PhD in Dresden
A survival guide

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Credits

Front/Back; Figure 2.1 Ana Maria Blanco Castaneda, p.3 top: www.wortwolken.com, bottom: Mario Alejandro Garcia Tzintzun, p. 9/11/33 Sabine Apelt

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1 Introduction

Dear current and prospective doctoral candidates,

This is the first edition of the "PhD in Dresden. A Survival Guide" by the DDocs - the Doctoral Council of the Graduate Academy (GA) of TU Dresden. It is based on the work of many others and will hopefully assist you before, during and after your PhD at TU Dresden. This booklet focuses on the challenges faced by international PhD students at TU Dresden, but contains also helpful information for all current and prospective doctoral candidates. This includes the daily live in Dresden as well as organizing your work at the university. We will not cover entirely how to deal with University institutions and authorities since an extensive booklet by the Graduate Academy of TU Dresden will be published in summer 2017. We rather want to provide you with a comprehensive and commented collection of useful links based on the experience of all DDocs members, which is open to grow during the next years. The layout of this booklet is based on a brochure from the department of psychology and we are gladly allowed to use it. The information presented here is true and complete to our best knowledge, but it is only for orientation purposes.

DDocs

Doctoral Council of the

Graduate Academy

TU Dresden
1.1 Doctoral student representatives, DDocs

We, the DDocs, are the elected representation of doctoral members of the Graduate Academy with the aim to help others, enhance doctoral participation in the policies of the university and organize networking events for all PhD students in Dresden. We are elected once a year by all members of the TUD Graduate Academy, in order to represent the doctoral members of GA. The spokesperson chosen by the Doctoral Council and his/her deputy become permanent members of the GA Executive Committee with voting rights. Moreover, they can be invited as guests to attend public and closed meetings of the TU Dresden Senate with the right to speak. Furthermore, we are in close contact to other PhD students representatives in Dresden:

- https://www.helmholtz.de/karriere_talente/foerderprogramme/doktorandenfoerderung/helmholtz_juniors/
- http://www.dresden-ipp.de/predocs/phd-student-representatives/
- https://tu-dresden.de/cmcb/lehre/phd/bips

As well as the doctoral councils of Leipzig, Jena and Freiberg in the VMPV (Vereinigung mitteldeutscher Promovierendenvertretungen) to exchange our experiences.

If you want to get in touch with us and other doctoral candidates in Dresden, don’t miss our events:

- the monthly Science Beer combining a short presentation given by a PhD candidate about her/his research topic with the joy of drinking beer, wine, water or whatever http://www.sciencebeer.org
- the yearly Junior Scientist Party
- the monthly PhD Breakfast at the Zebradiele of Alte Mensa

To find current information about the time and date of the events check our homepage or follow us on facebook:
https://tu-dresden.de/ga/die-einrichtung/doktorandenkonvent
www.ddocs.ga
https://de-de.facebook.com/Doktorandenkonvent.Dresden/
2 Before starting your PhD

2.1 Motivation to do a PhD

There are good reasons to do a doctorate:

- Your friends would use the words discipline, good time management and stamina to describe your personality.
- You want to solve a problem nobody has ever thought of or solved before even if it will take you 3 years or more and in the end your contribution to the field will be most probably microscopic.
- You don’t mind sitting in front of books or your computer for hours, days or even weeks in order to find one hint.
- You can easily find a subject that can sustain your interest as well as the academics world’s interest for several years.
- You don’t mind the lack of an open-ended full-time contract.
- You want to stay in the academics world, become a professor or a group leader in a research institute or in the industry.
- You won’t be overqualified in the job you actually want after finishing your PhD.

As well as not so good reasons to do a doctorate:

- The Dr gives a nice touch to your last name.
- You don’t like your current position and going back to university sounds more relaxing.
- You already did your Masters at the University and don’t know what else to do afterwards.
- All your friends started to do a doctorate.
- You want to keep the benefits of the student status.
2.2 Studying in Germany

The Ministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) and other governmental institutions offer very useful and general information for PhD students in Germany, regarding the starting process, types of visa, types of funding and employment:

- [https://www.daad.de/deutschland/promotion/en/](https://www.daad.de/deutschland/promotion/en/)
- [www.research-in-germany.org](http://www.research-in-germany.org)
- [www.study-in.de](http://www.study-in.de)

2.3 Travel to Dresden

You can travel to Dresden in different ways. If you want to travel by airplane, the closest airports are Dresden, Leipzig-Halle and the two airports in Berlin:


If you arrive in Leipzig-Halle, Berlin or any other German city, you can travel to Dresden by bus or train. Especially the connections from the FlixBus company are very good and cheap. Also from many European cities you can travel by bus and train to Dresden. You can find detailed information on the following websites:

- FlixBus ([https://www.flixbus.com/](https://www.flixbus.com/))
- BusRadar for an overview of available bus and train connections ([https://www.busradar.com/](https://www.busradar.com/))

