FAQ about Student Assistants in Germany

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: ISGS

Become a STUDENT ASSISTANT & find your HiWi-part time job

www.uni-kl.de/international

Publisher: Department of International Affairs: ISGS

Contact:
Technische Universität Kaiserslautern
Department of International Affairs: ISGS
Gottlieb-Daimler-Str. 47
67663 Kaiserslautern, Germany
Tel: +49 (0) 631 - 205 4998
E-Mail: info@isgs.uni-kl.de
Web: www.uni-kl.de/international

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WHAT ACTUALLY IS A HIWI?

In German a student assistant is called HiWi which means wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft (and denotes a student having a degree) or studentische Hilfskraft (student without a degree). Every student is able to apply for a HiWi job provided that he is enrolled properly at a German university and has already completed a few semesters of his/her studies or has passed an intermediate examination. A wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft does not have to be enrolled.
1. WHAT DOES A HIWI DO?

1.1 What are the main tasks of a HIWI?
In general, HIWIs work in a specific faculty or support professors, assistant professors, research and teaching assistants. Their tasks vary according to their domain. Typical work of a HIWI can be:
• support in research
• support in measuring and experiments
• taking care of computer systems
• working with software
• copying handouts
• running the media during lectures
• supporting administrative duties

HIWIs with a degree often have more demanding assignments, such as correcting tests or exams and tutoring as well as supporting research and measurements.

1.2 What kind of qualifications does a HIWI need?
As a prerequisite for any HIWI-Job every student must have completed a few semesters of his/her studies or must have passed an intermediate examination. This means that if a student already has a degree (e.g., a Bachelor), he/she is eligible to apply for a HIWI job. For particular jobs a degree is needed. In addition to that, he/she sometimes needs specific qualifications according to the field of work he/she is applying for, e.g.: work experiences, computer knowledge, language skills, etc.

1.3 ...and what about a HIWI’s salary?
The salary depends on whether the HIWI holds a degree or not. If the HIWI has a Master’s degree or a German Diploma, he/she earns € 17.22 gross per hour; if he/she has a Bachelor’s degree or an equivalent, he/she gets € 12.68 gross per hour; if not, he/she receives € 10.91 gross per hour (subject to change, April 2023): [http://www.uni-kl.de/fileadmin/ha-3/PDF/HiWIHilfeVertragsauswahl.pdf](http://www.uni-kl.de/fileadmin/ha-3/PDF/HiWIHilfeVertragsauswahl.pdf)

Consider that some foreign degrees are not equivalent to German degrees. Thus, you can be classified differently as you think.

Please note:
It is almost impossible to completely finance yourself with secondary jobs whilst studying at the same time! A HIWI-job can only be a financial support.

1.4 Exemplary HIWI work - two reports

“Hi, I am Grigorij from Russia and I want to tell you some details about my HIWI-work and some general aspects that you should consider: Are you thinking about applying for a HIWI job in Germany? First of all, you should ask yourself some questions: Are you friendly and polite? Can you work precisely, disciplined and be on time? Are you open-minded and do you like meeting new people? Can you work on your own and are not too shy to ask when you have not understood something? Can you live with “lowbrow” work (e.g., copying) from time to time without criticizing your boss? If you can answer these questions with “yes”: Congratulations, you are a perfect candidate for a HIWI-job in Germany! Here is how a HIWI-job works in practice: At the beginning of your job you might have some difficulties to familiarize yourself with your work. But don’t worry, this is normal! So, don’t give up, even if you might need more time for your tasks! I work eight hours per week and so do most of the other HIWIs. In general, I work at the University and I can choose my working hours, but sometimes there is a special project where I have to work from home. My main tasks are collecting information related to a certain project and analyzing data.

By the way, if you apply for a specific HIWI job, be aware that German employers expect a very good knowledge in this field from you! In addition to that, it is very important in Germany to be organized, to have a good time management and to work precisely. Regular meetings with my boss are necessary in order to show him/her my working progress, to discuss problems, receive advice and new tasks. The advantages of such a HIWI job are numerous: for example, you get practical experience, you can improve your German, and you get to know the German working culture. This is especially interesting if you want to work in Germany after your studies or in an enterprise that cooperates with Germany. Last but not least, such a job has the positive side effect of helping you finance your studies!”

How a HIWI’s week looks like

“Hi guys, my name is Bilali. I am from India and I’m studying Electrical & Computer Engineering. Besides my studies I have a HIWI job in my faculty in order to finance my living expenses and to get practical experience. Usually, I work eight hours per week and luckily I can choose when I work.

