures. Employees with disabilities are encouraged to contact their representatives if they have suggestions or complaints, and if appropriate, the representatives will then take these forward and seek a resolution with the individual's employer.
The representatives must be kept informed and their opinion must be sought in all cases affecting staff with disabilities, whether it is an issue affecting an individual staff member or staff as a group.
If an individual with a severe disability applies for a position at Freie Universität, a representative has the right to view the relevant sections of the person's application and to be present as part of the interview panel.
If problems arise in relation to an individual's work for the university, the relevant representative must be informed of this at an early stage so that if possible, problems can be resolved and the person can continue to work without threat to their employment at the university. The same applies to long-term sickness absence in the case of a disabled person.
Currently, representatives dealing with issues arising in relation to individual employment contracts are distributed over two areas:

- The Dahlem area
- Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum

The Chief Representative for Individuals with Disabilities is generally responsible for all issues relating to disability at work and also specifically responsible for student employees with disabilities.

- Personnel Services

Several teams of staff at the personnel department are responsible for issuing provisional job offers, determining pay grades within the relevant salary scale, and dealing with all matters relating to employment law and related regulations at the university. You should contact them if you have any questions about your employment contract with Freie Universität.
You can find an overview of the differents teams and contact persons here.

Further information:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/ansprechpersonen-servicestellen/weitere-ansprechpersonen

New in Germany?

District Office (Registration, Tax-ID, Certificate of Conduct)

- Registration

Within two weeks of moving into a new place, you need to register at one of the 60 district offices in Berlin. You will need to make an appointment in advance. You can do so online or call 115 for the district office hotline (Bürgertelefon). Appointments fill up fast, so you should plan to schedule yours well in advance. Along with the confirmation of your appointment, the district office will send you a list of the required documents. Please study the list closely and ensure you have all the documents with you, as you may be turned away if you don't.
You do not have to pay any fees to register.
At the end of your appointment, you will receive a certificate of registration ("Anmeldung"). Keep it in a safe place with your other personal records. You will need it again for various official purposes, e.g., when you apply for a residence permit or when you open a bank account.

- Steueridentifikationsnummer

The first time you register in Germany, the Federal Central Tax Office will issue you a tax identification number and send it to you by mail within about two weeks. Your employer will need your tax identification number in order to share important tax information with financial administration offices. Make sure that your name is on your mailbox at home so that you can receive the letter with your tax ID when it comes. You will be assigned to tax bracket 6 until you submit your tax ID number to your contact person in the personnel department. Bracket 6 means that you are liable for the highest maximum deductions. At the end of the year, when you file your taxes, you can get a tax refund if you overpaid due to being temporarily in the wrong tax bracket.

- Certificate of Conduct for Official Purposes (Führungszeugnis zur Vorlage bei einer Behörde)

If the personnel office requests a certificate of conduct for official purposes, you can apply for one at the district office. The certificate of conduct costs 13.00 euros. If you are already registered in Berlin it is also possible to apply for the certificate by mail. You can find further information here or ask us.

Further information:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/neu-in-deutschland/erste-schritte
Checklist for International Staff Members

New in Germany?

Important Insurances and Information

Social Security and Insurance / Social Security Number

Germany has a robust social security system. If your monthly income exceeds 603 euros and you are not self-employed, then your income is subject to social security and insurance payments. Most people who live in Germany and earn this kind of income have statutory health insurance (gesetzliche Krankenversicherung), long-term care insurance (Pflegeversicherung), pension insurance (Rentenversicherung), and unemployment insurance (Arbeitslosenversicherung).

Employees at Freie Universität Berlin with an employment contract are covered by the university as their employer. That means that the statutory contributions for the various social security insurance plans are automatically deducted from your gross salary. Generally, that comes to about 20% of an employee's gross income.

Normally, you should automatically receive your social security card by mail from the German Pension Insurance (Deutsche Rentenversicherung). Usually, the card arrives during your first month of employment, once your first month's income has been calculated and Freie Universität Berlin has reported you as an employee to the various insurance providers. If you do not receive your card within this time, be sure to contact your insurance provider.

- Health Insurance

In Germany, all residents are required to have health insurance. Coverage must include medical treatment for acute medical conditions and for accidents in Germany.

- Statutory Health Insurance

Unlike the other types of insurance for pensions, long-term care, accidents, and unemployment, where you do not get to choose your provider as a non-self-employed employee, with statutory health insurance it is different. You must pick your health insurance provider. Statutory health insurance coverage is basically standardized. There might be some minor differences when it comes to customer service, additional coverage, and optional costs. Health insurance costs must adhere to federal rates based on your income. The standard rate for statutory health insurance is currently 14.6%. In addition, health care providers can charge supplementary individual rates. Please check with your individual health care provider.