The main station (Dresden Hauptbahnhof) is the closest train and long-distance bus station to the university campus. From there you can go by the city bus or tram to university. Very helpful for-free Apps to plan your trip are:

- Moovit ([https://www.moovitapp.com/](https://www.moovitapp.com/))
- GoogleMaps

The currency in Germany is Euro (€). You cannot pay with other currencies. If you plan to travel by train, you need to buy your ticket before you enter the train. On every train station are automates (payment by EC or VISA card) and in larger train stations you can also find service centers. An alternative is to buy the ticket on the website or with the App of e.g. Deutsche Bahn or FlixBus. The public transport in Dresden is organised by Dresdner Verkehrsbetriebe (DVB, [https://www.dvb.de/en-gb/](https://www.dvb.de/en-gb/)). You can purchase a ticket in the bus, tram or at a ticket machine. Here you can pay cash. The public transport in Dresden is free of charge for students enrolled at the TUD (see section 2.8.2).

### 2.4 Funding

The two most common options to finance your PhD are working contracts at the TU Dresden or one of the affiliated institutes or a grant aka scholarship. The most important difference between these two is the social insurance (and type of visa if you need one). With a working contract you automatically have a health insurance and you pay for pension, unemployment and long term care insurances. With a grant you have to take care of these things on your own, see sec. 2.9.

There might be the possibility to be employed as a research associate or assistant at
the institute of your PhD supervisor. In this is the case, your work contract can be financed by various sources: third party funding from public funding organizations or the industry or budget funding from the university.

In relation to scholarships, it is always a good idea to get some advices before applying for them. One first place to go to is in this case the Graduate Academy. They also provide information and advice on how to finance your PhD, on various scholarship programs and the particularities in the application process. [https://tudresden.de/ga/finanzierung](https://tudresden.de/ga/finanzierung) The governmental website of Germany also offers some more information here: [https://www.research-in-germany.org/en/jobs-and-careers/info-for-phd-students/financing-funding-phd.html](https://www.research-in-germany.org/en/jobs-and-careers/info-for-phd-students/financing-funding-phd.html)

In the last month of your PhD or the beginning of your postdoc, it may happen you will be part of the application process of writing proposals in order to acquire third party funding. You must already hold a PhD in order to be eligible to apply for those grants but your supervisor might ask for your help in the application process.
There is some useful information how the TU Dresden supports the acquisition of funding:

https://tu-dresden.de/tu-dresden/organisation/zentrale-universitaetsverwaltung/dezernat-5-forschung/sg-5-1-forschungsfoerderung/index

Further funding agencies (but mostly require the proposer to already hold a PhD):

- **European Union**

- **Euraxess Germany**
  - [https://www.euraxess.de](https://www.euraxess.de)

- **German Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF)**
  - [https://www.bmbf.de/foerderungen/](https://www.bmbf.de/foerderungen/)

- **ZIM Programme for Small and Medium Enterprise**
  - [http://www.zim-bmwi.de/zim-overview](http://www.zim-bmwi.de/zim-overview)

- **German Federation of Industrial Research Associations - AiF**

- **German Research Foundation (DFG)**

- **Volkswagen Stiftung**
  - [https://www.volkswagenstiftung.de/en/funding.html](https://www.volkswagenstiftung.de/en/funding.html)

You might be employed also as a WHK (Scientific assistant) at your institute. These contracts are temporarily and usually depends on the economical resources of each institute. TU Dresden also offers vacancies for junior researchers:

https://tu-dresden.de/ga/die-einrichtung/aktuelle-stellenausschreibungen
Another opportunity to get some money are research fellowships. You might have one from your own country already, then your problems are probably already solved. But you can apply for such grants in Germany, too. One of the most famous organizations for such grants is the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), but there are many more.

- [http://www.mystipendium.de/stipendien/begabtenfoerderungswerke](http://www.mystipendium.de/stipendien/begabtenfoerderungswerke) (german only)
- official database of the BMBF: [https://www.stipendienlotse.de/](https://www.stipendienlotse.de/) (german only)
- GA online overview over funding organizations for the PhD period: [https://tu-dresden.de/ga/finanzierung/externe_foerderung_promovierende](https://tu-dresden.de/ga/finanzierung/externe_foerderung_promovierende) (german only)

### 2.5 Residence permit

Non-European citizens must apply for a visa in their home country before traveling to Germany. The requirements to get a visa may change in each country, so we recommend you to check the website of the German Embassy of your respective country. The visa is normally given for few months, so once you are in Germany, you need to apply for a residence permit. There are different types of residence permits according to your employment conditions, salary, amount of time living in Europe, etc. Please check more information and all requirements in:


