

## FAQs for exchange students



### 1. Who decides in which residence I will be staying?

Each semester the universities are provided with a contingent of rooms for their new exchange students by Studierendenwerk. The universities decide which applicants will get a room. Studierendenwerk does not decide where the applicants are allocated. The allocation is done by the universities corresponding with the contingent for each residence. Studierendenwerk Hamburg has no influence on this allocation process.

### 2. Can I change the room that has been reserved for me?

**No**, once a room has been allocated, it is not possible to change it, due to administrative matters.

### 3. Is the rental period flexible?

**No.**

As these room contingents are designed to provide prospective international students with accommodation while they are still abroad, the rental period for each room is limited to the maximum of 1 year (always starting when the semester starts and ending when the semester ends). That means, if you apply for, e.g. the summer semester, you can only rent the room from April 1<sup>st</sup> until the end of August. Only that way, many new international students can be accommodated when they arrive here.

### 4. What happens if I reject the room offered to me?

If you reject a room offered to you, you will automatically be removed from the university's applicant's pool. You will not be offered another room.

### 5. Why exchange students pay a higher rent than other students?

Exchange students, in contrast to other applicants, are offered a room without having to go through a waiting period. They also receive extra services, such as kitchenware and bed linen.

### 6. When is the rental agreement valid and binding?

The letter of offer is sent exclusively via email, along with a rental agreement. As soon as you have signed the rental agreement and returned it to Studierendenwerk by fax or as a scan via email, the agreement is considered valid and binding. You will be provided the original document with Studierendenwerk's signature when you move in.

### 7. Can I terminate the rental agreement if I don't come to Hamburg?

In accordance with §4 / §5 of your rental agreement, you may terminate or cancel your rental agreement as follows:

When cancelling your rental agreement at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the rental period, there will be a cancellation fee of €50.

When cancelling between 14 to 29 days before your arrival, the cancellation fee is €100.

The termination less than 14 days prior to the beginning of the rental period will attract a cancellation fee of at least one month's full rent.

The rental agreement may not be cancelled after the rental period has commenced. (see also **8.**)

### **8. Can I terminate the rental agreement early?**

**No.** Only severe reasons, such as, illness and exmatriculation, are accepted as reasons to terminate your rental agreement early.

Early termination, with a notification period of six weeks to the end of the following month is only possible in exceptional circumstances. E.g.: if enrolment has been cancelled, or the student cannot continue with her/his studies due to verifiable reasons of ill health. Proof of the cancelled enrolment or an official doctor's certificate must be submitted to Studierendenwerk. Other reasons for early termination, such as an earlier departure date are not permitted (§4 / §5).

### **9. When do I have to pay the security deposit and first month's rent?**

Studierendenwerk recommends paying the security deposit and the first month's rent into the Studierendenwerk-bank account stated in your room offer in advance. This simplifies the process of moving-in. If you do not pay in advance, both, the security deposit and the first month's rent, must be paid in person at a bank or at the Counselling Center, immediately after your moving-in (on the same day).

### **10. When can I move into my room?**

Please arrange a moving-in date with your property managers during their office hours. You can find the office hours and contact details for your property manager in the letter of offer sent to you or on our website.

### **11. When is the monthly rent due?**

According to the rental agreement, the monthly rent is due by the 5th working day of every month. If you award Studierendenwerk a *SEPA direct debit authorisation*, the monthly rent will be automatically booked from your bank account on the 5th working day every month. You need to have either a German bank account or a European bank account that participates in the SEPA process for this purpose.

### **12. When must I submit my enrolment certificate?**

The enrolment certificate must be submitted to the property manager when you move in. Should you not yet have an enrolment certificate by this date, you must provide it as quickly as possible. Without it, you are not entitled to live in the residence. We indicate that an interim enrolment certificate is not sufficient, and must be subsequently supplemented with a full enrolment certificate. If you have not submitted your full enrolment certificate within a maximum of 4 weeks from the day of your moving-in, your rental agreement will be terminated, due to the lack of entitlement. If you have a rental agreement that extends beyond one semester, you must always present your current enrolment certificate at the beginning of each semester.

**13. Do I have to clean my room myself? / Do I have to contribute to the cleaning of the shared rooms?**

**Yes**, you are responsible for your own room. **Yes**, all tenants are responsible to keep the kitchen and the bathroom(s) in good condition. We advise all students to compile a cleaning rota for their apartment.

**14. Can I sublet my room?**

**No**, this is not permitted under any circumstances.

**15. Do I still have to pay the rent even if I move out early?**

Given that you are **not** permitted to terminate the rental agreement early (see 8.) you are obliged to pay the rent until the end of the rental agreement.

**16. What do I need to consider with regard to the TV and broadcasting licence fee?**

The TV and broadcasting licence fee is regulated under private law in Germany, and can therefore not be included in the rent. You are obliged to pay this fee.

For more information on the TV and broadcasting license, please see:

[http://www.studierendenwerk-hamburg.de/studierendenwerk/de/downloads/finanzen/Mieterinformation\\_-\\_FAQs\\_Stand\\_1\\_4\\_2015.pdf?m=1432194932](http://www.studierendenwerk-hamburg.de/studierendenwerk/de/downloads/finanzen/Mieterinformation_-_FAQs_Stand_1_4_2015.pdf?m=1432194932)

**17. How and when do I get back my security deposit?**

Your security deposit will be fully repaid at the latest three months after your rental agreement expired, on the condition that your room was handed over to the property manager in good condition. On moving out, you will be given a form on which you have to state your bank account details so Studierendenwerk Hamburg can transfer the deposit sum into your bank account.

Please note that fees may apply for transfers to an international bank account (outside of the EU).

**18. Can I apply for a new room at the end of my rental agreement?**

Students who require accommodation for longer than six months can apply via our homepage. Please remember that the demand is very high at the beginning of the semester and you must take into account a waiting period of several months. Therefore we advise you strongly to look for private lodgings at the same time.

In addition, you can get into contact with the person responsible for international degree and exchange students at your university and ask if an extension of your accommodation at one of our residences was possible within the allocation for the newly arriving international degree and exchange students.