

IMPRS-HD

International Max Planck Research School for
Astronomy & Cosmic Physics at the University of Heidelberg



PHD STUDENT'S MANUAL

IMPRS HD



IMPRS Heidelberg * Max Planck Institute for Astronomy
Königstuhl 17 * D-69117 Heidelberg
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Foreword

This manual contains information that is relevant for a PhD student starting at one of the astrophysics institutes in the IMPRS-HD, whether German or from abroad, an IMPRS student or not. IMPRS-HD is the acronym for International Max Planck Research School for Astronomy and Cosmic Physics at the University of Heidelberg. The idea of making a manual resulted from many of the PhD students having similar experiences when trying to find a flat, signing up at the university, figuring out health insurance etc. It was then decided to write down all the important information for the generations to come.

The information presented here is only useful if it is continuously updated. Therefore we ask the reader to tell us if he/she has experienced anything different from what is written here.

Furthermore, there is an information resource for expatriates living in Germany - kind of a manual for Germany - from the German Foreign Office: "How to Germany". You can either find all the information on the internet <http://www.howtogermaany.com> or look for a copy at the MPIA information desk.

When the IMPRS manual was first issued (2007) the authors copied and adapted a major part of the existing MPIA students "pamphlet" which had been produced by Anders Johansen, Nadine Neumayer, Sascha P. Quanz, Florian Rodler and Jutta Stegmaier. Thanks to all of them!!

The IMPRS manual authors were/are: Cassandra Fallscheer, Ronny Geisler, Martin Hennemann, Claudia Mignone, Marie-Helene Nicole, Rosalind Skelton, Giulia Vannoni, Massimo Viola, Hsiang- Hsu Wang, Olga Zacharopoulou, Michael Zatloukal. Christian Fendt, Josefina Michea, Heide Seifert, and Thu Huong Witte-Nguy made the last update for 2020.

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Chapter 1

1 Heidelberg, Germany

1.1 Before you arrive: Visa

It is of utmost importance that you have the proper visa that allows you to stay in Germany for your PhD. To ensure this you should definitely take care of your visa before your arrival.

EU nationals

No visa and no residence permit for students who are a member of the European Union and the European Economic Area (EEA) states Lichtenstein, Iceland and Norway.

Non-EU nationals

Generally speaking, all other foreigners *require a visa* for stays in Germany. Exceptions are: Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea, the United States of America and Switzerland provided they are a stipend holder.

Nevertheless: PhD Students with work contract should apply for an entry visa directly even if you can enter Germany without. Reason: you are not allowed to start with your work immediately but need an appointment with the local immigration office to get the work permit and therefore your starting date may be delayed. Therefore, we strongly recommend applying for the visa before you enter Germany.

For more information go to: <https://visaguide.world/europe/germany-visa/long-stay/researcher/>

Both (with a stipend and a contract) need to apply for a residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel) based on this visa once they are here and intend to stay longer than three months.

Applying for a national visa in your home country or the country you are staying at during your studies

Once accepted to IMPRS, you should set up an appointment at the German embassy or consulate near your home residence/ residence you are staying at the moment. You must apply for this before coming to Germany well in advance.

Visa / residence permit for researcher (§20 Residence Act):

PhD students with employment *contracts (up to 50%)* must apply for the "researcher visa" (Visa Type-D) and residence permit for the purpose of research (§20). In order to apply for a researcher residence permit according to §20 of the Residence Act, the research organization must sign a **hosting agreement** with the visiting scholar. **You will need to submit the hosting agreement with your visa application to the German embassy** in your home country. Please note, an invitation letter of your host won't be accepted any more. Please contact your employer for the host agreement.

PhD students without a contract / with a stipend have to apply for a student visa (§16) and also a residence permit for students (§16 immigration act). When applying for a visa at a German embassy/consulate, the letter of admission of Heidelberg University/ an invitation letter of the institute should be presented. When applying for the residence permit at the local immigration office, a certificate of enrolment is required.

Note: Do not travel with a Schengen visa which is a tourist visa as it is valid for less than 3 months and cannot be changed. You have to travel back to your country in order to apply for another visa.

Health insurance

Please make sure that you do have health insurance that is valid in Germany and covers your travel and at least your starting period here in Heidelberg. Accidents, medical treatment and stays in hospitals all need to be covered. Further information can be found in Chapter 1.5.

Note: You will need several passport photos, so it is useful to always have a couple at hand.

1.2 Your first steps in Heidelberg

After your arrival, you have to take care of the following:

- Your working contract
- Your bank account
- Your accommodation
- Your health insurance
- Registration at the city authorities
- Registration and Enrollment as PhD student (see chapter 4)

For most of these steps you will get help either from IMPRS and/or your institute, so feel encouraged asking. In the next sections you will find useful information about these issues.

IMPORTANT HINT!!! Keep in mind that contracts in Germany are automatically renewed (e.g. mobile phones, internet, subscription to a gym etc.). If you do not want your contract renewed, you should go to the company some months before the end of your contract (usually at least 3 months in advance) and cancel it. They often ask for a written cancellation. Do not forget to get a written statement that they accepted your cancellation.

1.3 Open a bank account

One of the first things you should do on arrival in Heidelberg is to open a bank account, the “Giro-Konto” which is the most common one in Germany. This is very important because you will need a bank account for many other future steps like getting paid by your institute, of course, but also getting health insurance, for example. Some banks offer free or cheaper accounts for students, so have this in mind before choosing. You can ask your fellow students about the different banks. Most banks are located close to the Bismarck-Platz in Heidelberg.

To open a bank account you will need the following documents:

- Your passport
- A mailing address (You can give your institute address if you do not have an apartment yet!)
- Certain banks will ask you for a letter from your institute or working contract saying that you will be a PhD student for the next three years, starting on (e.g.) September 20XX with a net income of 1300 Euro per month.

In the following days, you will receive your Bank Card, PIN and further information by mail.

Hint: Before you go to the bank, check the opening hours. Usually they open late and close early. Some, however, stay open late once per week. The large banks, as e.g. Deutsche Bank or Dresdner Bank have English-speaking personnel.

The EC Card

Once you have opened an account the bank will issue you a card commonly referred to as an “EC-Karte”. You can use it to get cash from the automatic teller machines (Geldautomat), and it is commonly also accepted for withdrawing money and payments at supermarkets, payments at gas stations, ticket offices, department stores, and so on. Payment is made with either a signature or with the four-digit PIN number assigned to your card.



The Credit Card

From our experience a credit card is necessary for paying conferences fees and accommodation or booking flights. The credit card is also accepted at many stores and restaurants, and can also be used to get cash from the Geldautomat. Payment is made with either a signature or with the four-digit PIN number assigned to your card.

You can order one when you open your account or even later. But it takes around 2-4 weeks before you receive your credit card, depending on the bank you choose. A few banks offer the credit card for free; others only charge you approx. 20-30 Euro per year.

Online Banking

Online banking is usually offered for free without even having to ask for it. It is very useful when you have to pay bills or your registration fee at the university and you do not have to go to the bank.

The TAN number is some kind of password that you need for the online banking for your transactions. It will be sent to you via a mobile phone SMS.

1.4 Your first accommodation

Usually you organize your travel and initial accommodation to Heidelberg yourself. For your first days/weeks in Heidelberg, while you will be looking for your own accommodation, you can usually stay in one of the guesthouses of the university or institute. For guesthouse reservation, please contact the secretary of the institute that you will be working at early enough. More information about living in Heidelberg is given in the next chapter.

1.5 Health System

1.5.1 Health Insurance

There are two kinds of insurance systems, the “Gesetzliche” and the “Private” Krankenversicherung.

a) For students financed by a work contract as employee, it is compulsory to be insured under a public, statutory health insurance scheme, and you must choose an insurance provider once you have signed your contract. The personnel department will help out and give you a registration form for the insurance. After a few days, your provider will send you an insurance card (Gesundheitskarte) with a chip, much like in a credit card that you must present at every doctor’s visit. Ask the insurance company to issue a certificate stating that you have bought insurance as you need this certificate for admission at University. If you forget to obtain an issued certificate at the beginning, it is quite easy to order one online and print it right away.

b) Doctoral students financed through a stipend can join a statutory health insurance scheme or take out private health cover. Private insurance coverage has certain advantages in terms of service. Please note: Health insurance is a MUST-HAVE during your whole stay in Germany as it is a legal requirement, so please make sure that you have insurance upon your arrival until you have bought a new one in Germany.

A few things that you should check before choosing:

- ✓ If you have a family you should check if the rest of your family is also covered.
- ✓ If you will be covered when you go back home or what are the conditions when you are travelling.
- ✓ Some companies offer travel insurance only up to a certain number of days. When you can start making use of your insurance.
- ✓ Some private companies ask you e.g. to wait 6 months before they cover you dental treatments. Do you have to pay the doctor by yourself and afterwards ask them back from the health insurance?

For more information you may find somebody from your institute responsible (e.g. the personnel department) for guests that can offer you more details on the private health insurances.

1.5.2 When you need a doctor



How to choose a doctor? You can look online, but the best way is to ask a colleague or a friend. Do not worry, most of the doctors in Heidelberg speak English. The office hours are usually from Monday to Friday from 8 am to 1 pm and then from 3 pm to 6:30 pm, except Wednesday and Friday afternoons when most doctors' offices are closed. A "Hausarzt" (equivalent to a General Practitioner) may be able to refer you to a specialist if you require one. But it is also fine to see a specialist directly.