An overview of the different types of residence permits can be found here: [https://www.hrk.de/uploads/media/HRK-Faltblatt_Aufenthaltstitel_1._Aufl._EN.pdf](https://www.hrk.de/uploads/media/HRK-Faltblatt_Aufenthaltstitel_1._Aufl._EN.pdf)
2.6 Living in Dresden

2.6.1 Accommodation

Finding an apartment in Germany can be a difficult and long task, so you will need patience and persistence. There are several websites with the actual offers of single (Einzelwohnung) and shared apartments (WG - Wohngemeinschaften), like:

http://www.studenten-wg.de
http://www.wg-gesucht.de
https://www.wg-suche.de
https://www.zwischenmiete.de
https://www.immobilienscout24.de
https://www.immonet.de

Usually, you have to contact the tenant/owner of the apartment and arrange a visit. During the visit you have to answer several questions (especially if you apply for a WG) and prove that you are a responsible and nice person. If you pass the selection process (interview and proof of financial capacity), you get the room or apartment.

We recommend you to check the location of the available apartments with a map, in order to choose places that are not too far away from the city and your research institute (TUD campus, Universitätsklinikum, Helmholtz-Zentrum, etc.). The city of Dresden is divided into 64 districts (Stadtteile), which are organized in 19 localities (Ortsamtsbereiche, Ortschaften). A list of all localities and districts in Dresden are available in:

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_der_statistischen_Stadtteile_von_Dresden

Figure 2.1 indicates where the most important research institutes are located and contains the main living districts of students. The main campus of the TUD is
located in Sülvorstadt (in Plauen), but many students prefer to live in Neustadt because this zone has many restaurants, clubs and bars. However, with the very good public transport system of the city you will get to your institute, also if you find accommodation in other zones.

Please be careful if you are admitted to one of the research institutes located in Zittau, Pirna or Tharandt; those institutes are not close to Dresden and you have to look for accommodation in the respective city.

If you cannot find a room or apartment from abroad, then you have to look for a temporal rent while you find your final apartment in Germany. You have the following options for temporal rents:

- You can try to find a "Untermieter" or "Zwischenmiete" (temporal rent or sublet) in the websites mentioned before. "Zwischenmiete" means that a person leaves for 1 to 12 months and rents his or her apartment to another person for this limited time. It is a nice option, because you negotiate directly with the actual tenant and usually you do not need to visit the apartment in advance.
• For the first 3 months, you can get a room in the "International Guest House" which is another residence hall of the university for short periods of time. You can apply with the admission letter of the university or the acceptance letter from your professor. Please apply as early as possible as the IGH is often booked out (especially around Christmas or other holidays and at the beginning of each semester). More information about this residence in:

http://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/wohnen/gaestehausdetails.html

You can apply for this residence filling in the form

https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/wohnen/gaestehaus_formular.html

• Student halls are eligible only by Bachelor and Master students. PhD students can get a room in the student halls for maximum one year, but only if there are available rooms to sublet. Fill the application form including your admission letter (letter from your adviser or professor does not work, it must be the official admission letter of the TUD). The application form is in:

http://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/wohnen/antrag.html

More information about the students halls in:

http://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/wohnen/faq.html

If none of these options worked and you cannot find an apartment, then contact the Welcome Center of the TU Dresden, see sec. 2.6.2. They can help you with the process, but keep in mind that they assist when guests stay for longer than three months and only in searching for single apartments due to capacity reasons.

However, special assistance can be provided in cases where the language barrier makes it complex to contact landlords. Due to historical reasons, many landlords do not speak English.
2.6.2 Welcome centers

The city of Dresden (Landeshauptstadt Dresden) has a Welcome Center, which focus mainly on residence law and administration procedures. They are also called the "Immigration Office for higher qualified personnel". You can also get additional information about different aspects of living in Dresden, like visa requirements.

http://www.dresden.de/index_en.php

The Welcome Center at the TU Dresden is part of the DRESDEN-concept e.V., a connection of research institutes and the TU Dresden to advance research and better use the given resources. This center counsels and informs on immigration regulations, insurances and other formalities, helps to find an apartment and kindergarten or school for the children, provides information and access to the international networks at TU Dresden and DRESDEN-concept institutions.

The Welcome Center at the TU Dresden provides help to researchers, PhD and Postdoc students, who are staying in Dresden for longer than 3 months, with the different formalities before, during and after the studies. Moreover, they offer different social and cultural activities. Do not miss their newsletter.

https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/services-fuer-forschende/welcomecenter
http://ddcwelcome.de/welcome-center-tu-dresden/

2.7 Research in Dresden

No matter why you choose to do your doctorate in Dresden and at which institution you have your doctoral thesis supervisor, you will definitely get in touch with the
PhD in Dresden

Doctoral Regulations of the Faculty at TU Dresden where your supervisor has a professorship. These websites offer general information about doing a PhD at the TU Dresden and affiliated institutions, no matter if your institute is on the main TUD campus, a Max-Planck, Fraunhofer, Helmholtz or Leibniz institute or even the medicine center or CRTD:

- https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/studienangebot/promotionsstudium
- general information on doing a doctorate at TUD https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/wissenschaftlicher-nachwuchs/promotion?set_language=en
- https://www.hzdr.de/db/Cms?pNid=1908
- http://www.dresden-ipp.de/
- structured PhD programs aka research training groups (Graduiertenkollegs) https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/forschungsprofil/koordinierte-forschungsprojekte/graduiertenkollegs

2.8 Admission to TU Dresden

If you want to start a doctorate at TU Dresden, it is obligatory to register and be accepted as a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of your doctoral supervisor. In addition, there is the possibility to enroll as a student at the university and to register as a member at the Graduate Academy. Only the acceptance at your faculty as a PhD candidate, i.e. being on the "‘Doktorandenliste’" is a strict requirement for the doctoral process. When and how you can register highly depends on your faculty, see below for details. The other two options (student and GA member) are voluntary and independent of each other, i.e., you can be a student and a member of the GA, but you don’t have to. However, both is highly recommended.
and the reasons will be discussed in detail in the following. The option you choose for yourself does not necessarily affect your funding, but additional financial help from e.g. the Graduate Academy is only available for registered members.

2.8.1 Registration at the Faculty

How to be on the “Doktorandenliste” of each faculty or whether you are getting a PhD or a Doctor title, or if you are required to have a Rigorosum examination before concluding your studies, or the type of dissertation and amount of reviewers... all this is particular for each faculty and laid down in the respective Doctoral Regulations (Promotionsordnung). Currently the regulations are only in German, but you can request more information at your faculty. [https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/wissenschaftlicher-nachwuchs/promotion/zulassungsvoraussetzungen-anmeldung-immatrikulation](https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/wissenschaftlicher-nachwuchs/promotion/zulassungsvoraussetzungen-anmeldung-immatrikulation)

2.8.2 Enrollment (Immatrikulation)

In order to be a doctoral candidate you actually don’t need to be a student at the TU Dresden, but it offers some advantages. Beside the reduced students prices at the Mensa and the extensive semester ticket for buses, trams and some trains (see following sections), many museums offer reduced prices for students. Unfortunately, being a student does not allow you to get the reduced prices for the health insurance.

One of the most important regulations to take into account are the Admission regulations of the Registration office (Immatrikulationsamt) [https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/bewerbung/studienvoraussetzungen](https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/bewerbung/studienvoraussetzungen) [http://www.verw.tu-dresden.de/AmtBek/PDF-Dateien/2012-03/immao01.06.2012.pdf](http://www.verw.tu-dresden.de/AmtBek/PDF-Dateien/2012-03/immao01.06.2012.pdf) (german only). Important remark: the official duration of Doctoral studies is 3 years. However, it is common that the studies takes a bit longer. In this case, an application for an extension has to be submitted before starting your 4th year: [https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/ressourcen/dateien/immatrikulationsamt/antraege/promotionsantrag/antrag-auf-verlaengerung-des-promotionsstudiums?lang=en](https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/ressourcen/dateien/immatrikulationsamt/antraege/promotionsantrag/antrag-auf-verlaengerung-des-promotionsstudiums?lang=en)
PhD in Dresden

How to enroll as a student is explained here: https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/studienangebot/promotionsstudium https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/bewerbung/studienvoraussetzungen/voraussetzungen-fuer-ein-promotionsstudium

You have to re-register each semester. The re-registration periods and current semester fees to be paid (around 260€) are listed here: https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/studienorganisation/rueckmeldung?set_language=en

Semesterticket

When enrolled at the TUD, the “Semesterticket” is included in the semester fee and is a valid ticket for all public transportation in Dresden and regional transportation (buses and trains) in Saxony. Interesting information: it can be combined with additional regional tickets.

The terms and conditions of the tickets as well as the covered territory can be found on the following websites: https://www.vvo-online.de/en/tariff-tickets/special-tickets/semestertickets-153.cshtml https://www.stura.tu-dresden.de/semesterticket (german only)

2.8.3 Graduate Academy

The Graduate Academy is the place to go for all questions related to your doctoral studies and located at Mommsenstraße 7 on the main campus of the TU Dresden. Doctoral candidates, postdocs as well as academic supervisors from TU Dresden can become a member of the Graduate Academy without any financial commitment: https://tu-dresden.de/ga/mitgliedschaft/startseite The membership allows you to
• apply for the GA funding opportunities such as long- and short-term scholarships, mobility grants and others
• attend the GA qualification program that includes seminars and workshops with topics such as management and leadership, career development and writing advice
• get personal advice. The team of the GA provides information and support for (prospective) doctoral candidates, postdocs and supervisors
• use the GA Writing Lab.