Thus, I planned my week as shown in the schedule below. Usually, I work with Excel and analyze data or I create websites and update them routinely. Sometimes I get special tasks such as supporting the faculty’s employees at events or assisting my boss during his lectures. Therefore, it is advisable to still have some extra time so that I can exchange work and free time, if necessary. These extraordinary tasks, problems, and my working progress are discussed every week during our regular meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical HIWI Week</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AM</strong></td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Appointment with my employer and HIWI-work in my faculty</td>
<td>Self-study and preparing for lectures</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PM</strong></td>
<td>HiWI-work in my faculty</td>
<td>Seminars</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
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I would be very happy to answer your questions or I create websites and update them routinely. Sometimes I get special tasks such as supporting the faculty’s employees at events or assisting my boss during his lectures. Therefore, it is advisable to still have some extra time so that I can exchange work and free time, if necessary. These extraordinary tasks, problems, and my working progress are discussed every week during our regular meetings.
In general, foreigners holding a residence permit for their studies in Germany are already allowed to work as a HiWi. Additionally, they can take up a certain amount of work, e.g., in an enterprise, of up to 120 full days (or 240 half days) per year without needing the approval of the Federal Employment Agency for this job. The work permit is already included in the legal provisions of the residence permit. (see fig. 1) EU-citizens usually do not need a permit to work in Germany, provided that they have a valid passport or a German identity card and comply with German employment laws and regulations. However, there are some exceptions for special countries; thus, it is always advisable to check with the immigration authorities.

2.2 How many hours am I allowed to work?
Generally, a HiWi works 20–40 hours per month, but there is a working limit of 19 hours per week. A HiWi often has the chance to organize the working hours by himself/herself according to his/her study schedule. Therefore, please talk to your supervisor. If you want to have several jobs at the same time, be aware that they do not interfere with your studies and that taxes may have to be paid (see 2.4).

2.3 How long can I be employed as a HiWi?
Usually, at the beginning of your employment the contract lasts only three months or one semester as the so-called trial period. If everything is fine, the contract is extended every semester/every two semesters. In total, HiWis cannot be employed for more than six years! Exception: You have worked as a studentischer HiWi for six years and you received a degree afterwards - you can then work an additional six years as a wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft.

2.4 Do I have to pay wage taxes and social security contributions?
It depends on your income:

A: Jobs where you earn less than € 520 (Minijob)
In this case, no wage taxes have to be paid. Furthermore, no costs for the social security contribution occur. However, pay attention: If you have several minijobs at the same time, thus earning more than € 520 per month (incl. special payments, e.g., Christmas bonus), you will have to pay the taxes!
Check: www.minijob-zentrale.de

B: Jobs where you earn more than € 520
You are committed to pay wage taxes and social security contributions. If you earn less than € 850 per month¹, you will usually be reimbursed (only exception is the pension insurance) at the end of the year. For this, you will have to complete an income tax return form (Einkommensteuererklärung), which you can get at the fiscal authorities (Finanzamt). The taxes are automatically deducted from your salary every month. Check: https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/jobs/social-security/german

2.5 Do I receive additional payments?
Once a year you receive a Christmas bonus (Weihnachtsgeld), which is an annual payment and is paid in November, but only if you are employed on December 1. This payment differs from year to year and is about 50% of your normal wage.

2.6 Do internships/Master theses in industry count as work?
Compulsory internships that are part of your study program or Master thesis/study projects in companies do not require an approval of the immigration authorities. This also applies if you are paid as the work is covered by the relevant purpose of residence. The approval-free working days of 120 full days (see 2.1) remain unaffected! Voluntary internships require approval.

¹ Depending on your income.
2.7 What if I get sick?
If you get sick and cannot come to work, you must inform your supervisor immediately.
If it takes longer than three days, you have to hand in a confirmation of a doctor. You will continue to be paid if your illness does not exceed six weeks.

2.8 What is the content of the labor contract?
First of all, you have to state some personal data (name, date & place of birth, current address). Then, you and your employer agree on working hours per week (maximum 19 hours) and the duration of your contract (start and end of it). Consider that your contract ends without a cancellation, latest with your final examination or when your visa expires. Although a HiWi contract can be extended, it does not mean that you can automatically get a full-time job after your studies!
The salary, which is only paid for work that is really done, is fixed and depends on whether you have a degree or not. Your workplace usually is in Kaiserslautern.

Helpful links:


3. LOOKING FOR A HIWI-JOB

3.1 Research on your own: notice boards, online database, professors
If you want to apply for a job, you first have to consider which job you want and are able to perform! Be aware of the different kinds of jobs and, accordingly, their different demands and requirements: For example, if you want to support in teaching and tutoring, your German has to be more fluent than in the field of programming, databases, etc. HiWi jobs are commonly announced on notice boards of the faculty or on public notice boards, thus, walk around the university attentively! Many faculties also publish their offers on their websites, so just have a look on many department/chair websites under the points News or Aktuell.