Family members traveling with you can also be covered by your family insurance plan at no extra cost. Your family members are eligible if you are married or have entered a civil partnership according to the German Act on Registered Life Partnerships, they live in Germany and do not earn more than 603 euros a month.

New in Germany?

Important Insurances and Information

Statutory health insurance providers must provide coverage for the insured even if they have pre-existing medical conditions. Starting from the very first day of coverage, the health insurance provider is fully responsible for costs associated with any pre-existing conditions.
If you are insured through statutory health insurance, you will receive a chip card which you need to present once per quarter when you visit a doctor.
You can find an overview of statutory health insurance providers here (in German). Most health insurances will let you sign up online via their website and will email you the membership confirmation.

*** Compulsory Insurance Limit:
If you earn more than a certain income level, you can choose between a statutory health insurance or a private health insurance.

- Private Health Insurance

Compulsory insurance is only required up to a certain income level. If you earn more than that, your health insurance provider will let you know by sending you a notification stating that you are now insured voluntarily. At that point, you can choose whether you want to remain insured by your statutory health insurance provider or if you would prefer to switch to a private health insurance plan.

- Long-term Care Insurance

Long-term care insurance (Pflegeversicherung) is directly linked to health insurance. When you have health insurance coverage, you are automatically covered by long-term care insurance as well as part of the statutory social insurance scheme. Currently, the long-term care insurance contribution for people with one child is 3.6% of the gross income, and 4,2% for those without children (contribution rate plus surcharge for those without children). The contribution rate decreases further if you have more than one child. For employees, half of the contribution is paid by the employer, but not the childless surcharge.

- Pension Insurance

Pension insurance is also a part of the statutory social insurance schemes. It protects the insured person and their family if they have to reduce the amount they work or can no longer work due to old age or death. It includes medical rehabilitation care, occupational rehabilitation, pensions due to an overall reduction in earning capacity, pensions for the elderly, and survivors` pensions. Your statutory pension insurance is deducted directly from your gross income. The statutory pension insurance rate is currently 18.6%.

Employer and employee usually split the cost of the pension insurance equally. The employer registers their new employee with the appropriate healthcare provider. In turn, the healthcare provider then registers the new employee with all of the other social insurance schemes.
If you are leaving Germany after the end of your employment at Freie Universität Berlin, you can reclaim money paid into the German Pension Fund under certain circumstances. Only the German Pension Insurance Office (Deutsche Rentenversicherung, DRV) can definitively tell you whether or not you are entitled to a refund of your pension insurance payments – and if so, how much you will be reimbursed.
You can find more information and advice on the DRV website.

- Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment insurance is withdrawn directly from your gross income and is currently at 2.6%. The employer and the employee usually split the cost of unemployment insurance equally.
You are generally eligible for German unemployment benefits if you were working in Germany before you became unemployed, have been employed subject to compulsory insurance for 360 calendar days over the last three years, and are willing to make yourself available to the employment agency. Prior periods of employment in other European Union countries or within the European Economic Area or Switzerland also count toward your eligibility.

- Occupational Accident Insurance

Occupational accident insurance (Berufsunfallversicherung) is another one of the basic elements in Germany's social security system in Germany. All employees are covered by statutory accident insurance. That means that you are insured in the case of an accident that occurs while performing your work duties or, for example, while on your way to your place of work. Please note that statutory accident insurance only provides coverage for you in work-related accidents and does not include protection for private matters not related to work. You may therefore wish to purchase private accident insurance.

Do you have questions about social security in Germany? If so, please contact us.

New in Germany?

Important Insurances and Information

FAQ Taxes in Germany

- What is my tax identification number?

When you register at the district office you are automatically assigned a German tax identification number (Steuer ID-Nummer). Your personal tax identification number will be sent to you by mail within about two weeks. The number is yours permanently and does not change, for example, if you move, if you legally change your name when you marry, or if you otherwise undergo a change in your civil status.

- Do I have to pay taxes?

As a rule, if you have an employment contract, you must pay taxes. Your employer takes out your taxes from your gross monthly income, which it pays directly to the tax office. The amount of income tax you pay depends on the amount you earn, your family status, and your tax bracket.
To prevent you from being taxed in Germany and in your home country at the same time, Germany has double taxation agreements (Doppelbesteuerungsabkommen) with many countries. These agreements specify in which country you need to pay taxes.

- Can I get the money back that I paid in taxes if I move away from Germany?

At the end of a calendar year, you can submit a tax return to the local tax office. You may receive a tax refund depending on certain circumstances. It might be helpful to find an accountant or an income tax support who can help you file your income tax return.

New in Germany?