2.8.4 Especially for international PhD students

After you get accepted by a professor to start your PhD under his/her supervision, you need to apply for the admission to the TU Dresden, see sections above. Please be careful: the invitation letter from the professor is not an official admission letter of the University! You can begin to work with the professor without the official admission to the university, but you have to be admitted in the university in order to get the PhD degree.

The admission is not difficult. You have to send your bachelor and master degrees, the letter of acceptance from your professor and some other documents. You can find a better description here: https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/bewerbung/online-bewerbung?set_language=en

2.9 Insurances, taxes and pensions

2.9.1 Social security system

This system focuses on maintaining a stable standard of living for everybody in Germany. It includes: health, pensions, unemployment, accident and long-term care
insurances. You automatically pay for it, if your working contract is more than 450€ per month.

If you are a scholarship holder, please check what insurances are included, as it is common to have health insurance, but not necessarily the additional. Also, you do not have to pay for pensions and unemployment insurances.

As you register your residence in Germany, you will need to have a health insurance (see below) and you will obtain your Social Security Number per post. Keep in mind that this number is different from your Tax number. More information about the social security system: [http://dsv-europa.de/en/news.html](http://dsv-europa.de/en/news.html)

It is important to notice that for students from abroad a travel health insurance is needed for the initial months.

### 2.9.2 Health insurance

Health insurance is obligatory in Germany for everyone. There are two types of health insurance: public and private. Public health insurance contributions are based on your gross income. But beware: you might want to consider getting additional private insurances to cover some services, like full dental services/replacement. Please check the information provided by the Welcome Center of TU Dresden, you might also contact them for further information: ([https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/services-fuer-forschende/welcomecenter/formalities/health-insurance?set_language=en](https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/services-fuer-forschende/welcomecenter/formalities/health-insurance?set_language=en))

A complete list of the public companies can be found here: [https://www.krankenkassen.de/gesetzliche-krankenkassen/krankenkassen-liste/](https://www.krankenkassen.de/gesetzliche-krankenkassen/krankenkassen-liste/)

Private insurance contributions are based on your risk profile (e.g. age) and there are some special insurances for students ([http://www.germanyhis.com/private-health-insurance-germany/](http://www.germanyhis.com/private-health-insurance-germany/)). There are private travel health insurances PhD students can use for up to 5 years after they arrived here. Please note: private health insurances do not (or only partly) cover chronic diseases, dental prostheses, regular check-ups or pregnancies. You should read the terms and conditions very carefully.
If you are married with children and your spouse does not earn any income here in Germany, both types of insurance are covering all family members, but for the case of private insurance, they have to be contracted for each person separately. If you are German, for sure you already have a health insurance so this part of the booklet may not be interesting for you. If you already made or are making master course in Germany, you should also have already a health insurance. You can always change it. But remember that changing from private to public is complicated. If you are arriving only for a PhD, you might be forced to get the private insurance.

The Welcome Center at the TU Dresden has a list of private travel health insurances that are accepted by the Immigration Office. Feel free to contact them for further questions.

More information about the German health insurance you will find here:

https://www.justlanded.com/english/Germany/Germany-Guide/Health/Health-insurance

https://www.krankenkassen.de/ausland/versicherungspflicht/ (german only)

2.9.3 Pensions

As employee you have to participate in the German Statutory Pension system. Participation is mandatory, with each worker assessed for a sum based on annual earnings. A complete description of the systems and its benefits in:

www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de

If you are an employee in the public sector, like the TUD, then you can benefit from an additional pension provision, known as VBL (Versorgungsanstalt des Bundes und der Länder). You can find a complete description of this pension provision and their different types in:

https://www.vbl.de/en/app/media/resource/_h9h35iee.html

You can also have a private pension plan, in order to get a higher pension after your
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retirement. There are different options. Please check the following websites for more information:

http://www.howtogermany.com/pages/private-pension-plans.html
https://www.findyourpension.eu/

2.9.4 Other insurances

In Germany, it is a good practice to have additional insurances, which are not mandatory but quite useful. Here you have some of the most useful ones.

Personal liability (Haftpflichtversicherung). It is a good idea to get one and almost every German has it. It covers unintentional damages to third-parties and can cover single people, couples or families. They are relatively inexpensive and normally covered by private institutions. Some of the companies providing this type of insurance can be found here: https://www.haftpflichtversicherung-testberichte.de/haftpflichtversicherung-anbieter/ (german only).

Household insurance (Hausratversicherung). This is another useful insurance that covers damages in your flat against fire, flood etc., which is normally the responsibility of the owner of the property, not the renter.

More information about these and some additional insurances, please visit https://www.toytowngermany.com/wiki/German_insurances

2.9.5 Taxes and fees

As you may get funding for your PhD studies from different sources (scholarship, working contract, mini-jobs, etc.), it is important that every employee in Germany has to pay taxes and the amount depends on your income. Scholarships are mostly free of taxes. Everyone registered in Germany automatically receives a tax identification number about four weeks after registration in Dresden, this number is important for your tax payment and/or refund.
If you become an employee, you need to keep in mind that the taxation system distinguish different classes https://www.sachsen.de/en/1451.htm.