If there is an emergency outside the opening times, please contact the Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst, Alte Eppelheimer Str. 35, 69115 Heidelberg, Telephone: 06221 – 116117.
Or go to one of the hospitals in Heidelberg.

The phone number for all kind of emergencies is 110 and for the ambulance 112. The phone number of the Poison Center for Baden-Wuerttemberg is 0761 – 19240.

1.5.3 English speaking Doctors

Here is a list of doctors who speak English and this is the only criteria for being in the list. The quality of the services has not been checked and the list is partial. You can always go through the list of doctors using the link in the previous paragraph, choose somebody close your home and ask if they speak English.



DENTISTRY

Dr. Ertl-Bach, Herta
Buchwaldweg 23, 69126 Heidelberg,
Tel. 06221-383630

Dr. Smith III, Charles A.
Ärztzghaus, Bergheimerstraße 1, Tel.
06221-183000

OTOLARYNOLOGY

Dr. Heimlich, Angelika & Florian
Karslsruher Str. 86, 69126 Heidelberg,
Tel. 06221-314814

GENERAL PRACTICE

Arends, Albertus
Brückenstr. 43, 69120 Heidelberg,
Tel. 06221-472887

Dr. Jung, Dieter
Landfriedstr. 14, 69117 Heidelberg,
Tel. 06221-183021

INTERNIST

Dr. Hack, Fritz G.
Lindenweg 6, 69126 Heidelberg, Tel.
06221-314827

Vielhauser, Walter
Hauptstr. 29, 69117 Heidelberg, Tel.
06221-21587

OBSTETRICS / GYNECOLOGY

Dr. Lorenz, Ursula
Hauptstr. 107, 69117 Heidelberg, Tel.
06221-28058

Ries, Joerg K.
Steubenstr. 15, 69121 Heidelberg, Tel.
06221-45000

DERMATOLOGY

Dr. Wirth, Angela & Helmut
Rohrbacher Str. 9, 69115 Heidelberg,
Tel. 06221-22959

1.6 Registration with the city authorities (Anmeldung)

Regardless of whether you are a member of the EU or not, everyone, including Germans, staying in Heidelberg; Mannheim and in the surrounding area, more than three months must register with one of the city's administrative offices (Bürgeramt) within ten days (free of charge).

there, you will have to present your passport/ ID card
proof of your current address in Heidelberg (or Mannheim, Leimen, etc.), proof of your landlord to confirming where you are staying at (Wohnungsgeberbestätigung). If you do not have a permanent address yet, you can give them the address of the guest house you are staying at, but have to report them once you have moved to your own apartment.
and fill out a form called "Anmeldung" which is available at the Administrative Office

At which administrative office to register depends on where you are staying. Please contact the Office corresponding to your residential district. After registering you will receive a certificate of registration which you need for further administrative tasks. The staff at the City's Administrative Office usually gives you further instructions what to do to get your residence permit if needed.

Heidelberg: <https://www.heidelberg.de/hd,Lde/HD/Rathaus/Buergeraemter.html>

Eppelheim: <https://www.eppelheim.de/pb/,Lde/1089384.html>

Leimen: <https://www.leimen.de/index.php?id=4>

Mannheim: <https://www.mannheim.de/de/service-bieten/buergerdienste/buergerservice>

1.7 Getting a residence permit

Residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel)

A residence permit is a permit or a visa that you have to apply for to stay in Germany for a specific purpose. There are different types of residence permits you can apply for: student visa (§16) and a researcher visa (§20).

With a researcher visa, you are e.g. entitled for parental allowance (Elterngeld) and child benefit (Kindergeld). It also includes mobility privileges within the EU. A researcher's spouse who accompanies the researcher to Germany is entitled to take up gainful employment. No work permit is required. There is no German language requirement for the spouse.


Further information can be found on the following homepage of the Heidelberg University:
https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/research/international/heidelberg/researchers_directive.html

To apply for a residence permit is a several-stage-process:

Usually, at the registration at the Bürgeramt office corresponding to your residential district, the staff will tell you what further steps you should do to get your residence permit. If you live in Heidelberg, once registered, you have to make an appointment at the Foreigner's office by emailing the corresponding person according to your family name since it takes several weeks to get an appointment. Just for your information, most of the staff does not speak English very well.

<p>Rhein Neckar Kreis Local Foreigners' Office (Ausländeramt) Kurfürsten-Anlage 38-40 69115 Heidelberg Phone: 06221/522-1478 Email: auslaenderamt@rhein-neckar-kreis.de Internet: https://www.rhein-neckar-kreis.de/,Lde/1877852.html</p> <p>Business hours: Mo, Tue, Thu, Fri: 7:30 – 12 h, Wed: 7:30 – 17:00</p>	
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If you live in i. a. Eppelheim, Gaiberg, Dossenheim (on the webpage you can find the area that the Local Foreigner's Office of the Rhein Neckar Kreis Amt is responsible for), you have to contact the corresponding person according to your family name at the Local Foreigner's Office of the Rhein Neckar Kreis for an appointment.

<p>Local Foreigners' Office (Zuwanderungsbehörde/ Ausländeramt) 69115 Heidelberg Bergheimer Str. 147 (Landfriedgebäude) Phone: 06221/58-17524 Email: zuwanderungservicepoint@heidelb.de Internet: https://www.heidelberg.de/hd,Lde/-/Behoerdenwegweiser/;oe6018769</p> <p>Business hours: Mo: 8 – 12 h, Tue: 8 – 16 h, Wed: 8 – 17:30, Thu: 8 – 16 h, Fri: 8 – 12 h</p>	
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In Eppelheim, you have to go to the "Bürgeramt" in the first place. There the personnel will contact the Local Foreigner's Office of the Rhein Neckar Kreis Amt for your residence permit.

Required documents:

1 biometric passport size photo

- ✓ Hosting agreement
- ✓ proof of sufficient financial resources (your contract)
- ✓ proof of your health insurance coverage (you will receive a proof of your membership from the insurance)
- ✓ valid passport
- ✓ application form
- ✓ proof of acceptance from the Department of Physics and Astronomy
- ✓ formular for enrollment to be signed by the Local Foreigners Office (Immatrikulation ohne Aufenthaltstitel zu Studienzwecken) / later enrollment certificate



Aufenthaltstitel: Unlike the previous permit that was attached to a passport page, the new eAT chip-card residence permit, issued since 2011, is a credit-card-sized plastic card with biometric data. PHOTO: bamf.de

Students on a stipend applying for a residence permit do not have to pay a fee if they are funded by the government. Others, e.g. with work contract, do have to pay a fee of approx. 100 Euro.

Usually, the residence permit is valid as long as your contract is valid. And it is only valid when displayed together with your national identity document.

If your passport expires while you are in Germany, once you receive your new passport you will have to go through the whole residence application process again. If your passport is due to expire in the near future, renew it in advance to avoid the hassle of applying twice for residence. The image shows what a residence permit looks like.

Chapter 2

2 Living in Heidelberg

2.1 Temporary accommodation

Moving to Heidelberg is at your own expense. Before you come to Heidelberg, we recommend taking care of a temporary housing early in advance.

2.1.1 Guest Houses

The University owns several guest houses in Heidelberg, with one-room flats for about 600 Euros per month. You can stay there for a limited amount of time (maximum one year), depending on availability. It is important to reserve a place in the guesthouse in advance. For further information, please go to:
<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/institutions/guesthouses/>

Also the institutes on the hill (MPIA, LSW, and MPIK) have guest houses up there. Prices and conditions are more or less the same as in the university guest houses, and if you work in one of these institutes you can ask the secretary to reserve a room for you. Be aware that transportation connecting the hill and the town (including supermarkets etc.) is quite poor (see chapter on transport) so that the accommodation in such guest houses is usually convenient only for a short time.

2.1.2 Hostel

If you cannot manage to find place in a guest house, you can consider going to a hotel. On this website you can find a list of the hotels in Heidelberg: <http://tourismus.meinestadt.de/heidelberg/hotel>
A cheaper solution would be the Youth Hostel, Steffis hostel, or Lotte-The Backpackers. The Hostels cost approx. 26 euro per night, including breakfast.

Youth Hostel (located near university campus)

Tiergartenstr. 5, 69120 Heidelberg
Tel: 06221 - 651190; Fax: 06221 - 6511928;
E-Mail: info@jugendherberge-heidelberg.de
<http://heidelberg.jugendherberge-bw.de/de-DE/Portraet>

Steffis hostel (located near main station)

Alte Eppelheimer Str. 50, 69115 Heidelberg
Tel: 06221 - 7782772
E-Mail: steffi@hostelheidelberg.de
<http://www.hostelheidelberg.de/de/index.html>

Lotte – The Backpackers (located in the Altstadt)

Burgweg 3, 69117 Heidelberg
Telefon: +49 (0)6221 - 735 0 725
Email: info@lotte-heidelberg.de
<http://www.lotte-heidelberg.de/de/hostel-in-heidelberg.html>

Important: Even if you spend a very short time in the guest house, you must in principle register at the Bürgeramt (Resident's Registration Office) relative to the city area where the guesthouse is. When you find a place and move there, you will have to register again at the new office (see chapter below about registration).

2.1.3 AIRBNB

Airbnb is an online community marketplace that connects people looking to rent their homes with people who are looking for accommodations. To sign into Airbnb, open your web browser and go to Airbnb.com. You can log in with your Facebook or Google account, or with your email address and password.

