

# FAQ ONLINE WELCOME WEEK SUMMER TERM 2020 KICK-OFF MEETING & ORGANIZING YOUR STAY AS EXCHANGE STUDENT

Link to Kick-Off Presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2f8lvBOQzs>

Link zu Facebook Group "RWTH Welcomes Internationals":

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/708655583228602/>

Download the recorded Zoom session "Organizing your Stay as Exchange Student" at: Organizing your Stay as Exchange Students: <https://gigamove.rz.rwth-aachen.de/d/id/v8ynSdwcFEgPvb> (password: ExchangeStay)

- Will I receive an email for the meeting tomorrow?

Yes, everyday, you will receive an invitation per email to the Zoom Meetings taking place on the next day as well as the link to download the presentation and the FAQ from the past meetings. PLEASE WATCH THE VIDEOS BEFORE ATTENDING THE ZOOM MEETINGS. Answering the same questions in the group chat although it is already been answer in the video is a loss of time and productivity for everyone.

You can also find the schedule of this week's meetings on our website [www.rwth-aachen.de/welcomeweek](http://www.rwth-aachen.de/welcomeweek) (subpage Events) and the presentations as PDF, Video on our subpage "Latecomer Program".

- How is the Corona Pandemic in Aachen? Is it bad?

Germany, as well as many other countries worldwide is currently very affected by the Corona Virus. Right now, Aachen is not on complete lock-down but everything is shut down except for supermarkets and pharmacies. Canteens are closed and restaurants can only do delivery. Everyone is smartworking if possible and the personal office hours have been cancelled everywhere. You can go for a walk outside but with a max. of one person who is a relative or living in the same household.

The restrictions are planned for the next two weeks but we assume they will continue until at least mid-April.

The RWTH updates its website about Corona daily so that you should be able to find many answers here: [www.rwth-aachen.de/corona](http://www.rwth-aachen.de/corona)

- Must I practice a 14-day self-isolation if I arrived recently?

If you come from high-risk region, yes. If not, the government still urges you to stay at home as much as possible except for necessary activities such as buying food or going to the pharmacy. Therefore, everyone is kind of forced to self-isolate anyway.

- Does start of university count as a good enough reason to come across borders? Could the certificate of arrival / my admission letter help me to get across the borders?

Admission to a University or for an exchange program probably does not count to the reasons for being able to cross the border at the moment. Priority is on people who have a work contract and need to cross the border for their job.

Furthermore, we do not recommend travelling to Aachen at this point but rather come later when the situation has improved.

- If I am enrolled, have residence permit and accommodation, can I travel to Germany?

If you have a residence permit and if you have an address registration in Germany you should be able to travel to Germany. However, we do not recommend travelling to Aachen at this point.

- Can I extend my visa if I am not able to travel to Germany within the period of validity of my current one due to Corona?

In order to get an answer to that question, you need to contact the embassy directly to check whether your visa can be extended.

- When will classes start? If the corona crisis lasts longer, will E-Learning be continuing?

Physical classes are planned to start on 20 April at the moment but might be subject to changes depending on the evolution of the corona pandemic. Digital classes are being prepared and should be available from 6 April.

Depending on the evolution of the crisis, the faculties will continue to offer digital courses or switch to physical classes at some point. Information about these questions will come directly from the faculties. Not all courses can be offered online, there is no guarantee, get in touch with your own faculty for further information on their online offer.

PLEASE NOTE: we – at the International Office – cannot answer any questions regarding your courses as every faculty has its own regulations. Please contact your academic advisor (Fachstudienberater) if you are a degree student or your departmental coordinator if you are an exchange student for more information on your courses and on the registration.

Here is a list of all academic advisors for degree students: <https://www.rwth-aachen.de/cms/root/Studium/Beratung-Hilfe/~tmy/Fachstudienberatungen/?lidx=1>

Here is a list of all departmental coordinators for exchange students: <https://www.rwth-aachen.de/go/id/febz/lidx/1>

- How can I register for classes? Where can I get the information about the ECTS for each course or module?

You can register for your courses at RWTHonline. Please note that every faculty is responsible for their courses and they have different rules and regulations. We are sorry we cannot answer the questions regarding your course registration and contents. Please contact your faculty for questions concerning the courses.

- How can I register for language courses?

The RWTH Language Center is currently updating its procedure for the placement tests and course registration for summer term 2020 due to the Corona Crisis. Please check out their webpage regularly to find out how to register for the courses and the tests:

<https://www.sz.rwth-aachen.de/go/id/grgxe/lidx/1>

- Do we need to give the language placement test to enroll in level A1 German classes?

No if you do not have any preknowledge, you do not need to take a placement test. If you do have preknowledge, you will need to take a test to apply for a spot in a German course corresponding to your level.

- Can I take the bus with my Semesterticket and passport only, since I could not pick up by BlueCard? Do I have to use another card if I am traveling from Kerkrade / Heerlen to Aachen?

Yes you can take the bus with your Semesterticket and passport only since the passport is a proof of identification. When being controlled on the bus or train, you always need to present your Semesterticket and your passport or ID – not the BlueCard.

The Semesterticket is valid for the region of Limburg (including Kerkrade and Heerlen), up to Maastricht. You can therefore travel from Kerkrade or Heerlen to Aachen with your Semesterticket.

- What differences are there between the Semesterticket and the BlueCard?