As taxes is an extensive topic, please check the useful information found here:

https://www.sachsen.de/en/1455.htm
http://www.internationale-studierende.de/en/prepare_your_studies/financing/jobbing/

There are additional statutory deductions which are not actually income tax, but deducted from salary:

- Solidarity surcharge
- Church tax
- Employee’s share in health insurance
- Nursing insurance scheme
- Pension insurance fund
- Unemployment insurance

**Broadcasting fee**

Every household is charged a flat rate broadcasting fee of 17.50€ per month, regardless of its equipment with, or usage of, television, radio or web-enabled devices. This licence fee is used to fund the public broadcasting stations. Once you register as a PhD student, the Broadcasting Fee Authority is contacted and they send you further information via post.

https://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/e175/e198/Informationsflyer_Buergerinnen_und_Buerger_englisch.pdf
https://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de/ (german only)
2.10 Bank account

There are different banks in Germany, most of them with branches in Saxony. You can find an extensive list of the different banks in Germany in:


Some of the banks offer the option to open a bank account online. This option is very helpful if you need a bank account before entering Germany. For more information about opening a bank account online and some of the institutions that offer this service:

http://www.movingto-berlin.com/german-bank-account/

https://www.toytowngermany.com/wiki/Banking_in_Germany


For additional questions regarding these issues, you can contact the Welcome Center at welcome.center@tu-dresden.de and they will assist you or guide you towards experts on the issue.
3 During your PhD

3.1 Good scientific practice

The TUD has issued guidelines for the safeguarding of good scientific practice, for the avoidance of scientific misconduct and for the handling of violations. Based on the guidelines, an arbiter (Ombudsperson) has been appointed. If you ever encounter problems with your supervisor, the order of authors on your paper etc. you can find help here: https://tu-dresden.de/tu-dresden/qualitaetsmanagement/gute-wissenschaftliche-praxis-an-der-tu-dresden

Before contacting the Ombudsperson of TU Dresden, we highly recommend to meet with an adviser of the Graduate Academy in order to confidentially clarify the situation, develop possible solutions and identify the next steps to do.

3.2 Facilities of TU Dresden

3.2.1 Campus

- all maps: https://tu-dresden.de/tu-dresden/campus/orientierung/lageplaene#k_tp_4
- interactive tool to find rooms, buildings etc.: https://navigator.tu-dresden.de/
3.2.2 ZIH

As a registered student of the TU Dresden, you will be assigned an official ZIH login in order to have access to different online services like

**SELMA** The self-management portal where you will find your Certificate of registration or registrations for examinations. [https://selma.tu-dresden.de/](https://selma.tu-dresden.de/)

**OPAL** The Online Platform for Academic teaching and Learning is a platform which provides lecture notes, teaching material and study-related information. It is also required for registration to the GA workshops and seminars. [https://bildungsportal.sachsen.de/opal/dmz/](https://bildungsportal.sachsen.de/opal/dmz/)

**CloudStore** A perfect place for storing your data and it also works as storage space for large email attachments. [https://cloudstore.zih.tu-dresden.de/](https://cloudstore.zih.tu-dresden.de/)

**WiFi** Eduroam is available at the campus and at many other universities in Germany and worldwide. If you need to access to the TUD network outside of the campus, give also a try to the VPN. [https://tu-dresden.de/zih/dienste/service-katalog/arbeitsumgebung/zugang_datennetz/index](https://tu-dresden.de/zih/dienste/service-katalog/arbeitsumgebung/zugang_datennetz/index)

Your official E-Mail address is automatically generated. A self-assessment of your personal TUD e-mail address is possible through the ZIH IDM portal [https://idm-service.tu-dresden.de/](https://idm-service.tu-dresden.de/)

Important information (reminders, deadlines, registration) is regularly sent to your email. As you may get an additional email account from your institute or you may prefer using regularly your private email account, it is strongly recommended to try one of the following options:

- Automatically forward the emails to your personal email account
- Link your email accounts using Exchange and MS Outlook
- Link your email accounts using Mozilla Thunderbird

For more information visit [https://tu-dresden.de/zih/dienste/service-katalog/arbeitsumgebung/e_mail/index](https://tu-dresden.de/zih/dienste/service-katalog/arbeitsumgebung/e_mail/index)
Additional useful information from ZIH related to email, calendar, login and networks in general [https://tu-dresden.de/zieh/dienste/service-desk/ese]

3.2.3 Childcare and family support: Uni mit Kind

Studying and having a family is possible, and Uni mit Kind aims to give you the support that you need. Personal advice, different meetings, courses and extensive services, everything under one roof. Especially the second hand sale for children’s clothing in the Zeltmensa once a semester is a must-go. Take a look at the offers and opening times. [https://kinder.studentenwerk-dresden.de/](https://kinder.studentenwerk-dresden.de/) (german only)