Be careful: Many faculties only publish their job offers on their German pages, not on the English ones! It is also advisable to check the websites of the research institutes surrounding the university (Science & Innovation Alliance KL) as well as those of bigger enterprises in the city of Kaiserslautern (PRE-Park). In addition, you can also look for jobs in general databases in the internet, but this is often not very effective (offers are Germany-wide). You should also consider that these jobs are not real HiWi-jobs, therefore, conditions and salary may vary.

Helpful links: http://jobs.meinestadt.de/kaiserslautern http://jobboerse.arbeitsagentur.de

3.2 Application
Usually, it is mentioned which form of application is wanted. If not or if you are not sure about the requirements, call the contact person, show your interest and ask for the ongoing procedure. If you are requested to send your application via e-mail, transfer your documents into a pdf-document since this can be opened and read by everybody.

3.3 Glossary – Important Terms in Job Descriptions in German

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. How to read a job advertisement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>die Bewerbung für/um eine Stelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Verwaltungsaufgaben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Analyse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Lebenslauf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Bewerbungsfrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die (Schul-)Ausbildung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Erfahrung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Weiterbildung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Bruttoeinkommen</td>
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<tr>
<td>die Interessen (pl.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>das Vorstellungsgespräch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Stellenausschreibung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Kenntnisse (pl.),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Qualifikation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sometimes, professors and assistants look for HiWis on their own, which means they “observe” their students and offer the best of them a job personally. So, be friendly, open-minded and hard-working! Another option is that you ask the faculty/institute/chair directly if they need a HiWi. Be informed who is the right contact person and be prepared for upcoming questions such as “What are you skills?”, “How much time do you have for work and when can you work?”. You can also ask fellow students whether they know about vacant HiWi positions or if they can introduce you to potential employers.
B. How to write a job application

Sehr geehrte (Damen und Herren)

Dear (Sir or Madam/Dear Sirs and Madams)

das Vorstellungsgespräch
(job interview)

sich um etwas bewerben
(to) apply for sth.

die ausgeschriebene Stelle
advertised job/position

der voraussichtliche Abschluss
anticipated/estimated time of graduation

Grundkenntnisse (pl) haben in...
(to) have basic knowledge in...

die Computerkenntnisse (pl)
computer skills

der Abschluss
degree

der Führerschein
driver’s licence

der beiliegende Lebenslauf
enclosed CV

die Erfahrung
experience

das außeruniversitäre Engagement
extra-curricular activities

Für weitere Informationen stehe ich Ihnen gerne zur Verfügung
For further information, please feel free to contact me at anytime

mit freundlichen Grüßen,
Yours sincerely,.../Yours faithfully,...

Ich freue mich darauf, bald von Ihnen zu hören./ Ich freue mich, auf Ihre baldige Antwort...
I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

mit freundlichen Grüßen,
Yours sincerely,.../Yours faithfully,...

Über eine Einladung zum Vorstellungsgespräch würde ich mich freuen
I would appreciate an invitation to a job interview

Ich habe gute Kenntnisse in/bei...
I am very competent in...

Ich möchte mich um (…) bewerben / Hiermit bewerbe ich mich um...
I would like to apply for...

detailliert
in detail

In Bezug auf Ihre Stellenausschreibung...
In response to your advertisement...

die Interessen (pl.)
interests

das Praktikum
internship, (work) placement

die Kenntnisse (pl.), die Qualifikation
knowledge, qualification

die Sprachkenntnisse (pl.)
language skills

der Studienschwerpunkt/die Vertiefung
major field of study, course specialization

Meine Aufgaben waren...
My tasks were...