The semester ticket is your transportation ticket (you cannot get it online, it is sent per post by the bus company ASEAG) and the blue card is your student ID - you can even charge money on it and pay in the canteen or for washing your clothes in the dorms. You cannot use your BlueCard to take public transportation and you cannot use your Semesterticket to get student discount, use the library or pay at the canteen.

- Will all extra-academic events (Freshman events from faculty student councils, sports activities, events, language courses, events from student associations etc.) resume after 20 April?

It is not possible to say at the moment, since we do not know how the situation will evolve. For now, language courses and sport activities are planned to start again on 20 April but the dates can be postponed. Freshman events and celebrations for the 150 years of RWTH have been cancelled already.

- When will the canteens open again?

The canteens are currently closed until further notice. There is not approximate date of re-opening yet.

- Is there any program of financial aid for international students due to COVID-19?

The University does not offer financial support for international students concerning COVID-19. We would strongly recommend checking out the DAAD page since they give students tips on how to deal with this situation (find a mini-job, search for financial support, etc.)

<https://www.daad.de/en/coronavirus/>

- Can International students live in Vaals (Netherlands)?

Only students with European Citizenship can live in Vaals while studying in Aachen. Non-European students cannot do so, as they need German Visa and residence permit for the purpose of studying in Germany.

- Where can I get support for housing?

Our Housing Advice Service will be very happy to help you search for accommodation. Just check out our website [www.rwth-aachen.de/housing](http://www.rwth-aachen.de/housing) and if you need to, contact us at [housing@rwth-aachen.de](mailto:housing@rwth-aachen.de).

- Can the Housing Advice Service or AStA give advice on lease contracts?

AStA offers some legal advice on the topic of Housing. You can contact AStA at [asta@asta.rwth-aachen.de](mailto:asta@asta.rwth-aachen.de). Even though we are not lawyer, our Housing Advice Service can also help you check what is included in your lease contract – especially if it is in German and you do not understand it. Just contact us at [housing@rwth-aachen.de](mailto:housing@rwth-aachen.de).

- If I have reserved a room at Studierendenwerk, can I get waived off for one or two month due to the Corona situation?

In order to request discount in your rent or to make sure your room reservation will stay active until you arrive in Aachen, please send an email to [housing@rwth-aachen.de](mailto:housing@rwth-aachen.de). We will forward your request to our responsible colleagues at the Studierendenwerk.

- Can I still get a Buddy at the moment?

Of course you can! Even though you will surely first meet online only. Still, your Buddy can be very helpful. For all that want to register to a BeBuddy Programm please do so here:

<https://www.rwth-aachen.de/cms/root/Studium/Im-Studium/Engagement-Freizeit/Engagement-International/BeBuddy/~bqxb/Mentees/lidx/1/>

- How do we get the certificate of arrival if we cannot make it to Aachen until May?

As exchange student, you might need a certificate of arrival to "activate" the payment of your scholarship. Just write an email to [incomings@rwth-aachen.de](mailto:incomings@rwth-aachen.de) with your arrival date if you are already in Aachen. We will fill it out and sign it for you and send it back to you via email. If you are not in Aachen yet but have completed enrollment, we will use your enrollment date.

- I am EU student and I need an exemption of Health insurance. What should I do?

If you have the blue EU insurance card, you can send a picture per e-mail to the German public insurance company and they will issue the document for you. This paper is always issued by a German public health insurance company.

- I am exchange student and I would like to postpone my exchange, is it possible?

Yes, just write an email to [incomings@rwth-aachen.de](mailto:incomings@rwth-aachen.de) requesting the postponement of your stay. Make sure that your home university is okay with that.

QUESTIONS ABOUT ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT FOR DEGREE STUDENTS (can I extend/postpone my admission to winter term? How to I enroll? ...) will be answered during the Zoom Session on Tuesday, 31.03.2020 at 10am (see email invitation)

Example:

- If I am not able to come for summer semester, can I transfer or extend my admission onto the next semester?
- How is the enrollment done if not in Aachen / not able to travel to Aachen before May/June?
- Where can I find the reference number for the payment of my student service fee?
- I forgot the reference number while doing the payment, what should I do?
- Can one of my friend pay for my student service fee?
- What should I do if I could not pass my language test due to corona because the centers closed?
- What is the deadline of enrollment for degree students?
- How can I get my health insurance waiver if I am not in Aachen yet?
- How many days does it take for the payment to be processed?
- My status on RWTHonline has not updated to "completely enrolled" (last checkmark) although everything else has been green for more than a week.
- How long does it take for my documents to be checked?
- Is it possible to change the semester ticket delivery address?
- How can I get my BlueCard if I have completed enrollment and if I am in Aachen already? Can it be sent via regular mail?
- I do not have German address. What address should I use knowing that I do not know anyone in Aachen and I am still in my home country for an unpredictable period of time.
- Can I have my Semesterticket sent by regular mail to my home address abroad or to another address in Germany (e.g. Munich)?
- How can I change my address?

QUESTIONS ABOUT IMMIGRATION (MSA, RESIDENCE PERMIT) will be answered during the Zoom Session on Wednesday, 01.04.2020 at 10am (see email invitation)

Example:

- What should I do to be able to withdraw money from my blocked account while not being in Aachen?
- I am currently in Germany but not in Aachen will I be able somehow to get the residence permit or I have to wait until I go to Aachen?
- Can I work as a student in Germany if I live in the Netherlands? Does it contribute to my time as a resident in Germany?
- I am having difficulty extending my Visa as immigration office is not working as usual and I need work permit ASAP.