Once the host accepts your request, your payment method will be charged for the entire amount at that time. Whether the reservation is two days or two months away, AIRBNB holds the payment until 24 hours after check-in before giving it to the host.

2.1.4 Temporary rent: “Housing Anywhere”

Several ads carry the label “Housing Anywhere” This means that the flat or room is only temporarily available for rent, because the person who lives there is out of town for some time (it could be for a month, several months, even one year) and does not want to waste rent money.

Even if it is not the most convenient situation, you can consider this option as well, at least as temporary accommodation while you keep looking for your own place. For further information, please visit: https://housinganywhere.com/de/?utm_source=Zwischenmitte

2.2 Looking for a place to live

House hunting is not always easy and usually requires some time. The main source of information is the local newspaper: Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, www.rnz.de. Ads come out on Wednesday and Saturday. You have to be very, very fast: usually in the afternoon of the same day on which the ad comes out in the newspaper, the best flats are already taken. Therefore, try to get the newspaper early in the morning and start calling right away!

You can also have a look at the University Cafeteria or at one of the websites listed in the “shared flat” section because there are also several ads for 1-room or 2-room flats to rent.

If you feel very desperate, you can contact an estate agent (in German: Immobilienmakler), but usually you have to pay a fee of 1-3 month rents.

The abbreviations used in accommodation advertisements are often as confusing to Germans as they are to non-native speakers. In the appendix you find a table of the most common ones and also brief descriptions of the city areas and the suburbs.

2.2.1 Shared flat or your own?

There are two main options: either you look for a room in a shared flat, which in German is called Wohngemeinschaft (WG), or for a flat of your own, which is usually more expensive. There are also dorms for students in several areas of the city.

2.2.2 Price overview

On average, a room in a WG can vary between 200 and 400 euro per month, depending on the city area you choose (but not only!); a flat of your own can cost at least 300 euros per month, and can be much more expensive if the area is more central and, obviously, if it is bigger. Rooms in a dorm are usually slightly cheaper than in private flats.

Depending on the flat, the rental costs can be “warm” (=warm) or “kalt” (=cold): this means that they include (warm) or do NOT include (kalt) additional costs such as electricity, water, heating, internet, telephone, garbage, and so on. Remember to ask your landlord if the rent is “kalt” or “warm” and, in this case, exactly which fees are included (more details in later sections).

2.2.3 Furniture

In most cases, the room or flat is not furnished. However, this is not a major problem, since it is very easy to find furniture at a reasonable price: there are department stores close to Heidelberg or you can look for second hand things, which are usually in good condition.

Buying furniture

There are some large stores close to Heidelberg where you can find cheap furniture, i.e. IKEA, XXXL Mann Mobilia, Möbel Höffner). You can ask them to deliver the furniture to your place, but sometimes it is more convenient to rent a car and do it on your own. There are several car rental shops in Heidelberg - you can find them in the telephone book or on the internet. (www.dastelefonbuch.de)

Second hand stuff

It is also very easy to find second hand furniture, since there are lots of people who live in Heidelberg for only a few years during their PhD or Postdoc, and they want to sell their furniture when they leave. You can have a look at the magazine Sperrmuell (<http://www.sperrmuell.de/>) and also ask around at your institute. One second hand furniture store is the Heidelberger Dienste Möbelhalle. Besides furniture, they also offer, dishes, books, clothes, toys and much more.

Address:

Oftersheimer Weg 1

69124 Heidelberg

Tel: 06221/ 141054

E-Mail: moebelhalle@hddienste.de

Contact person: Kirsten Stein

Internet: <http://www.hddienste.de/service-fur-buerger/diemoebelhalle/>

2.2.4 Transport issues

Rooms and flats in the old centre (Altstadt) and in the other central neighborhoods are on average more expensive than in the suburbs. You should however consider that if you choose to live in one of the suburbs, the connections to the centre are not always optimal.

This is important, especially if you are going to work at one of the institutes on the hill. In this case, you will need to take the science bus 30 to go to work (see section about transport for details).

If you choose to live in one of the suburbs, you have to take into account the additional time that you need to arrive at The Universitätsplatz in time for the bus, which could well be another half hour. Obviously, this does not apply if you use your own car.

2.2.5 Rental Contracts

The contracts for renting a house are usually very standard. You generally need to pay some deposit (Kautions), which you will get back after you leave the flat if everything is in order. In the contract it is specified how many months before (usually three) you have to tell your landlord that you want to move out. Some contracts may have a blocked period, i.e. you cannot leave the flat before a certain time, decided by the landlord. Sometimes landlords may ask for your financial details: in that case a letter from your institute secretary stating that you will be employed there for three years and will receive a certain salary is enough.

If you need help you can ask your colleagues or the secretary at your institute. If you feel that you need expert advice, there is a tenant association ("Mieterverein"), which provides legal advice about rental issues for reasonable prices. They mainly speak German, but some of them speak English and can provide you a translation or at least a better explanation of what is written in the contract. You can have a look at www.mieterverein-heidelberg.de or visit them (Poststrasse 46; opening times Mo-Thu 9-12 and 14-18; Fr 9-14; telephone 06221/20473).

2.2.6 A room in a shared flat – Wohngemeinschaft - WG

Usually students live in these flats, so the best time to find a room would be at the end or beginning of one of the semesters, i.e. March-April, and July-August-September. There are usually a considerable number of offers at all times of the year, though it can be more difficult after the semester has begun.

Websites

www.zimmer69.de (Heidelberg only), www.wg-suche.de, www.wg-gesucht.de, www.homecompany.de, www.housinganywhere.de, www.wg-welt.de, www.vierwaen.de, www.immonet.de, www.rnz.de, www.immobilienscout24.de

The first website is specific for Heidelberg, the others are for any city in Germany, so you have to specify that you are searching in Heidelberg (“Stadt” means city, “Suche” means search).

There you can find ads or put your own ad for free. These websites are in German. There is a list at the end of this chapter with all the words and abbreviations which may be useful while you are browsing ads.

Advertisements at the Mensa



Another place to look for advertisements is the University cafeteria. There are two: one in the Altstadt (Triplex Mensa, Uniplatz) and another on the University campus (Im Neuenheimer Feld). There you can find a lot of “home-made” ads on the walls, where you directly find the telephone number you have to contact.

There are also several “professional” ads where you don’t see the telephone number to contact. They belong to a service offered by the University, called Zimmervermittlung. You can ask for it at the InfoCentre: you have to pay 10 euros and for a month you can choose 5 different ads every day and you will receive the corresponding telephone number.

The opening times are:

Info Center

Triplex-Mensa - Universitätsplatz

Mo-Thu 9:00-17:00, Fr 9:00-15:00

InfoCafe International – ICI

Zentralmensa - Im Neuenheimer Feld 304

Mo-Thu 10:00-17:00, Fr 10:00-15:00

Contact the following number/ email for searching a room.

Tel: 0 62 21 / 54 5400

E-Mail: info@stw.uni-heidelberg.de

Important: Remember that when you apply for a shared flat and when you visit it, in most cases the contact is directly with the people who are already living in the flat, because they are usually those who choose the new tenant. Usually you meet the landlord only in the second step. Sometimes the appointment with the people who already live there is like some sort of “interview”, so do not be scared if they ask you things like your favorite music or movie!

2.3 Student accommodation (Dorms, “Wohnheime”)

Only around 13% of all new students at Heidelberg University find accommodation in a student hall. Heidelberg student union (Studentenwerk Heidelberg) provides around 4,800 rooms in flat shares in around 65 halls of residence to students at Heidelberg. The rental price of rooms in flat shares is between €70 and €50 according to type and facilities.

Many of them are located on the campus (Im Neuenheimer Feld), and there are several others in other areas (Altstadt, Neuenheim, Rohrbach, Pfaffengrund, Schlierbach; and in the suburbs: Leimen, Dossenheim). Some dorms with a limited number of rooms (Europahaus) are located in the old centre, but it is very difficult to get a room there.

In most of the dorms, you can find flats for one, two or more people. They are on average cheaper compared to private flats. You can have a look at the website: www.studentenwerk.uni-heidelberg.de, under the section “wohnen” which means “living”.

To apply for a room in one of the university dorms you need to be registered at the university, which may not be a quick process (see further chapters). For further information about dorms: Tel: 0 62 21 / 54 542706, E-Mail: wohnen@stw.uni-heidelberg.de

2.4 Setting up your flat

If you get a room in a shared flat, usually the main settings (electricity, telephone, and so on) have already been taken care of. If you get your own flat, you have to take care of these issues. Different contracts may or may not include additional costs, such as electricity, water, heating, television, etc. Ask your landlord which services are already included; for those which are not included, you have to start your own contract.

2.4.1 Electricity, Water, Heating

You have to choose a company which will provide you the service and make a contract with them. There are several private companies, and there is the “Stadtwerke Heidelberg” (Municipal Service), located on Kurfürsten-Anlage, close to the main station. In general, you can make a cumulative contract, including all the services you need. In general, they ask you to pay a certain amount per month at the beginning; then after some months they check your average monthly load and may modify your monthly costs. At the end of the year they always check whether you paid more or less than what you consumed and you will get some money back or have to pay more.

2.4.2 Telephone and Internet

There are several companies providing many different services and offers, with or without flatrates (one price with unlimited usage). They all have shops located in the central area of the city. You can have a look at the different shops and choose which company is the most convenient for your needs.

