

Direct Exchange Program

Fact Sheet Academic Year 2024/2025

Contact Information		
Head	Ms Gesa Heym exchange@fu-berlin.de	
	Incoming	Outgoing
Coordinator	Ms Carmen Gleisenstein	Ms Sabine Simon
E-mail	exchange@fu-berlin.de	exchange@fu-berlin.de
Telephone	Tel.: +49 30 838 73921	Tel.: +49 30 838 73930
Address	Freie Universität Berlin (FU Berlin) Student Mobility Unit Ilthisstraße 4 14195 Berlin, Germany	
Homepage	https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/international/studium_fu/auslandssemester/direktaustausch_in/index.html	
Film portrait	https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/bids/fu-studium/video	
Office hours	Tuesday/ Thursday 9.30 am – 12.30 pm, 2 – 5 pm and by appointment	
Important dates	winter term 2024/25	summer term 2025
Semester dates	1 October 2024 – 31 March 2025	1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025
Orientation	First week of October	First week of April
Lecture period	14 October 2024 – 21 February 2025	14 April 2025 – 25 July 2025
Exam period	During the last two weeks of the lecture period; may vary from department to department	
Suggested arrival	In time to attend the orientation program	
Academic calendar	http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/studienorganisation/termine	
Application		
Deadline	30 April 2024	30 October 2024
Application process	All applicants must be officially nominated by the home university prior to the deadline mentioned above. This may be done either with an official nomination letter or with an e-mail from the home university. The nomination must contain the full name, birthdate, sex, e-mail, study area and duration of the student's stay. Students must complete the online application form and upload all required documents until 30 April respectively 30 October: https://fuberlin.moveon4.de/form/5949803983fb963f532593f4/eng	
Required documents	The documents should be in German or English or accompanied by an English translation. - Photocopy of the student's passport (page with photograph) - Photocopy(ies) of the student's transcript - Photocopy(ies) of the student's B. A., M. A. or any other final degree (if available)	
Acceptance letter	Students will receive the letter of admission via e-mail from the beginning of June for the winter term and from the beginning of December for the summer term.	
German language requirements / Language courses		
German language requirements	Direct exchange students are exempt from a German language exam (DSH or TestDaF), which is otherwise required for international degree-seeking students studying at a German university. However, we expect language skills equivalent to level B 2 of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) in the humanities and the social science departments and B 1 in the natural sciences. A language certificate is not necessary, because we expect that our partner universities guarantee the required language skills.	
Language of instruction	Almost all subjects at undergraduate level are taught in German. Please note that subjects taught in English outside the Departments of English and North American Studies are very limited in number. Students must have an English language level of C1 to join courses at the John F Kennedy Institute for North American Studies. Availability may vary and cannot be guaranteed. An overview of courses taught in English is available at https://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/en/fb . Please use the “advanced search option” to find courses in English.	

German language requirements / Language courses	
<i>Preparatory German language courses</i>	A six-week intensive preparatory German language course (20 x 45 min of instruction per week) will be offered prior to the beginning of the summer respectively winter term. All language levels, including absolute beginners are offered. If students attend the pre-semester language course, a spot in an adequate level German language course during the semester will be guaranteed (not mandatory). The course fee will be approx. 780 €. Spots are limited, interested students should apply as soon as possible: http://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/sprachangebot/sprachen/deutsch/vorkurs_deutsch
<i>Language courses during the semester</i>	German language courses, offered during the semester, are free of charge. If students wish to participate in a German language course, they have to take a placement test first, which will be offered during the orientation period shortly before the semester starts. Without this test, exchange students are not eligible to take language classes. Further information is available at: https://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/sprachangebot/sprachen/deutsch/programmstudierende/index.html
<i>Courses in other languages</i>	The Language Centre (ZE Sprachenzentrum) offers a limited number of language courses. Please note that students need to take a placement test first and that the number of places is limited. Further details are available at: https://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/sprachtests
Visa requirements	
<i>Entry visa</i>	Students who are citizens of EU or EEA countries, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Switzerland, UK or the USA do <i>not</i> need a visa in order to enter Germany. Upon arrival in Berlin, citizens from these countries (except EU) must apply for a residence permit (see under “Arrival in Berlin”). Students who are <i>NOT</i> citizens of the countries listed above must apply for a student visa (<i>Visum zu Studienzwecken</i>) at the local German Embassy or a German General Consulate <u>before</u> they come to Germany. We therefore urge those students to apply for a study visa as soon as possible. It will take at least eight weeks, sometimes a few months, to process the visa application. The necessary documents concerning the admission to our university (and, if applicable, the scholarship offer) will be sent via e-mail to the student as soon as possible. More information is available at: http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/international/studium_fu/einreise_aufenthalt/visum
Health insurance	
<i>Waiver</i>	Exchange students must have comprehensive health insurance valid in Germany for enrollment as a full-time student at FU Berlin AND for obtaining a residence permit. Students who EITHER have the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or the Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) OR who can provide proof of an adequate comprehensive health insurance valid in Germany (unlimited in case of illness and rescue!) may request an insurance waiver. Please note that a waiver can only be obtained at a German state-regulated health insurance company, not at the university. Since many insurance policies purchased outside Germany require substantial co-payments, have caps or exclude many illnesses it has been increasingly difficult for exchange students to obtain a waiver. We therefore urge all students younger than 30 years to purchase a German student health insurance for about 120 € per month. The German student health insurance policies are very comprehensive and are automatically accepted by the office granting residence permits. More information is available at: http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/international/studium_fu/einreise_aufenthalt/krankenversicherung
Mandatory fees	
<i>Social fees / public Transportation</i>	Exchange students are exempt from university fees, but they still need to pay the so-called semester ticket and social fees of approx. 270 € per semester. These are non-university related fees and pay for the student union as well as for a public transportation ticket for the whole area of Berlin for the entire semester. Students will be asked to pay the fees via PayPal before arrival in Berlin as part of the enrollment process.
Pre-arrival requirements	
<i>Distributed Campus</i>	Distributed Campus is an online platform, which is especially designed for exchange students who have already received their letter of admission. It comprises all the information mentioned above and a lot more useful links, deadlines and insights about life in Berlin in one platform. Students will receive registration details to access the platform at: https://distributed-campus.org/dc-root/ with their letter of admission. Registration for and use of the platform is required for participation in the exchange program.
Arrival in Berlin	
<i>Enrollment</i>	Upon receipt of all necessary documents (Health Insurance, Payment, Enrollment Form), students will be enrolled. After enrollment, students can immediately set up their FU-ZEDAT-Account. Students need this account in order to register for courses and use the FU-Net, Wi-Fi and computers on campus. As participants in our exchange program, students will be admitted and enrolled as full-time students at Freie Universität Berlin for the duration they have been nominated for by their home university.
<i>Residence permit</i>	After arrival, students must apply for a residence permit (<i>Aufenthaltserlaubnis</i>) within three months (except students from EU or EEA countries). Students will be provided with detailed information and assistance upon arrival in Berlin.

Accommodation	
<i>Private accommodation</i>	Either students can organize their own private accommodation (such as student-shared apartments, so-called <i>WG=Wohngemeinschaft</i>) or use the university's accommodation service offered by the ERG GmbH.
<i>University housing service ERG</i>	The accommodation service offers a variety of accommodation options, including dorms, shared flats and fully furnished single apartments. All housing options are available from the beginning of September/October or March/April onwards and cost about 450 – 850 € per month. For more information, please see the following website: http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/unterbringung .
<i>Registration deadline</i>	Since there has been a dramatic increase of student housing demand, students wishing to use our accommodation service must apply <i>online</i> as soon as possible and no later than December 10 or June 10 using the link above. Registrations will be on a first come, first served basis.
<i>On-campus accommodation</i>	Please note that on-campus accommodation is not available. Further information about accommodation options will also be available to students via the Distributed Campus platform.
Orientation	
	Orientation takes place 5-10 days before the lecture period starts. It is necessary to participate in our orientation program. Students will be provided with essential information about studying at Freie Universität Berlin such as course selection and using the FU-Net, campus tours and how to use libraries and computers. The current orientation program is available online at: https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/veranstaltungen/orientierungsveranstaltungen/index.html
Selecting courses and attending classes	
<i>Undergraduate programs</i>	The Freie Universität Berlin offers a broad variety of undergraduate programs: https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/studienangebot/grundstaendige/index.html In the field of undergraduate programs there is a huge possibility to combine different subject fields: https://www.osa.fu-berlin.de/studienfachwahl/en/bachelorstudium/kombitabelle/index.html With few exceptions, all undergraduate programs are open for exchange students. Enrollment in the following courses is subject to availability of lab classes and to prior approval by the institute/department: <i>Biochemistry, Bioinformatics and Biology</i> . Restrictions apply in <i>Pharmacy, Law, Business Administration and Economics</i> . The Law Department prefers direct exchange students from institutions who also accept law students. There are only very few places available for other exchange programs. The School of Business Administration and Economics requires excellent German language skills (at least level B2) for classes taught in German. There is only a varying and very limited number of classes in English. Please note that <i>Human Medicine</i> and <i>Veterinary Medicine</i> are NOT open to exchange students.
<i>Master's programs</i>	The Freie Universität Berlin offers a range of master programs. The following programs are open for exchange students without restriction: <i>Modern German Literature, Philosophy and Political Science</i> . All other master programs are restricted and need prior approval by the institute / department. Admission to a master's program (non-degree status) is only possible with the approval of the department offering the master's program. Please contact us if you plan to nominate students for a particular master's program. Please note that in general BA students cannot be enrolled in master programs and cannot register individually in chosen master courses. However, exemptions can be made upon individual request. Fee-based continuing education master's programs are NOT open to exchange students.
<i>PhD programs</i>	If students have the necessary prerequisites, exchange students may be enrolled as visiting PhD students.
<i>Special classes for exchange students</i>	The Institute of German Languages and Literature offers a study program exclusively for exchange students. The seminars focus on the culture, society and history of Berlin and Germany and should be regarded as an additional offer to the basic study program. Detailed information can be found here: https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/studium/international/studium_fu/auslandssemester/Studienangebot-fuer-internationale-Gaststudierende
<i>Modules</i>	Bachelor's and master's programs are structured around modules, which usually consist of two content-related courses (e.g. a lecture and a seminar). While modules are offered on a regular basis (at least every 2nd semester), the content of the individual lecture or seminar might vary from one semester to the other.
<i>Study & examination regulations</i>	Detailed module descriptions specifying contents, structure, contact hours and credits (Leistungspunkte, LP) can be found in the study and examination regulations (Studien- u Prüfungsordnung): https://www.fu-berlin.de/studium/studienorganisation/pruefung/Archiv_stud-pruef-ordnungen.html (German only).
<i>Course catalogue</i>	The courses offered during the current semester are listed in the course catalogue (Vorlesungsverzeichnis, VV) which is available about one month prior to the beginning of the semester at: https://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/en/fb . It is structured by departments, degrees and modules.
<i>Course registration</i>	Students have to register for courses on our online portal Campus Management before the semester starts. Access and further information will be provided during the orientation period. Please note that in order to attend classes within our master's programs, students need prior approval of the respective lecturers or program directors.
<i>Subjects taught in English</i>	Subjects taught in English, will mostly be offered by the Department of English Philology and the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies. An overview of subjects offered in English is available at https://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/en/fb . Please use the "advanced search option" to find courses in English. Course-Catalogue-Guide.pdf (fu-berlin.de)
<i>Courses at other universities</i>	Exchange students may also attend courses at <i>Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin</i> , the <i>Technische Universität Berlin</i> and <i>Universität Potsdam</i> . In order to gain credits for these courses, students need prior approval of the respective lecturer and must fulfil the university's requirements.

<i>Course approval at partner universities</i>	When applying for an exchange to Freie Universität Berlin, some of our partner universities require that students have to get their subject selection approved prior to handing in the application (e.g. Learning Agreement). Since applications have to be submitted at least six months before the beginning of the exchange semester, it is not possible for students to access the course catalogue of the respective semester in time. We therefore recommend students to get a preliminary approval based on the course catalogue of prior semesters.										
Grading system											
	<p>All departments, except for the Law Department, use the following grading scale:</p> <table> <tr> <td>1,0 – 1,5</td><td>very good</td></tr> <tr> <td>1,6 – 2,5</td><td>good</td></tr> <tr> <td>2,6 – 3,5</td><td>satisfactory</td></tr> <tr> <td>3,5 – 4,0</td><td>sufficient</td></tr> <tr> <td>5,0</td><td>fail</td></tr> </table>	1,0 – 1,5	very good	1,6 – 2,5	good	2,6 – 3,5	satisfactory	3,5 – 4,0	sufficient	5,0	fail
1,0 – 1,5	very good										
1,6 – 2,5	good										
2,6 – 3,5	satisfactory										
3,5 – 4,0	sufficient										
5,0	fail										
De-enrollment / Transcript of Records											
<i>De-enrollment</i>	At the end of their stay at Freie Universität Berlin, exchange students should de-enroll (Exmatrikulation). This is very important, especially if students wish to return to a German university at a later point.										
<i>Transcript of Records</i>	<p>Transcripts from Freie Universität Berlin are not issued automatically. Students who wish to obtain a Transcript of Records have to fill out a form and contact our transcript officer at: incoming@fu-berlin.de before leaving Berlin. Students will be provided with detailed information and assistance via e-mail before departure.</p> <p><u>Important:</u> Students should apply for a Transcript of Records no later than three months after their stay. Freie Universität Berlin cannot issue any transcripts after that time. The transcript will be issued once the student's grades are released.</p> <p>The original Transcript of Records will be sent to the international office of the home university. We will send a copy via e-mail to the student.</p>										