

Housing Guide for International Students at TUHH

August 2015

Finding a Room

Finding an affordable room for students in Hamburg is not easy. With more than 7 higher educational institutions and 80'000 students, the situation is less than ideal. You should start looking early and never be too picky. A short-term accommodation is still better than sleeping on the central station ;) The links provided have much more information, so check them out and read them carefully. With that in mind, we hope you find this guide helpful for your search!

1. TUHH Accommodation Office:

<http://www.tuhh.de/.../accommodation..-tuhh.html>

The Accommodation Office at TUHH offers rooms for new international students in cooperation with Studierendenwerk. The office also has a mailing list for some housing opportunities around Harburg.

1.1. Rooms for International Freshmen-Program:

<http://www.tuhh.de/.../rooms-for-international-freshmen-program.html>

This is the best option for exchange students (Erasmus, etc.) who stay for up to 1 year, but less so for international bachelor or master students.

- The rooms are reserved for new international students at TUHH. In addition, the Freshmen-Program tutors speak English and can help you with moving in and initial paperwork ([The Compass Program](#)).
- The rent is bigger (by about 50€ per month) than regular Studierendenwerk Hamburg rooms.
- The contracts are for a fixed period – they usually cannot be extended unless there are available rooms after the new round of applications. Also, if you decide to reapply through Studierendenwerk as a regular student (see next page), you will be put in a lower priority bracket!

How to apply, including deadlines: <http://www.tuhh.de/.../application-procedure.html>

1.2. Contact the TUHH Accommodation Office:

<http://www.tuhh.de/.../accommodation.../contact.html> (in person or by e-mail)

- If you have further questions or you need help, you should contact the Accommodation Office directly.
- They have a mailing list for available places around Harburg and Heimfeld. Those are usually shared flats with older people who rent out a room. The rents are reasonable, but there are not many available places.

2. Studierendenwerk Hamburg

Studierendenwerk Hamburg provides not only housing services, but also financial and social counseling. Do not hesitate to contact them regarding housing, financial concerns, or anything else regarding your studies in Hamburg: <http://www.studierendenwerk-hamburg.de/studierendenwerk/en/home/>

- Long-term contracts are for 3 to 4 years. They can be expanded for up to 2 more years if you become a tutor for your respective dormitory.
- The average monthly rent is 244€ (spring 2015) with some dormitories reaching up to 300 and more.

2.1. Applying for a room

This application is for regular students who study full time and **not** for exchange programs! There are further restrictions for students over 30, etc. – read the info on the website carefully.

- You can and should apply at least 3 months in advance! You can apply even before being accepted at TUHH, but you have to provide your admission information as soon as possible (contact Studierendenwerk about this).
- When listing your priorities, place “1. ALL (Alle Zimmer in Hamburg)” as your first choice to maximize your chances; after that pick your favorites in the second and third option. Getting a cheap room further away from your university is better than no room at all. You can always look for better opportunities on the housing market later on.
- Have a good photo ready to upload for your application (Germans love applications photos).
- After you send your application, check your e-mail regularly for a confirmation. About 35% of the residences are reserved for international students, but you can be placed on a waiting list due to high demand. In both cases, you have to reply fast if you do not want to lose your place.

2.2. Dormitories relatively close to TUHH:

http://www.studierendenwerk-hamburg.de/studierendenwerk/en/wohnen/halls_of_residence/

- WOHNANLAGE Harburg (Schütstraße 1-5) – smaller rooms, older furniture, but cheaper rent.
- WOHNANLAGE Harburger-Häuser (Bunatwiete 6 / Moorstraße 7 & 15):
 - Bunatwiete – slightly bigger, fresher rooms with big kitchens, but there is a small chance to get gassed from the Phoenix Tire Factory (which happened once during my stay there).
 - Moorstraße – unfurnished rooms, for regular bachelor and master students.
- WOHNANLAGE Triftstraße – reserved only for TU students, close to TUHH, but far away from the city center; highest rent of all Studierendenwerk residences near TUHH.

2.3. Short-term rents from Studierendenwerk:

<http://www.studierendenwerk-hamburg.de/studierendenwerk/en/wohnen/kurzzeitmiete/>

- Short term rents are a good idea before you find something more permanent. You should click on the individual residences and contact the Housemeister even if the site says that there’s no availability (especially for Rahlstedt). Vacant rooms are not published all the time.

3. Looking on the open housing market

3.1. The most popular site for renting a room in a shared flat is: <http://www.wg-gesucht.de/>
The website is in English as well and you can add many filters for your searches for both long and short-term rents. Another popular website for students is: <http://www.studenten-wg.de> (less offers than wg-gesucht).

3.2. Application

- Beware of scams! Don't pay in advance before signing a contract and never transfer money to services like Western Union/Moneybookers! Just be careful - if the offer is way too good to be true, it is most probably a scam. If you have the option - always visit the place first.
- When you apply, it is important to write a good introduction. Be friendly, say a bit about yourself, reference what is written in the offer, use your German university e-mail for credibility if you can, etc. Expect to not get replies (tenants/landlords receive a LOT of emails), so do not give up soon! Think of it as a job market – people get rejected a lot, but it's not personal! If a number is provided and you are in Germany, it is best to call directly. In general – be friendly and nice.
- The average monthly rent for a room in Hamburg varies from district to district. Harburg and Heimfeld: 350€. Wilhelmsubrg and Veddel are a bit cheaper: around 300€. Eimsbütel and Altona: 500-600€. These are approximations, actual prices may vary.

4. Other options

4.1. Hostels

- In the very short term: once you arrive in Hamburg, you can get a Hostel room – these are shared rooms with a lot of people and individual beds.
- Prices start from 19€ per night. The prices change according to the season, upcoming events and availability. The most popular website with no additional taxes is <http://www.booking.com/>. Select from the advanced search all available options and sort by price for "1 person (including dorm beds)".

4.2. Private Wohnanlagen: http://www.studierendenwerk../wohnanlagen_anderer_traeger/

We have no experience with such dormitories, but you can try them as well.

4.3. Facebook groups and posts

- Some students post vacancies when they are leaving their rooms. There are dedicated groups for such offers and posts in Erasmus groups that you can search for yourself. Again, beware of potential scams!
- The International Student Group at TUHH sometimes has posts about housing: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/207867219280930/>
- Physical *Adverts at Bulletin Boards* around the TUHH campus (Mensa, Building O). These are less popular as most offers nowadays are online. Still, you can check them out.

4.4. Other Resources

ESN Housing Guide: <http://hamburg.esn-germany.de/en/housing-guide> (with a lot more links)

TUHH Acc. Office Guide: <http://www.tuhh.de/...-acco-tuhh/private-market.html> (link at the end of the page)

5. Living in Hamburg and housing expenses

5.1. Meldebestätigung – after you find a place to live you must register your residence at the town hall. You can do this on your own or with the help of tutors. If you have questions, you can direct them at the Accommodation office at TUHH.

5.2. Nebenkosten – those are your additional costs for living in a private flat such as water, gas, electricity and garbage collection. Some rents have these costs included (**Warmmiete**), while others only show the base price (**Kaltmiete**). When signing a new contract, you have to pay a deposit (**Kaution**) usually between 1 to 3 monthly rents. This deposit is refundable (partially or completely) at the end of your stay.

5.3. Rundfunkbeitrag – from 01.2013 every household is obliged to pay this TV and Radio tax, which is around 18 euro per household. Students have to pay as well (unless you receive Bafög) even if you do not use their services! You cannot escape this (sorry) – especially if you plan on staying in Germany.

- A household is a shared flat where all tenants have common access to the kitchen and bathroom.
- For further information about this tax you can contact the dormitory tutors.

5.4. Torrenting and downloading of copyrighted materials – just don't.

- If you are caught torrenting a popular TV show or a movie, fees start from 800€.
- Streaming is a gray area and you can use unofficial streaming sites. If you want to be extra careful use private browsing (the cache - temporary files on your computer - will get deleted after each session).
- Services like Netflix or Amazon Instant Video are perfectly legal!

5.5. Glossary of terms

Deutsch	English
WG – Wohnungsgemeinschaft, die	shared flat
Meldebestätigung, die	confirmation of residence
Kaution, die	deposit (usually between 1 and 3 monthly rents)
Studierendenwerk, das	General Student Services (housing, finance, catering, counseling, etc.)
Housemeister, der	caretaker for Studierendenwerk dormitories
Wohnanlage, die	building residence
Nebenkosten, die	additional costs
Warmmiete, die	rent plus additional costs
Kaltmiete, die	base rent without additional costs
Rundfunkbeitrag, der	TV and Radio tax

Best of luck in finding a place to live and in your future studies!

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- It is a starting point to make your life as an international student hopefully easier. However, we share no responsibility for faulty information, so do your own research! ;)
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