2.4.3 Radio, Television

If you own a radio or television, you have to pay a tax which is called GEZ (even if you do not use it). You can find the form to pay this tax at the post office (see below). If you have cable television, you have to pay an additional fee; it is sometimes included in the additional costs of the flat.

As an owner of a television set and/or radio (including a car radio) and/or PC sound card, video/TV software, you are required to register and pay a quarterly user fee (“*Rundfunkbeitrag*”). There are penalties if caught not paying it. For any number of radios, TV's, tablets or computers with TV/ sound cards in one household, you will have to pay €2.50 quarterly.

Applications to register your TV, radio or computer (for a household or company) can be downloaded at the Rundfunkbeitrag website: https://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/formulare/index_ger.html

2.4.4 Post offices

The main post offices are located at: Sofienstrasse, very close to Bismarckplatz (central area), Kurfürsten-Anlage 62 (very close to the main station) and Universitätsplatz.

2.4.5 Things that may sound weird – but are not!

Some things, which here are absolutely normal, may sound weird to you because things work differently in your country.

It can happen that in the flat there is no washing machine, and maybe there is not even place to put one, if you want to buy it. Some apartment blocks have a shared laundry in the basement, with washing and drying machines for which you have to pay a few euros. If there is no washing machine in your flat nor block, there are several laundry shops where you can do the laundry yourself.

Unfurnished flats in Germany may be completely empty, without light fittings or a kitchen (cupboards/sink/stove). For many contracts (rent, electricity, telephone, tv, etc) money can be directly taken from your bank account. You have to give them your bank details and sign a paper.

2.5 Transportation to and in Heidelberg

2.5.1 Traveling by plane

The nearest airports to HD are

Frankfurt (Main): One of the most important airports in Germany providing all international connections. Going there by train takes approx. 1 hour, usually one has to change in Mannheim. The Lufthansa Airport Shuttle needs approximately an hour and goes every hour from morning to evening (<http://frankfurt-airport-shuttles.de/en/home-2/>) There are additional transfer services like TLS.

Stuttgart: Many international connections and also low-cost airlines. Trains take ca. 40mins to Stuttgart main station and then you can use the S-Bahn which takes another 30mins.

Hahn-Airport (Frankfurt/Hahn): Small airport (not near Frankfurt!) where Ryanair offers low-cost flights. There is the Hahn Express bus leaving from the main train station HD taking 2h. (https://www.hahn-airport.de/default.aspx?menu=by_bus&cc=en).

Baden-Airpark (Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden): Small airport Ryanair serves. The Hahn Express also provides a bus there taking 1h30 (https://www.hahn-airport.de/default.aspx?menu=by_bus&cc=en).

City Airport Mannheim: small airport in Mannheim that serves a few destinations inside Germany.

2.5.2 Traveling by train

From the HD main train station (Hauptbahnhof) you get all kinds of train connections. The company that generally provides all train services is Deutsche Bahn (DB). On the website www.bahn.de you find the dropdown view “Deutsch” which should lead you to the English version.

If you travel often by train you can buy “Bahncard 25” or “Bahncard 50”. Bahncard 25 offers you 25% discount in any train ticket even if the ticket is in an early-booking offer. Bahncard 50 offers 50% discount on the original price of the ticket. There are also a lot of offers if you book early, if you are travelling with more people or during the weekend. More info you can get from the website of Deutsche Bahn.

If you already have the semester ticket then you can use it to travel with the regional train or the S-Bahn in a region around Heidelberg. This region is quite big, so each time you travel around check if you are covered with the semester ticket. The most popular destination covered by the semester ticket is Mannheim but you will find a lot of nice places to visit around Heidelberg.

In HD the S-Bahn is a regional train system that provides fast connections to outer areas of HD and reaches as far as Kaiserslautern, Karlsruhe etc. The connections are included in the DB system.

2.5.3 Local public transport

The VRN is the regional public transport syndicate. Searches can be done on www.rnv-online.de or www.vrn.de, where flags link to international forms.

One of the places where you can buy tickets and get information is at the service center at the Hauptbahnhof (main station). There are many tobacco shops, newspaper stands that also sell tickets. If you are enrolled at the Heidelberg University, you can buy the Semesterticket, which allows you to use the buses, trams (including the Bergbahn to Königstuhl) and regional trains (S-Bahn, R, RE, not valid for: EC, IC, ICE) in a fairly large region around HD for one semester (six months).



The prize is 175,00 Euros (March 2020). You can get the Semesterticket even if you did not receive your University ID card yet, but you have to display (and get a stamp on) the enrollment document you get when registering as a student at Heidelberg University (you should ask during the registering process which is the right document to use). Later you can display the stamp on it again and they will also put the stamp on your University ID card, which is the normal place.

The *VRN-Semesterticket* can be shown on a Smartphone through the VRN-Ticket-App of the Deutsche Bahn. The Semesterticket is only valid in conjunction with your student ID, so please always take your ID with you! The ticket is not transferable.

If not enrolled, you can purchase a monthly ticket for approximately 76,80 Euros (March 2020), but the Bergbahn is not included in this.

Science Bus

If you are going to work at one of the institutes on the hill, you will need to take the science bus 30 to go to work. The bus leaves from Altstadt (in the old town), Universitätsplatz every hour (7:27am to 7:27 pm) and takes 8 minutes to get to HITS and 13 minutes to get to LSW and 15 minutes to MPIA.

Bergbahn / Funicular

The Heidelberg funicular railway is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the town. It starts at Kornmarkt in the old town and runs via the Castle (Schloss) station as far as Molkenkur. From there you can continue with one of the oldest electric funicular railways to the Königstuhl, the town's highest point at more than 550 metres. The fee for a return ticket (old town-Königstuhl-old town) is 14 Euro.



With the Semesterticket you can take the Bergbahn for free.

2.6 Car Sharing

The principle of Car sharing is simple: Individuals gain the benefits of a private car without the costs and responsibilities of ownership. Instead of owning one or more vehicles, a household accesses a fleet of vehicles on an as-needed basis. Car sharing may be thought of as organized short-term car rental. For further information, please go to: <http://www.stadtmobil.de/english/>

2.7 Bikes

Having a bike in Heidelberg is very useful. Bikes are a fast, practical way to get around the city year-round. Bike shops are prevalent in Heidelberg, offering all types of bikes and accessories for a broad spectrum of prices. For around town, a simple city bike would work fine, and there are several bike shops that specialize in second hand bikes. In the downtown area, you can find Radhaus on Nadlerstrasse and Radhof Bergheim at Bergheimer Strasse 101. Radhof also has a self-repair work-station. There are several shops along Rohrbacher Strasse that sell new bikes and gear. Another shop with used bikes is Madame Velo, close to the main train station. Check the opening hours before you go there (<http://www.madame-velo.de/>). In Germany, your bike has to be equipped with functioning lights and brakes.

Bike Rental in Heidelberg

VRNnextbike is a regional system, which means that you can pick up a bike in Heidelberg and return it to an official location in Mannheim for example. Once registered with VRNnextbike, you can use all bike sharing systems operated by nextbike – worldwide. You have to sign up first, send nextbike the identification number of the bicycle you would like to use, via app, at the station terminal or via the hotline. You will then receive a code with which you can open the combination lock of the bike. Return your VRNnextbike to the bicycle stand at one of the rental stations. Go to: <http://www.vrnnextbike.de/it/heidelberg/>



2.8 Sports

If you wish to do some sports, there is a large offer at the University sport centre. All courses are free for students, apart from some special courses, for which you have to pay (but still very cheap with respect to private sport centres).

If you are registered at the university, you only need to show your university ID card to enter; if you are not registered, you can ask the secretary of your institute to write you a letter to say that you are employed there, and then you can get a card from the University sport centre for with a special price which is valid for one semester and allows you to do all the sports offered. We are not certain about the prices. For further information an online registration: www.issw.uni-heidelberg.de

Chapter 3

3 Financial issues

3.1 Grant versus contract

Doctoral Grant:

The Max Planck Society gives grants to talented junior scientists. They are considered awards for their scientific studies to date. A doctoral grant allows the doctoral student to carry out independent research for his or her thesis at a Max Planck Institute. The doctoral students are not employed by the institute, which means that there are no requirements for attendance, and vacation and travel need not be approved. Furthermore, participation in institute activities is not compulsory. The grant is an “allowance for living costs” and, as such, is not subject to taxes or social security deductions. Students receiving the grant must therefore take out their own health insurance. We also recommend purchasing personal liability insurance. The Max Planck Society group accident insurance covers all grant holders.

Since July 2012 the monthly grant rates consist of a basic amount of 1,365 Euros.

Funding contract:

The funding contract for doctoral students is signed directly with the institute. Besides the research conducted as part of the individual doctoral studies, it is also expected that the student devote some of his/her time to work for the institute. Moreover, the student is bound by the directives of the institute: he or she must be present at the institute during certain core hours. Vacation and work trips must be approved by institute management. Half of the average weekly work time is considered “paid work”, which is remunerated at half the wage rate stipulated for category 13 in the Collective Wage Agreement for Government Service Workers (TVÖD). Since doctoral students with funding contracts are considered employees, their remuneration is subject to taxes and social insurance deductions. The institute will pay the employer’s part of health, nursing care and unemployment insurance and pensions; the employee’s part to be paid by the student is deducted automatically from wages. In addition, the student is insured by the institute against work-related accidents and occupational illnesses.

(Reference:)

3.2 Taxes

If you are on a contract you usually have to pay taxes which are automatically deducted from your salary. How much you pay is listed in detail in the letter you get every month from your institute.