Important Insurances and Information

Financial Support

- Assistance (Beihilfe)

Civil servants employed by Freie Universität Berlin can apply for assistance in cases of illness if they meet certain conditions. Regular employees are also eligible in exceptional cases. When you are hired/appointed, you should receive information that tells you about the conditions necessary in order to qualify for this kind of assistance. If you did not receive this information or want more details, please click here (website in German).
The Berlin State Administration Office is responsible for processing requests for assistance as well as requests for expenses related to rehabilitation measures. To apply, please use the templates and forms provided by the personnel department. You can also download them directly here. Please send your request, including all the necessary documents, via the university's official mail service (Fachpost) to
Landesverwaltungsamt Berlin
zentrale Beihilfsstelle - VB B - 10702 Berlin
Tel.: (030) 90139-6060
Approval decisions will be sent to the beneficiary's home address if they cannot be contacted at their place of work (e.g. due to a longer leave of absence or after termination of employment). This also applies to emeritus professors. Please indicate if your decision should be mailed to a different address when you submit your request.

- Child Benefits (Kindergeld)

The German Federal Employment Agency's Family Benefits Office oversees the distribution of child benefits. For more details on who is eligible, the amount of support, and how long families can receive benefits, please visit the Federal Employment Agency website.

- Expense allowance for moving costs - For newly appointed professors

Newly appointed professors who do not reside in Berlin or the surrounding area can receive approval for an expense allowance to cover costs associated with relocating. Approval is issued by your specific human resources office and is only valid for a limited time. A different administrative unit based within Division IA in Freie Universität's central administration is responsible for handling the actual reimbursement transaction for moving costs and separation allowances.

New in Germany?

Important Insurances and Information

- Personal Liability Insurance (Haftpflichtversicherung)

In Germany, you are personally liable for any damages caused by you to a third party (i.e., anyone outside your family or household). Most people take out personal liability insurance to cover themselves and their family/household, so that they are insured against claims if they accidentally cause damages to another person or their property.
Your liability insurance plan should cover all personal liability both in your private sphere as well as while at work. There are a variety of insurance companies that offer personal liability coverage. To help find the best one for you, you might consult product comparison websites.

- Broadcasting License Fee

People living in Germany are legally required to pay public broadcasting fees that help fund public radio and television stations. Every household is charged a flat rate for the broadcasting license fee. Adults with a registered address in Germany are required by law to file with the license fee service. Only one adult per household has to file and pay the fee. Currently, the monthly rate per household is 18.36 euros (as of August 2021).
You can either wait until the license fee service contacts you by mail (shortly after you register at the district office) or report directly to their offices at “ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio Beitragsservice.” The form you need is available here. Please note that the fee is due starting from the first month you’re registered in Germany. It does not matter if you report to them yourself or wait for a letter from their office.

Further Information:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/neu-in-deutschland/versicherungen-informationen

New in Germany?

- Finding an Apartment

There is a lot of competition on the housing market in Berlin. Unfortunately, we can cannot arrange accommodation for you but can share tips and helpful contacts. FUB's Accommodation Service supports international guests who have been invited by Freie Universität Berlin, hold a doctorate degree and have not yet arrived in Berlin with finding an apartment. If you do not fall into this category, the Accommodation Service offers a comprehensive list of websites you can use for your apartment hunt.

- Opening a Bank Account

You will need a checking account at European bank based in a country that has the Euro as its currency in order to receive your salary and pay bills and rent. The following documents are required when you open your account: Your passport, confirmation of your registration from the district office, and your employment contract or other proof of income. Many banks require you to set up an appointment in person to open an account; however, some direct banks offer an online application process for new accounts.

- Learning German - German Language Courses at Freie Universität's Language Center

Freie Universität Berlin's Language Center offers free German language courses for students, doctoral candidates and staff members of Freie Universität Berlin.
The courses offered cover levels A1 to C1 (based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). You can find more information on the courses and how to sign up for them here.

- Daycare / Schools

The student union organization "studierendenWERK BERLIN" has 180 daycare spots available at Freie Universität Berlin. The spots are open to children of university members from the various universities and colleges around Berlin, but the families of students and employees at Freie Universität Berlin are given priority.
One focus of the Dual Career & Family Service (DCFAM) office lies in networking with daycare centers and schools. These networks help when it comes to finding spots for the children of visiting researchers, scholarship recipients, and freshly appointed professors who are new to Berlin.
The Dual Career & Family Service office can provide you with more information and specific advice.

Further Information:
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en/neu-in-deutschland/fuer-den-alltag



FURTHER QUESTIONS?

We are happy to help!

Welcome Service
www.fu-berlin.de/welcomeservice-en
030 838 55443

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN