STUDYING IN GERMANY

Brief Overview: Essential Information

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Differs from university to university, but generally:
Winter Semester (Oct-Mar): Lectures held mid-Oct to mid-Feb (with a two-week Christmas break from end Dec to early Jan)
Summer Semester (Apr-Sep): Lectures from early Apr to end Jul
The **non-lecture periods** are for sitting of exams, submission of term papers and completion of internships, but there will also be plenty of free time to travel or return home!

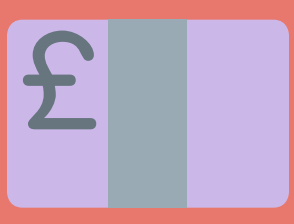
TERTIARY EDUCATION

Universities typically offer **3-year Bachelor's programmes**, with **Master's programmes being 1-2 years** long.
Universities specialise in theoretical education.
Technical Universities (TU) focus more on engineering courses.
Universities of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschulen*) offer more practical training/experience and are more job-oriented.

UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

Universities are typically strong in specific fields, with differing strengths, and therefore do not always rank highly on overall international rankings which mainly emphasise research output. German rankings (e.g. CHE University Ranking) instead compare specific faculties and criteria (e.g. student-teacher ratio).

COST OF LIVING



Semester contributions are on average **250 EUR** and include free access to public transportation. Tuition is otherwise free, except for in the state of Baden-Württemberg (1500 EUR per semester for non-EU citizens). **Health insurance** is compulsory (about **100 EUR** monthly). Students spend on average 800 EUR per month (incl. rent), although this differs based on city.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Most undergraduate programmes are taught in German (though there are also English degrees offered, especially at private institutions), whereas most master's programmes are more international, with many courses in English.
Students generally need to be at B2-C1 level in German (more info on language requirements later).

HIGHLIGHTS AND OBJECTIVES

WHY GERMANY?

REASONS TO STUDY IN GERMANY

Cosmopolitan, with a pluralism of ethno-cultural diversity and lifestyles

Generally safe, with economic and political stability

Known as the land of thinkers and poets: rich culture and history

World-class education with long and famous university tradition

Progressive, inclusive and environmentally conscious

Perfectly situated for exploring Europe (bordered by 9 countries!)

Known for beautiful natural landscapes and charming cities

Huge international student community (one of the most popular destinations for EU students)

Learn one of the most popular languages in the world!

"Around **130 million people** speak German as their mother language or as a second language. German is the most widely spoken mother language in the European Union and an official language in seven countries."

(Source: https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/culture/the-german-language-surprising-facts-and-figures)

Neuschwanstein Castle, Bavaria
Photo by Eric Marty on Unsplash

What do I need to study in Germany?

APPLICATION PROCESS

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

e.g. Singapore's GCE "A" Levels min. 3 H2s, 1 H1
at least one mathematical / science subject

GERMAN PROCIENCY

(not needed for international degree)

TestDAF (TDN 4) available in Singapore
DSH (DSH-2) in Germany
= generally B2-C1 proficiency (based on Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), admission possible with lower scores based on university

HOW TO APPLY

Many universities use the platform **uni-assist**, but every university has a different application process, so check your preferred university's website for more information.

LEARNING GERMAN

Singapore: Goethe-Institut
Germany: Students may enrol in language courses offered at universities (usually between Jun-Sep), *Volkshochschule*, private language schools, and summer schools

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

LANGUAGE BARRIER

While many Germans are able to speak English, the language of administration is still German and this may daunt those who are new to the language. Students may contact the DAAD if assistance is required.

BUREAUCRACY

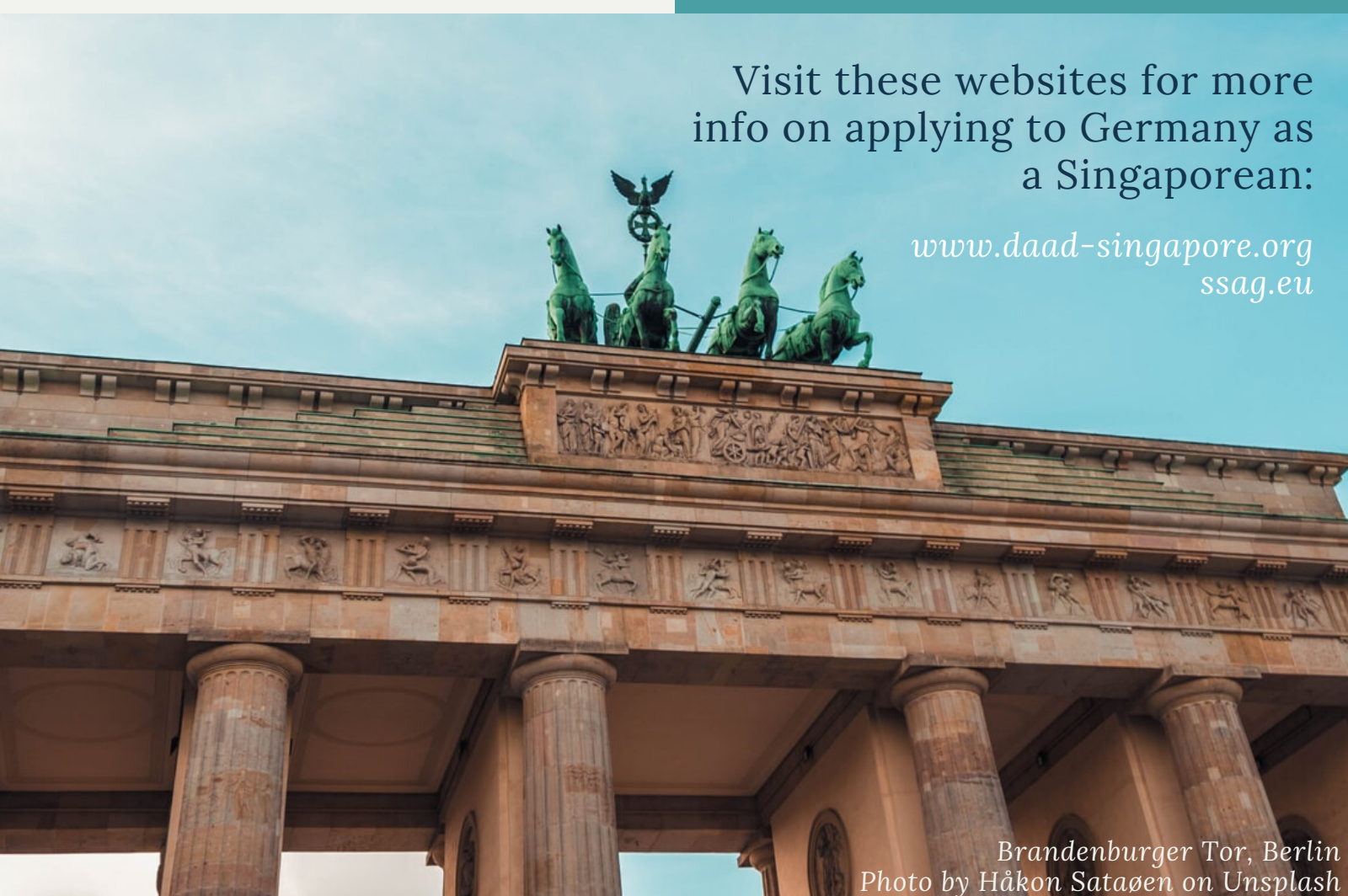
Germany is famous for its bureaucracy and the many administrative hurdles one has to clear in order to finally settle in the country. The settling-in process may seem endless and stressful.

DIFFERENT CULTURAL PRACTICES

Living in Germany comes with many quirks, such as having to take recycling very seriously. You will have to get used to sorting your trash all the time!

SMALLER SG COMMUNITY

The SG community is much smaller relative to places like the UK (although still sizeable in bigger cities e.g. Munich). One definitely has to step out of their comfort zone (and perhaps into the huge international student community)!



Visit these websites for more info on applying to Germany as a Singaporean:

www.daad-singapore.org
ssag.eu

Brandenburger Tor, Berlin
Photo by Håkon Sataøen on Unsplash

Römerberg, Frankfurt
Photo by Yuan Ting

TESTIMONIALS

AMANDA LEE JIAQI

2015 PSC Scholarship
Freie Universität Berlin
Social and Cultural Anthropology (Undergraduate)

Three years of language immersion, enriching debates and hilarious cultural misunderstandings later, I look back and have no regrets choosing Germany for my undergraduate studies. Berlin, in particular, is an international, student-friendly city with no shortage of spontaneity and unexpected encounters. My time in Berlin has taught me to respect different, sometimes opposing, perspectives and engaged me with ideas of justice and equity.

YUAN TING LEE

2015 PSC Scholarship
Hertie School of Governance
Public Policy (Master's)

Studying in the capital of a major European power is undeniably exciting, and conversations about politics in Europe and beyond can be heard floating in hallways at all times. It is challenging to move to a new place where I did not grasp the language fully, but constant effort and practice has made the transition much smoother for me. I am getting used to something new about life in Germany everyday and this is undeniably exciting.

NICOLE WONG YIFEI

2018 PSC Scholarship (Teaching Service)
Universität Leipzig
German as a Foreign and Second Language (Undergraduate)

Leipzig has a young, lively energy that can be felt even with constant reminders of its rich history. Walking on the streets, in the footsteps of famous historical figures such as Bach and Goethe and surrounded by beautiful old architecture, one also sees people from all over the world, clear evidence of Leipzig's international appeal. As a city, Leipzig is neither too big nor too small, managing to be both exciting and cosy, due also in part to the fun and warm-hearted people one is bound to meet.

Photo by Roman Kraft on Unsplash
Heidelberg

Speicherstadt, Hamburg
Free stock photo on Pixabay

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