At the beginning of each year, you get a letter stating how much you earned during the last year, how much taxes you payed and so on. This is the time to do the “Einkommensteuererklärung”, the tax report. After giving the tax report to the Finanzamt (tax office) you usually get some of the taxes you payed back. The exact amount of this refund of course differs from one person to another, but as a rule of thumb the first 8,500 Euros of your income. Get advice on how to fill out a German tax report from your fellow students.

3.3 Pension fund

If you are on a contract you automatically pay part of your income to the “Deutsche Rentenversicherung”, the German pension fund. You can see the exact numbers on your monthly income statement. If you leave Germany after your PhD, and especially for foreigners from non-EU countries, it may be possible to ask for the money back from the pension fund. Since this is usually a substantial amount of money you should check whether or not this is possible.

3.4 Liability insurance

It might be a good idea to get liability insurance, just in case. Normally, they are rather cheap and might help you in case you get into trouble (e.g., flooding, explosions and fire in your apartment, or when you break or damage things and/or people). One possibility might be: <http://www.huk24.de>.

Chapter 4

4 Working and studying

4.1 IMPRS & non-IMPRS curriculum and requirements

The IMPRS-HD membership is suggested for a PhD in an astronomy-related topic in Heidelberg. IMPRS-HD membership is voluntary and the hope of IMPRS is that it will be beneficial for your PhD education. If you are member, you and your supervisor are expected to obey the IMPRS regulations.

The Department for Physics & Astronomy of Heidelberg University has defined some general rules for PhD students (Promotionsordnung", in German) which can be obtained on the Department's web-pages (see below). In addition to the Department's conditions for acceptance, IMPRS has some further requirements, discussed below.

Since 2007 the department of physics and astronomy is granted with the Heidelberg Graduate School for Fundamental Physics which now acts as a kind of umbrella for several branches of physics.

The general agreement is that IMPRS-HD is an independent part of the HGSFP implying that IMPRS-HD students are members of the HGSFP as well, and that a graduate school education in astronomy/astrophysics in Heidelberg is not possible outside IMPRS-HD.

4.2 PhD requirements of the Department for Physics & Astronomy

There are two principal options to obtain your doctoral degree:

- (1) a PhD examination in Physics, or
- (2) a PhD examination in Astronomy.

However, your final degree and also the degree certificate will be the same (!). You will be awarded with the doctoral degree "Dr. rer. nat" (thus, in natural sciences). On your degree certificate the title of your PhD thesis is mentioned. What is different is (i) the topics of your final examination and (iii) the examination committee.

Option (1) does not provide a new qualification, as the physics degree has been granted already with your Masters. However, you have to attend a couple of lectures or seminars to advance your knowledge in the field. This could e.g. be achieved by attending the Graduate Days of the department for physics.

Option (2) is rather unique in Germany. It formally provides you with the qualification of an "Astronomer". Option (2) therefore requires following the Astronomy PhD curriculum ("Studienplan Astronomie"). It is expected for your final examination that you have a broad and deep knowledge of astronomy - a natural requirement for your qualification as an astronomer.

When you apply for acceptance as a PhD student at the Department you have to declare which route you like to follow (Physics or Astronomy). It is in principle possible to change your decision later.

There might still different versions of the "Promotionsordnung" around. You should always ask the Department for the latest version of the PhD rules and have a look in the Promotionsordnung, especially in "zu §6 Abs. 2" in the appendix.

http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/courses/download/examination_rules_regulations.html

When you sign your application for acceptance as a PhD student at the department, you also state that you will prepare yourself properly for the final disputation (for option 1 and for option 2).

The requirements of the HGSFP are mostly compatible with the IMPRS requirements. A potential, but unlikely conflict may appear if an IMPRS-HD student arrives with a complete astronomy education and all courses attended so far are accepted for the IMPRS-HD education. In that case, IMPRS-HD would not require attendance to any other lecture, but the HGSFP requires 16 hours per week of course attendance distributed over the PhD.

As said, such a case is unlikely since a student will naturally attend some lectures just because of his/her interest. In addition to the IMPRS seminar attendance and a summer school the 16 hours will easily be reached.

4.2.1 Doctoral degree examination in astronomy

If you go for option (2) a thorough knowledge is required in all fields of astronomy. This is covered by the 4 advanced lecture courses (“Kursvorlesungen”):

- Instruments and observational methods
- Stellar astronomy and astrophysics
- Galaxies
- Cosmology

These courses build up on the basic lecture courses (“Grundvorlesungen”):

- Introduction to Astronomy I and II
- Astronomical Lab Course (“Astronomisches Praktikum”)
- Theoretical Astrophysics

In addition to that, you should give (at least) two seminars: one “normal” seminar (“Astronomisches Seminar” or “Fortgeschrittenenseminar”, maybe on your specific research topic), the other one an advanced seminar (“Oberseminar”, literature seminar).

When you finally hand in your thesis and register for the final examination/disputation, the department requires seeing your course certificates for the two seminars and the lab course. If you have already done an astronomy lab course somewhere else, you should ask the department to accept the previous lab course instead (do this early enough). The department does not check attendance at the other lecture courses.

4.2.2 Doctoral degree examination in Physics

If you go for a PhD examination in Physics there is no detailed plan of studies as it is for Astronomy. You are, however, obliged to attend a certain number of lectures per semester improving and deepening your education in Physics. You are free to decide which lectures are most important/ interesting for you and your PhD work. You should discuss your curriculum with your thesis committee.

If you do Astrophysics related thesis work, the final examination/disputation will probably cover astronomical topics as well. One of your examiners will be an astronomer besides the three physicists. Questions during the exam will probably go deeper into the Physics background.

4.2.3 Teaching obligation

As a PhD student at the Department of Physics and Astronomy you also have the obligation to support the university by teaching. This is not detailed in the “Promotionsordnung”, but is an additional condition defined by the Department that you “have” to sign when you register.

The teaching duties are counted in units of a “Semesterdeputat” corresponding to either

- 2 SWS (2 hours per week during the semester) when supervising e.g. a two-hour lecture exercise during the semester plus preparation/ corrections, or
- 6-8 SWS (2 afternoons each 3-4 hours) lab course during the semester, or
- Similarly a lab course as a block course (4 weeks) between the semesters (“Ferienpraktikum”).

Note that two “Deputate” is the minimum requirement that you have to prove when you register for your thesis examination.

The actual amount of teaching duty required depends on the institute you are joining. The reason is that your institute may be required to do a certain amount of teaching and your director may ask you to help his/her institute.

The current rules say that

A. If you do your PhD at the ZAH, you should be ready to teach three “Deputate”. Again, how much you actually teach depends also on the teaching load your institute is supposed to deliver. Note that on your application form for acceptance, the number of Deputate is specified.

B. If you do your PhD at MPIK, you have to teach two “Deputate” during your PhD.

C. If you do your PhD at MPIA, you have to teach two “Deputate” during your PhD. You could do this within astronomy related exercises or lab courses but also in the physics area.

When you finally register for the thesis disputation you have to prove participation in teaching, in German: “Bei der Anmeldung zur Disputation ist die Mitwirkung in der Lehre nachzuweisen”. Independent of teaching duty at your institute, when you finally register for your disputation the department requires “at least two Deputate” (only). In German: “Unabhängig von den instituts-internen Regelungen ... ist von ... jedem Doktoranden ... zumindest 2 einsemestrige Lehrtätigkeiten nachzuweisen“.

There are several options for teaching:

For example, the MPIA offers two astronomy lab courses in the advanced lab program (“FP2”) for undergraduate physics students:

- FP 30: CCD photometry in modern astronomy
- FP 36: Wave-front analysis with a Shack-Hartmann sensor

You may supervise the astronomy lab course (which you have to do yourself beforehand) at the LSW. The MPIK has similar (nuclear physics related) lab courses in the advanced lab program for undergraduate physics students. You may also do a tutorial for one of the lecture exercises for undergraduate physics students (e.g. lab quantum mechanics, general relativity etc.). You may also do a tutorial for one of the basic undergraduate physics lab course (“FPI”). Topics include “Electronics”, “Sound”, “Microscope”, etc..

4.3 Additional requirements by IMPRS-HD

Membership in IMPRS-HD implies certain obligations in addition to what is “required” by the faculty for the traditional (i.e. non-IMPRS) PhD student. Essentially there are three add-ons:

- The thesis committee
- The IMPRS seminar
- The IMPRS curriculum

4.3.1 Thesis committee

The IMPRS thesis committee supervises the PhD project as a whole, i.e. it monitors the progress of the PhD project itself, but also the scientific development of the PhD student.

The existence of a thesis committee for each student is an essential ingredient in the IMPRS program, defined as a condition not only by our local IMPRS-HD, but by the Max Planck Society itself.

The thesis committee is expected to convene at least once a year to meet the student for discussion and review. A half page (informal) report should be written for the thesis committee members and the student and a copy should go to IMPRS-HD for reference.

The committee evaluates the status of the student both concerning his/her PhD project AND his/her overall education. The committee is thus able to decide on details of the student’s curriculum, if necessary. This is particularly important in the case of conflicts between the project’s time schedule and the lecture schedule.

In addition to the thesis supervisor, each thesis committee should consist of two (independent) scientists familiar with the research topic (this is different to the MPIA PAC for e.g.). One of them could be a colleague from the same institute, the other one must come from a different institute. Colleagues from institutions outside Heidelberg are welcome; however, IMPRS cannot reimburse travel costs for their trips to Heidelberg.

Further information about the thesis committee could be found on the IMPRS-HD webpage.

4.3.2 **IMPRS seminar**

The IMPRS seminar is intended to provide a central meeting opportunity for all IMPRS students in order to exchange ideas and experience and to provide an opportunity for students from different institutes to socialize.

During the first year, the IMPRS seminar is held weekly during the semester term. In the winter semester, the IMPRS seminar is an “Oberseminar”, i.e. literature seminar, discussing current research highlights or fundamental/classical papers of the literature. In the summer semester, the IMPRS seminar is an advanced seminar (“Fortgeschrittenenseminar”) with students presenting their on-going thesis project.

By attending both the first-year IMPRS seminars you fulfill the Faculty seminar requirements.

In the second year the IMPRS seminar is held as a workshop seminar over a few days (retreat) and an update on the thesis progress is presented.

4.3.3 **IMPRS-HD curriculum**

The general experience with final PhD examinations over the years has proven that some PhD students appear to the final exam rather unprepared. They might have done a great job on their PhD research project; however, they may have concentrated solely on that to the exclusion of general astrophysical knowledge. The results are a difficult examination.

Therefore, IMPRS-HD decided that IMPRS students must attend certain lecture courses to gain a broad foundation in astronomy. Attendance is sufficient for IMPRS. Note that since attendance certificates are not issued, it is actually difficult for IMPRS/HGSFP to approve attendance.

IMPRS students do not need to pass the final exam for the lecture, only the course attendance is essential. It is also not needed (but encouraged) to attend the exercises of the lecture course. When handing in for the PhD examination, an informal list of the attended courses that is signed by you and your supervisor is sufficient.

If a student can prove that he/she has attended certain lectures already, this will be accepted by IMPRS. It is not required to repeat the course. Approval could be obtained by showing your past transcripts and should be agreed upon by the thesis committee.

Lectures in astronomy/astrophysics are offered in English.

In the end you will receive an “IMPRS certificate” besides your PhD certificate, stating that you have successfully followed the IMPRS graduate program, and listing your thesis committee and all courses/schools/etc. you have attended.

IMPRS-HD Astronomy Curriculum

The IMPRS curriculum in Astronomy is composed of the following lectures:

- Introductory Astronomy block course. This is offered to all new students before the start of their first winter semester and is composed of three weeks of full day lectures and exercises.
- Theoretical Astrophysics: A general overview of the main topics in Astrophysics. This is offered as a semester course every winter term.
- Advanced course lectures: Offered as semester courses periodically on a 1-year cycle and also (anti-cyclic) as block courses before or after the semester.
 - Galaxies
 - Cosmology
 - Observational Methods
 - Stellar Astronomy and Astrophysics

Of those course lectures an IMPRS-HD student has to attend at least two courses, but two outside of his/her research field.

The curriculum also includes attendance of at least one specialized course, i.e. a lecture more focused on a specific topic, further away from the student's research field. Several different courses of this kind are offered every semester by the university. Participation at a dedicated summer school of your choice can also be considered as a "specialized course".

One has to meet the requirements set by the Faculty (astronomy lab course (Praktikum), two seminar talks and teaching duty).

Every year IMPRS organizes a summer school on a specific astronomical/astrophysical topic. The attendance of this school is not mandatory, though it is warmly encouraged at least once during your PhD. For more information refer to:

IMPRS Physics Curriculum

If you go for a PhD examination in Physics (option 2 above), you also have to follow the same astronomy program as an IMPRS student. Thus, the IMPRS curriculum in physics/astrophysics is composed of the following lectures:

- Introductory astronomy block course (see above).
- Theoretical astrophysics (see above)
- IMPRS seminar (see above)
- Advanced courses and specialized courses defined by the student and his/her thesis committee considering their relevance to the PhD project. In particular, the advanced astronomy lectures – Stellar Astronomy and Astrophysics, Galaxies, Cosmology, Observational Methods are mandatory as well.

(The only exception is that you do not have to do the astronomy lab course that is required by the university for astronomy examination students).

4.3.4 HGSFP curriculum requirements

Since IMPRS-HD students are members of the HGSFP, the curriculum rules of HGSFP apply also for the IMPRS students. The general HGSFP curriculum requirement is that a PhD student within HGSFP has to attend 16 SWS (semester units) during his/her PhD. These can be seminars, lectures, journal clubs, summer schools, or the Graduate Days of the HGSFP.

Usually, this requirement is easily met by fulfilling the IMPRS-HD conditions. In the unlikely case that the thesis committee of an IMPRS-HD student decides that the student does not need to attend any lecture since he/she has attended all lectures before, a conflict of rules may arise. However, this is maybe not the typical student for whom IMPRS-HD is intended and such a student may graduate outside of IMPRS-HD.

After each semester the HGSFP requires students to fill in an online form with the courses they have attended that semester. As pointed out above, a signed, informal list of course can be handed in when registering for the final exam (if you "forgot" to fill the online form).

4.4 Admission to Heidelberg University

Admission to the IMPRS-HD

Applicants who applied via the IMPRS-HD application procedure and have been offered a position will be asked formally to join IMPRS-HD upon arrival. Christian Fendt will ask you and your supervisor to sign a membership form.

Admission to the Heidelberg University

Admission for PhD studies involves a little bureaucracy. The following steps are involved:

- Acceptance to the IMPRS-HD
- Acceptance as PhD student by the Department of Physics and Astronomy
- Enrollment at Heidelberg University

4.4.1 Acceptance by the Department of Physics and Astronomy

ALL IMPRS students have to register at the Department for Physics. If you are accepted as an IMPRS fellow, registration at the Department has to be done at the secretariat of the Heidelberg Graduate School for Physics (HGSFP). Only with that registration, you can be accepted as PhD student at the Heidelberg University. Further information can be found at the IMPRS and HGSFP homepage. Registration for Ph.D. has to be done at the secretariat of HGSFP:

Graduate School of Fundamental Physics
Im Neuenheimer Feld 226
room 02.304
69120 Heidelberg

Please fill out the form that can be found on the website of the HGSFP and bring it with you for registration. Once the Department of Physics has accepted you (after about one week), you will receive an acceptance letter from the Department.

What you need:

- the application form “Antrag auf Annahme als Doktorand”
- letter of acceptance from the doctoral supervisor, incl. the signatures from you, your supervisor, and (part of) your thesis committee
- your MSc and BSc degree certificates, or equiv. (original + copy)
- proof a completed university degree (Master’s thesis (original + copy))
- an English abstract of your thesis (if the thesis is not written in German or English)
- curriculum vitae

Now that once you are accepted at the Department, you can then enroll at Heidelberg University which takes place at the central administration building. The enrolment at the Heidelberg University is the last step of administrative work for German students or students from the EU and EEA states. All registration and enrolment materials and more information about physics/astronomy PhD studies at Heidelberg University can be found on the website of the Heidelberg Graduate School for Physics.

Students (no Germans and members of EU and EEA) should immediately go to the Local Foreigners’ Office (Ausländeramt) to apply for a residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel) in order to receive your enrollment certificate.

Further steps for Non-German citizenship after admission to the Faculty

If you are of non-German citizenship and have a work contract (50% or more, and a work visa you have to go to the Akademisches Auslandsamt in the same building. There, you will receive a document (“Enrolment: Residence permit for study purposes at Heidelberg University for a certain course of studies”) which has to be signed and stamped by the Local Foreigners’ Office (Ausländeramt/ Zuwanderungsbehörde) stating that the student will receive a residence permit once they have enrolled at the University. Also hand in the acceptance letter from the Faculty.

To complete your enrolment, please hand the signed document signed by the Local Foreigners’ Office (Ausländeramt) back to the central administration building (Serviceportal-Studierendenadministration). You will receive a preliminary enrollment certificate (by postal mail), that you have to show the Local Foreigners’ Office (Ausländeramt/ Zuwanderungsbehörde) in order to get your residence permit.

After the registration at the Department, German students or students from the EU and EEA states can then enroll at the Heidelberg University if they want to. Enrolment has some benefits: These benefits include a student ID card that can work at the dining halls/mensas around campus, a student ID card that gives you free access to the public transportation on weekends/ holidays and after 7 pm on weekdays, the possibility to buy a Semesterticket, and other benefits that are mentioned later on.

4.4.2 Enrollment at Heidelberg University

Enrollment at the University takes place at the central administration building (Serviceportal-Studierendenadministration) downtown Heidelberg (close to "Universitätsplatz"):

Central Administration Office
Seminarstrasse 2
69117 Heidelberg

The following applies to students with a national visa:

- For enrollment, you need to fill in the application form for “enrollment” (Immatrikulation)
- The office will also give you a document that has to be signed and stamped by the Local Foreigners’ Office (Ausländeramt) stating that the student will receive a residence permit/visa once they have enrolled at the University.
- You will receive a preliminary enrollment certificate (by postal mail), that you have to show to the visa authorities.
- To complete your enrollment, please hand the document signed by the Local Foreigners’ Office (Ausländeramt) back to the central administration building (Serviceportal-Studierendenadministration) in order to receive your enrollment certificate.
- After full enrollment you have to go to the visa office again to pick up your visa.

For the Heidelberg University you need to provide THE SAME documents that you already showed the Department. This includes original documents and copies.

What you need for enrollment (Immatrikulation)

- letter of admission to the University (Zulassungsbescheid)
- enrolment form "Admission and Immatriculation at the University of Heidelberg"
- a passport photo
- the University admission form you had filled out for the HGSFP and which was returned to you with the signature of the Dean
- your high school certificate/diploma (original + copy).
- your MSc and BSc degree certificates, or equiv. (original + copy)
- the transcripts of your studies (original + copy)
- your Master's thesis (original + copy)
- an English abstract of your thesis (if the thesis is not written in German or English)
- a photograph (passport sized)
- proof of health insurance
- evidence of your funding situation
- about 171,75 Euro (as of 2020) to pay your registration fee
- your passport incl. your new visa

Once you are registered and enrolled at Heidelberg University and have received your student ID card (Studierendenausweis), you may go and buy your "Semesterticket" (175 Euro as of March 2020) for public transport in the Heidelberg area and use all university services (refectories, accommodation service, email, etc.).

4.4.3 Benefits of being enrolled to the University:

Student ID card (Studierendenausweis)

The student ID card is used for the following: University computer centre and library services, Payment card for student services (cafeteria, copier, etc.) With your student ID card, you can also use the public transport FOR FREE after 7 pm on weekdays, and during all days during weekends and holidays. You do not need a Semesterticket for this. This benefit is included by just paying your registration fee (171,75 Euro) for the semester and being a regular student at the University. In case a transport inspector shows up, you only have to show your Student ID card.

Semesterticket

The Semesterticket for the transport lasts exactly for 6 months, and starts counting from the month you buy it. It is not bound to the "semester" itself, but to the day you buy it. When using the public transport, it is important to always bring both your semester ticket AND your student ID card with you. These two things together allow you to use the public transport. You have to re-register every semester at the University to continue being enrolled as a student (*Rückmeldung*). This means you have to pay the semester fee again, and re-validate your student ID card for it to continue working. It can be done online:

4.5 German courses

There are several German courses at different levels offered free of charge to students. Courses are available at ARI, MPIA, and MPIK, but you are not restricted to take the course offered at your institution. Ask Christian Fendt for the times and locations of the IMPRS German classes that are appropriate for your level or see the webpage. Course textbooks can be found at local bookstores or online. If you prefer (maybe because it fits your time schedule better), there are also many language schools in town which offer cheap German courses. Here we can suggest two:

A. The Max Weber Haus, which belongs to the university, has a very large offer of courses, covering all levels. For information:

Max-Weber-Haus, Ziegelhauser Landstrasse 17, 69120 Heidelberg
Tel.: +49 (0) 62 21/54 - 59 49; Fax: +49 (0) 62 21/54 - 59 56
e-mail: sekretariat@isz.uni-heidelberg.de

B. There is also another large school, the "Volkshochschule", which offers many courses (language, arts, and so on), among which are several German courses for foreigners. Students have a discount

price. For information: For information: www.vhs-heidelberg.de
vhs Heidelberg, Bergheimer Strasse 76, 69115 Heidelberg
Telefon: 0 62 21/91 19-11, Fax: 0 62 21/16 51 33
e-mail:

4.6 Problems, pressure and anguishes

If you feel like talking to somebody not in the institute about your fears, problems and anguishes there are office hours and a telephone hot-line of the “psychologische Beratungsstelle” of the Heidelberg University <http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/studium/beratung/pbs.html>

In each institute there is somebody that you can talk with if you have problems related with women equality at work. Please inform yourself about this at the administration.

In each institute there is (should be) a person you may contact in case of suspicion of scientific misconduct. This might concern problems related to publications, but also behavior to you as a scientist. That (elected) person is called “Ombudsmann”. He/she acts strictly confidentially and may help clarify things.

For other problems as legal issues with worker’s rights or, say, social misconduct (harassment at work, stalking, pressure by employer etc.) there is the (elected) “Betriebsrat” (worker’s council) who will help you and/or inform you.

Chapter 5

5 The IMPRS institutes

5.1 ARI - Astronomisches Rechen-Institut

The ARI (Institute for Astronomical Computing) was originally founded in Berlin in 1700 with a letter patent from Fredrick I of Prussia to provide the official calendar for the kingdom and continued this duty well into the 20th century. During this time the ARI also became a major astronomical library and the center for cataloging astronomical abstracts. The ARI was moved from Berlin to Heidelberg in 1945 to keep the calendar records in the western sphere of influence. The ARI was a state institute until 2005 when it joined the University of Heidelberg as part of the Zentrum für Astronomie Heidelberg (ZAH) along with the Institut für Theoretische Astrophysik (ITA) and the Landessternwarte Königstuhl. The ARI is located in Neuenheim on the North side of the Neckar.

Astronomisches Rechen-Institut, Mönchhofstraße 12-14, 69129 Heidelberg, Germany. ARI	website:
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5.2 ITA - Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics

The Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics of the University of Heidelberg originated in 1976 from the two already existing sections for theoretical astrophysics. It contains several research groups that attend to a broad spectrum of topics from many areas of astrophysics. Since January 1st, 2005 ITA is part of the “Zentrum für Astronomie Heidelberg” (ZAH) which also incorporates the “Astronomisches Rechen-Institut” (ARI) and the “Landessternwarte” (LSW).

ITA, downtown Heidelberg, Albert-Ueberle-Straße 2, close to the Philosophenweg Other parts: ”Villa Bergius” on the other side of the street, Albert-Ueberle-Straße 3-5. Physics Institute, Philosophenweg 12 Institute for Theoretical Physics, Philosophenweg 16, 19. ITA	website:
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5.3 LSW - Landessternwarte Königstuhl

The observatory at Königstuhl was inaugurated on 20th June 1898 by the grand duke Friedrich I. of Baden. Since January 1st, 2005, the Landessternwarte Königstuhl (LSW) - together with the Astronomisches Rechen-Institut (ARI) and the Institut für Theoretische Astrophysik (ITA) - is part of the “Zentrum für Astronomie” (ZAH) of Heidelberg University.

At the Landessternwarte there are a lot of historical domes located. The most famous one is the more than one hundred year’s old Bruce telescope. This refractor was built in 1900 and has a focal length of about 400 cm. It is still used for teaching and public guiding tours as well as for the advanced astronomy lab course.

The LSW is located on top of the Königstuhl in Heidelberg. Landessternwarte, Königstuhl 12, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany LSW website: https://www.lsw.uni-heidelberg.de/
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5.4 MPIA - Max Planck Institute for Astronomy

MPIA has two major departments: The Planet and Star Formation Department and the Department for Galaxies and Cosmology. Each department has its own director. The Max Planck Institute for Astronomy is

located on top of the Königstuhl, about 6 km outside the center of Heidelberg.

Max-Planck Institute for Astronomy, Königstuhl 17, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany.
MPIA

website:

5.5 MPIK - Max Planck Institute for Nuclear Physics (MPI für Kernphysik)

The MPIK has been founded in 1958 under the leadership of Wolfgang Gentner. Its precursor was the Institute for Physics at the MPI for Medical Research led by Walther Bothe from 1934 to 1957. The initial scientific goals were basic research in nuclear physics and the application of nuclear-physics methods concerning questions in the physics and chemistry of the cosmos. Since 1966 the MPIK is led by a board of directors. Today, the activities concentrate on the two inter- disciplinary research fields: Astro-particle Physics (Crossroads of Particle Physics and Astrophysics) and Quantum Dynamics (Many-Body Dynamics of Atoms and Molecules).

The MPIK is located half way to the top of the Königstuhl in Heidelberg.

Max Planck Institute for Nuclear Physics, Saupfercheckweg 1, 69117 Heidelberg

MPIK

website:

<https://www.mpi-hd.mpg.de/mpi/start/>

5.6 HITS - Heidelberg Institute for Theoretical Studies

The Theoretical Astrophysics Group at HITS has been established 2010. Numerical simulations of cosmic structure formation, as carried out in the Theoretical Astrophysics (TAP) group, are one of the best tools for understanding our quite strange Universe, in which most of the material consists of unknown "Dark Matter", and a mysterious "Dark Energy" field drives an accelerated expansion of space. The work focuses on the formation and evolution of galaxies, supermassive black holes, stars, and planets. A major goal of the group's research is to unlock the power of modern high-performance supercomputers for basic research in theoretical astrophysics. To this end, both the state-of-the art computational facilities at HITS and supercomputers in Germany and across Europe are employed.

The HITS is located close to the Heidelberg Castle.

Heidelberg Institute for Theoretical Studies, Schloss-Wolfsbrunnenweg 35, 69118 Heidelberg

HITS website: <https://www.h-its.org/de/>

Appendix A

6 Heidelberg, its neighbourhoods and suburbs

6.1 Altstadt

The old centre. On average houses and rooms are very expensive. It is very difficult to find a flat and a parking space here, a bit easier to find a room in a shared flat. There are a lot of restaurants, cafes and cinemas in the Altstadt. There is not a very large offer of supermarkets and grocery stores. Connections are very good: from Bismarckplatz you can get a bus to go everywhere, and if you work on the Königstuhl you can also consider the Bergbahn (mountain railway) to go to work instead of taking the science bus.

6.2 Bergheim, Weststadt, Neuenheim

Close to the centre (walking distance). Houses in these areas are very expensive, more or less the same as in the Altstadt. Maybe somewhere in Bergheim you can find cheaper flats. There are a lot of nice restaurants and cafes. Connection to Bismarckplatz is very good (by tram/bike it takes approx. 5-10 min).

Bergheim: very close to the main station, convenient if you need to travel a lot; very convenient for shopping because there are several supermarkets and grocery stores; maybe a bit noisy, lots of traffic. Weststadt: The area is very exclusive. Neuenheim: More peaceful than Bergheim and Weststadt. The connections to Bismarckplatz and elsewhere are a bit worse, but still ok.

6.3 Handschuhsheim

Northern part of Heidelberg. Expensive, but on average less than i) and ii). Very close to Neuenheim, but a bit less lively. Peaceful, but also enough supermarkets, shops and some good restaurants. The connection to Bismarckplatz is very good (tram/bike: approx. 10 min).

6.4 Südstadt, Rohrbach, Kirchheim

Southern parts of Heidelberg. Cheaper than the central areas. Good offer of supermarkets and grocery stores. Very few locations to go out in the evening. Connection to Bismarckplatz is good (tram/bike: approx. 15-25 min).

6.5 Boxberg, Emmertsgrund

Southern suburbs of Heidelberg. Quite cheap, but not very nice. These suburbs are located on a hill. There are no restaurants or bars. Connection to Bismarckplatz is ok (one bus, approx. 25-30 min). There is a path leading to the MPIK which takes only 5 min walking.

6.6 Wieblingen, Pfaffengrund

Very western parts of Heidelberg, industrial areas. Cheaper than the central areas, but there are no locations to go out. Connection to Bismarckplatz is good (approx. 20-25 min).

6.7 Schlierbach, Ziegelhausen

Eastern suburbs of Heidelberg. These two small villages are located close to the hills in the Neckar valley. Cheaper than the central areas. Very peaceful, still ok for supermarkets but no locations for going out. Connection to Bismarckplatz is ok (bus: approx. 25 min).

6.8 Dossenheim, Eppelheim

Small towns in the vicinity of Heidelberg. Cheaper, more peaceful, less lively than central Heidelberg. Good public transport connections to Heidelberg (approx. 30 min).

6.9 Edingen, Leimen, Neckargemünd, Plankstadt

Towns close to Heidelberg. Public transport connections to Heidelberg ok (approx. 30 min).

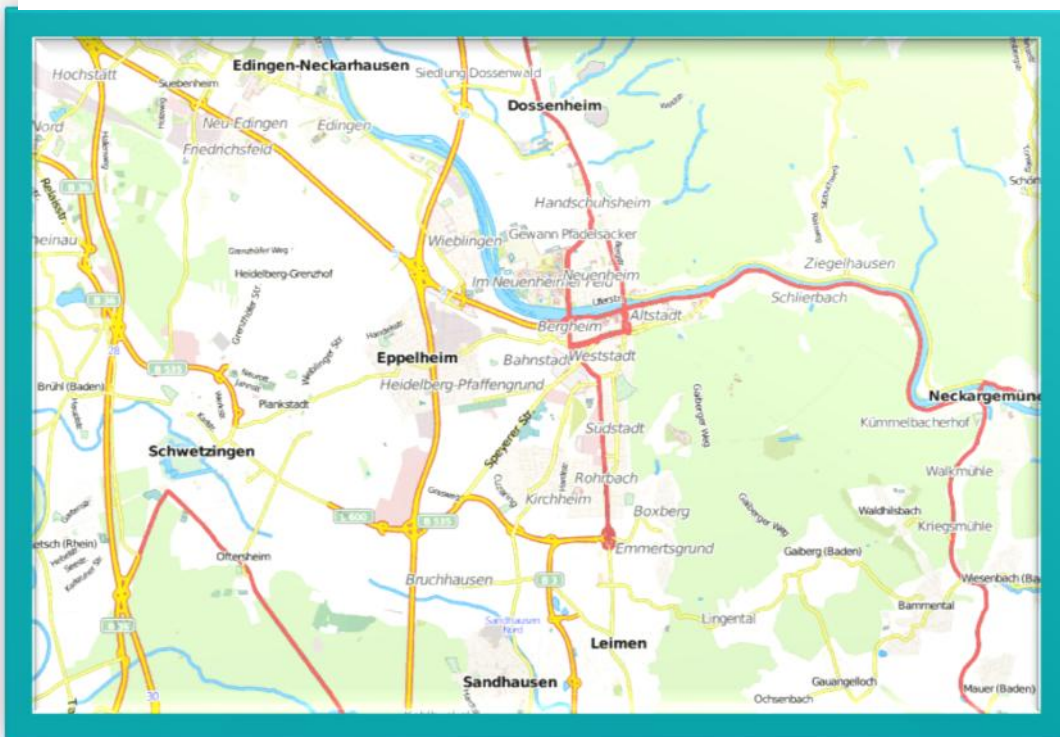
6.10 Sandhausen, Nussloch, Mückenloch, Schwetzingen, St. Leon- Rot

Villages further away from Heidelberg. You may be able to find a cheap flat, but you probably will need a car to get to the institute (public transportation to Bismarckplatz: rarely, takes at least 40 min).

Heidelberg's districts



Heidelberg's surroundings



Appendix B

7 Renting a flat: List of useful words and abbreviations

7.1 To get familiar with the websites

Angebote: offer

Gesuch: search

Suchen (suche, suchst; gesucht): to search



7.2 Types of houses

WG, Wohngemeinschaft: shared flat

2er(3er,4er...)-WG: shared flat with 2 (3,4...) people

1(2,3)ZKB: the flat has one(two, three) room(s) + kitchen + bathroom

Wohnheim: student dorm

Verbindungszimmer: room in some sort of student fraternity association

7.3 Rooms and other things

Zi (Zimmer): room

Ku (Küche): kitchen

mobl. (mobliert): there is furniture in the flat

n. mobil (nicht mobliert, unmobliert): there is no furniture in the flat

qm (m²): square meters

7.4 Costs

Miete: rent cost

NK, Nebenkosten: additional costs for water, waste removal, electricity, gas, heating...

Miete kalt (KM) means that the NK are not included in the rental fee

Miete warm (WM) means that the NK are included in the rental fee

zzgl. Nk, plus Nebenkosten (NK): additional costs are not included in the rental fee (like kalt)

inkl. NK: additional costs are included in the rental fee (like warm)

Kt, K., Kautio: deposit money you have to pay to the landlord when you move in. When you move out, you should get this money back unless you caused damage to the flat. Usually, this Kautio is approximately 1.5 times rental costs per month.

Abstand: you have to pay money for renovations or purchases done by previous tenant.

7.5 Additional costs

Strom: electricity
Heizung: heating
Wasser: water

7.6 Other facilities

Parkmöglichkeit, Garage, Stellplatz: parking place for a car
Keller: cellar
Waschmaschine (WaMa): washing machine
Trockner: clothes dryer
Spuehlmaschine: dish washer

7.7 Timescales

frei ab ... bis ... : free from ... to
ab sofort: immediately
bis unbegrenzt: indefinitely
Zwischenmiete: the flat is only temporary available for rent (see section above)

7.8 Location

Nahe... : close to...
Ruhige Lage: peaceful location

7.9 Other useful words (for WG mainly)

nur Frauen/Männer: only women/men
nur Nichtraucher: only non-smokers
Bad-Mitbenutzung: shared bathroom
Mitbewohner: person who lives in a shared flat
Zweck-WG: people share the flat only for dividing the costs
keine Zweck-WG: people share the flat and do not mind interacting with each other

Appendix C

8 Further links and addresses

- ✓ Promotionsordnung (http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/courses/download/examination_rules_regulations.html)
- ✓ Lectures in Physics & Astronomy
<http://www.physik.uni-heidelberg.de/studium/lehrveranstaltungen/vorlesungen.php>
- ✓ Department of Physics and Astronomy
Dean's Office
Im Neuenheimerfeld 226, R. 2.105t, 69120 Heidelberg-Neuenheim
Tel.: 06221/54 19546
Prüfungsamt: 06221/54 4124, Fax: 06221/59288 E-Mail:
Email: dekanat@physik.uni-heidelberg.de
<http://www.physik.uni-heidelberg.de/>
- ✓ Dezernat Internationaler Beziehungen/ International Relations Office Seminarstraße 2, 69117 Heidelberg
Tel.: 06221/54 5454
E-mail: studium@uni-heidelberg.de
<http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/courses/contact/aaa/index.html>

UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG



Appendix D

9 Useful and important telephone numbers

Last update November 2018

9.1 Emergency numbers

Non-medical

Police / Emergency: 110 (nationwide)

Fire department: 112 (nationwide)

Medical

Emergency Medical Services: 19222 (“Rote Kreuz”)

Poison Control: 0761 - 19240

Medical Emergency Service Heidelberg: 06221/116117

Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst, Alte Eppelheimer Str. 35, 69115 Heidelberg

Go there if you need medical aid after the office hours of doctors and at the weekends.

Crisis line: 0800/1110111 or 0800/1110222



Car break-down: 01802/222222 (ADAC) or 0711 530 33 88 33 (Autoclub Europa - ACE)

9.2 University

Central University Administration: 06221/54-0

Hotline concerning studying at the University of Heidelberg: 06221/545454

(Mo-Thu: 9am -4pm, Fr: 9:00am -1pm)

University – Department of Physics and Astronomy: 06221/54-19648 (Yvette Harbers)

9.3 Taxi and Pizza services

Ruftaxi: 06221/302030 or 73 90 90

Pizza-service La Fayette that delivers to the MPIA: 06221 – 164066/67

9.4 Credit card, Online Banking pins, ID card barring

EC cards, Creditcard, Cell phone, online banking: 116 116

American Express: 0800 900 940