It might be helpful to find a daycare facility for your children so you can more easily focus on your PhD. Each child at the age of one or older has the right to find a place in one of the childcare institutions in Dresden. Some even offer to start taking care of your child at the age of only eight weeks. To apply you have to register at the Elternportal: [https://kita-anmeldung.dresden.de/elternportal/?rq.Lang=en#](https://kita-anmeldung.dresden.de/elternportal/?rq.Lang=en#)

3.2.4 Mensa

Great food with special prices for students is found in any of the cafeterias and canteens (Mensas) in Dresden, Tharandt, Gorlitz and Zittau. Moreover, you don’t need to be a student in order to enjoy the food there. [https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/mensen/](https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/mensen/)

If you are looking for the closest Mensa to your home or institute and opening times take a look here [https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/mensen/mensen_cafeterien.html](https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/mensen/mensen_cafeterien.html)

And don’t miss the menu for today! [https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/mensen/speiseplan/](https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/mensen/speiseplan/)
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There is even an offer for students with temporary financial difficulties from the Studentenwerk: https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/soziales/freitisch.html

3.2.5 The library

The SLUB https://www.slub-dresden.de/en/home/ is the university library and one of the largest and most complete libraries in Germany. Here you can find all type of books and media resources in physical and digital forms, as well as in many different languages. Do not miss the large databases available for scientific research. You may choose to register and obtain a SLUB card in order to gain additional benefits. While the main library is located near the main campus, additional branches are distributed in Dresden and its surroundings. Watch out for the opening hours, as they are particular for each library. Additionally, there are many Dresden municipal libraries (Städtische Bibliotheken), where you can find more recreational and popular books and media resources, and even videogames http://www.bibo-dresden.de/en/index.php.

3.3 Doctoral participation in University Policies

If you are interested in contacting other Doctoral candidates to share ideas and having a deeper discussion about research, working conditions or the current political position related to the University, you can get more information and even become a member of the different associations like DDocs, Thesis, the European council of Doctoral Candidates, Mittelbauinitiative among others.

www.ddocs.ga

www.thesis.de (german only)

http://mittelbau-dresden.de/ (german only)

http://www.promovierenden-initiative.de
3.4 Language courses

The TU-Dresden offers different German courses for PhD and Postdocs, but there are also many private language schools and online courses. A good summary of the different options can be found in:

https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/services-fuer-forschende/welcomecenter/language_activities/german-language-courses

3.5 Recreation

Are you new in the city? Take a break from work and explore Dresden and its surroundings. You can consider yourself lucky since the city of Dresden and the Free State of Saxony offer an immense palette with appealing events, trips and excursions. The few useful links below will further guide you.

3.5.1 Meet other people

- Events organised by Studentenwerk Dresden:
  - Family and International Friends (FIF)
    https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/internat/fif-family-international-friends.html
  - International Coffee Hour (ICH)
    https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/english/internat/international-coffee-hour.html
- Erasmus Initiative at TU Dresden
  http://tu-dresden.esn-germany.de
  https://www.facebook.com/erasmus.dresden
3.5.2 Explore Dresden and the surroundings

www.sachsen-tourismus.de
https://tu-dresden.de/studium/rund-ums-studium/studienstadt-dresden

3.5.3 Sport activities

- Sport courses at TU Dresden
  https://tu-dresden.de/usz
- Swimming pools in Dresden
  http://dresdner-baeder.de

3.5.4 Events in Dresden

- Classical music at TU Dresden
  http://uniorchester.file1.wcms.tu-dresden.de/tuo
  http://www.unichor-dresden.de
  http://www.tubigband.de
- The theater “die bühne” at TU Dresden https://die-buehne.tu-dresden.de/
- Museums and exhibitions
  http://www.museen-dresden.de
  http://www.skd.museum/
- Partying meetups https://www.meetup.com/topics/partying/de/dresden/
- Further events
  https://veranstaltungen.dresden.de
  http://www.dresdner.nu/timer
3.5.5 Save money

- Dresden for friends, 2 for 1 deals [https://www.dresdenforfriends.de](https://www.dresdenforfriends.de)
- Deals for students at State Playhouse of Dresden (Staatsschauspielhaus) [http://www.staatsschauspiel-dresden.de/karten/ermaessigungen_und_geschenke/](http://www.staatsschauspiel-dresden.de/karten/ermaessigungen_und_geschenke/)
- Special tickets for students for The Opera House Semperoper [https://www.sempерoper.de/aktuelles/newsdetailseiten/news-studenten-angebote.html](https://www.sempерoper.de/aktuelles/newsdetailseiten/news-studenten-angebote.html)
- Additional events and exhibitions, especially parties
  [https://www.banq.de/](https://www.banq.de/) (ger)
  [http://www.exmatrikulationsamt.de](http://www.exmatrikulationsamt.de) (ger)
- Get or repair a bike DIY:
  [https://rad-i-o.org/](https://rad-i-o.org/)
  [http://radskeller-dresden.de/](http://radskeller-dresden.de/)
  [http://radschlag-dresden.de/](http://radschlag-dresden.de/)
4 After your PhD

Congratulations!! You made it!

There are several options now, you can either continue to work at the university or apply for a job in the public or private sector. The TUD website offers useful information concerning the academic career path about PostDocs, Young Investigators, becoming Professor and staying abroad: [https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/wissenschaftlicher-nachwuchs/nach-der-promotion](https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/wissenschaftlicher-nachwuchs/nach-der-promotion).

The Graduate Academy offers a wide range of support during the career orientation phase: workshops and seminars, individual coaching, information events such as the Career Day and the GA Future Career Programme. This modular training program offers two lines: Academia and Business, addressing doctoral candidates and PostDocs who aim at pursuing a career within or outside Academia respectively: [https://tu-dresden.de/ga/ressourcen/bilder/bilder/qualifizierungsprogramm/GA-Future-Career-Program/view](https://tu-dresden.de/ga/ressourcen/bilder/bilder/qualifizierungsprogramm/GA-Future-Career-Program/view).

If you just want to look for jobs there are plenty search engines such as [www.indeed.de](https://www.indeed.de) and the official search engine of the Arbeitsagentur für Arbeit [http://jobboerse.arbeitsagentur.de](http://jobboerse.arbeitsagentur.de).

The "'Team akademische Berufe’’ of the Bundesagentur für Arbeit Dresden offers some more information even for experienced academics on their website: [https://www3.arbeitsagentur.de/web/content/DE/dienststellen/رds/dresden/Agentur/BuergerinnenundBuerger/Akademiker/index.htm](https://www3.arbeitsagentur.de/web/content/DE/dienststellen/ورds/dresden/Agentur/BuergerinnenundBuerger/Akademiker/index.htm). There you can also find a brochure about current events for academics in and around Dresden.

A third option is to become an entrepreneur yourself. If you are looking for help in Dresden, these people can definitely answer your questions: [www.dresden-exists.de](http://www.dresden-exists.de).
5 Additional useful links

Good forum for PhD candidates, mainly in German, but questions can be as well asked in English.

www.doktorandenforum.de (german only)

Some Facebook groups where you can get in contact with other international students and ask different questions:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/internationalfriendsdresden/?fref=ts
https://www.facebook.com/groups/231726516956963/?fref=ts
https://www.facebook.com/groups/75363759125/?fref=ts

Other guides for PhD students and Postdocs:

https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/beratung-und-service/akademisches-auslandsamt
https://tu-dresden.de/forschung/services-fuer-forschende/welcomecenter/ressourcen/dateien/welcomeguide.pdf
http://www.dresden-ipp.de/living-in-dresden/moving-getting-started/
http://ic.daad.de/imperia/md/content/informationszentren/icaccra/the_german_documentation.pdf
A  Are you missing something?

This is the first edition of our survival guide. If you notice something we forgot or if you have some additional information you would like to see in this guide, please let us know. Send us an email or contact us via Facebook.

promovierendenrat@tu-dresden.de
www.ddocs.ga
# B Term list

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Gute wissenschaftliche Praxis
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Funding
Advancement of women
Doctoral council of the Graduate Academy (DDocs)
Education and Researchers Union
Equal Opportunities
Representatives/ Gender Equality Commission
Graduate Academy
Graduate School
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Good scientific practice
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Qualifizierung Qualification
Rigorosum Oral Examination
Rückmeldung Re-registration for the semester
Senat und erweiterter Senat Senate and extended senate
Sonderforschungsbereich (SFB) Collaborative research centre
Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek (SLUB) Saxon State and University Library Dresden
Studentenrat der TU Dresden (StuRa) Student Organisation/Student council
Tarifvertrag der Länder (TV-L) Wage agreement in the public sector
Universitätssportzentrum (USZ) University Sports Centre
Veröffentlichungen Publications/Paper
Verteidigung der Doktorarbeit Thesis Defense
Weiterbildung Continuing education
Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft (WHK) Research assistant
Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten Academic research
Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz Law Restricting the Time Limitation of Employment Contracts for Academic Staff
Zentrum für Informationsdienste und Hochleistungsrechnen (ZIH) Centre for Information Services and High Performance Computing
Zwischenmiete Temporal rent
This booklet focuses on the challenges all PhD students face at the TU Dresden and provides helpful links for all current and prospective doctoral candidates, including the daily life in Dresden as well as their work at the TUD.

"‘A wonderful compilation of information! This will be absolutely useful!’” — TU Dresden Welcome Center