die Nationalität
nationality

die Muttersprache
native language

mündlich
oral

höflich
polite

kompetent
proficient

programmieren
programming

zuverlässig
reliable

das Auslandssemester
semester abroad

die Fähigkeit, die Qualifikation
skill, capability, qualification

teamfähig
team-oriented

die Arbeitserfahrung
work experience

das selbständige Arbeiten
independent working

schriftlich
written

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,...
Yours sincerely,.../Yours faithfully,...
C. How to write a CV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>zusätzliche Qualifikationen</th>
<th>additional qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>die Anschrift</td>
<td>address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Grundkenntnisse (pl.)</td>
<td>basic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Computerkenntnisse (pl.)</td>
<td>computer skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geburtsdatum</td>
<td>date of birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Führerschein</td>
<td>driver’s license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>außeruniversitäres Engagement</td>
<td>extra-curricular activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Lieblingsfächer (pl.)</td>
<td>favorite subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fließend (in)</td>
<td>fluent (in)…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Hobbys/Interessen</td>
<td>hobbies, interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Praktikum</td>
<td>internship, (work) placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Kenntnisse</td>
<td>knowledge, qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprachkenntnisse</td>
<td>language skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meine Aufgaben waren…</td>
<td>My tasks were…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Name</td>
<td>name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Nationalität</td>
<td>nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Muttersprache</td>
<td>native language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mündlich</td>
<td>oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Telefon</td>
<td>phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>der Geburtsort</td>
<td>place of birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Berufspraxis</td>
<td>professional practice</td>
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<td>die Schulausbildung</td>
<td>school education, schooling</td>
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<td>das Auslandssemester</td>
<td>semester abroad</td>
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<tr>
<td>das Studium</td>
<td>studies</td>
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<td>die Arbeitserfahrung</td>
<td>working experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schriftlich</td>
<td>written</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. APPLICATION FOR A HIWI-JOB

4.1 Different forms of application

4.1.1 Speculative application

If you are interested in working at a special department or working group or with a professor and there is no current job offer, it is a common practice to send a speculative application.

You should thereby:
- Find out the right contact person and his/her gender and title.
- Shortly introduce yourself.
- Explain why you are interested in a job at that particular department/research group/professor as a reason for your speculative application.
- Describe the benefits which you would bring, if you are offered that job position.
- Find out the responsible person, send him/her the application and call him/her if you do not get an answer within two weeks.

Please avoid:
- Writing mass-emails with a generic header and content.
- Sending your application to everyone in the department/group.

4.2 The application portfolio

The application portfolio consists of:
- a cover letter (Begleitschreiben)
- a CV (Lebenslauf)
- a passport photograph (Passfoto)
- university certificates (Zeugnisse)
- testimonials of previous employments (Empfehlungsschreiben)

4.2.1 The cover letter (Begleitschreiben)

The cover letter introduces yourself shortly and describes the reason why you are applying for the job. It should not just repeat the information given in the CV but point out what you can generally contribute to the institution and what makes you perfect for the job announced.

The cover letter should follow the rules of a formal business letter and should never be longer than one page! Its three paragraphs should be structured as follows:

Paragraph 1
- Reason why you are writing
- Where did you get to know from the ad?
- Short introduction of yourself
- Why are you interested in that job/company?

Be aware of the requirements!

This guideline describes a full process of application. Normally, for a HiWi-job only some aspects are of relevance: The best advice is sticking to the requirements of the ad. If you send a whole job application portfolio and if only a letter of motivation and short CV is required, the addressee won’t be amused. Furthermore, this reveals that you have not clearly read (or understood) the ad and, thus, are not really interested in the job!
The German Curriculum Vitae (CV) sums up your educational and academic background in a tabular and listed form and in a chronological order. The CV should normally not exceed one page! In Germany, a passport photograph is required. It is acceptable to insert a high resolution color scan.

Applications in Germany require more documents and a larger number of certificates than in other countries, e.g. school leaving certificates or references of past work experiences. However, for a HiWi-application the copy of your school leaving certificate/first university degree and one testimonial of a relevant previous job (if existing) will be sufficient. Attaching more documents if not required is not advisable! The application portfolio is either handed in by post mail or via email – proper scans in the correct order. Please put all certificates in one document, if possible. Please name CV, cover letter and certificates clearly. The latter with clearly arranged copies, e.g. in a plastic wrap or when more documents are required in a special portfolio.

**Categories of a CV:**
- Personal information (Persönliche Daten)
- Educational background (Schule und Studium)
- Relevant experience (Arbeitserfahrung/Berufspraxis)
- Other experiences (Zusätzliche Qualifikationen)
- Language and computer skills (Sprach- und Computerkenntnisse)
- Optional (usually not relevant for a HiWi-job):
  - Memberships, Associations, Conferences (Mitgliedschaften, Gesellschaften, Konferenzen)
  - Publications (Publikationen)
  - Awards & Grants (Ehren und Stipendien)

**4.2.3 Certificates & Testimonials (Zertifikate & Zeugnisse)**

Applications in Germany require more documents and a larger number of certificates than in other countries, e.g. school leaving certificates or references of past work experiences. However, for a HiWi-application the copy of your school leaving certificate/first university degree and one testimonial of a relevant previous job (if existing) will be sufficient. Attaching more documents if not required is not advisable! The application portfolio is either handed in by post mail or via email – proper scans in the correct order. Please put all certificates in one document, if possible. Please name CV, cover letter and certificates clearly. The latter with clearly arranged copies, e.g. in a plastic wrap or when more documents are required in a special portfolio.

**Helpful links, e.g.:**
- [www.mygeo.info/bewerbung.html](http://www.mygeo.info/bewerbung.html)
- [https://www.staufenbiel.de/magazin/bewerbung/bewerbungsschreiben/tipps.html](https://www.staufenbiel.de/magazin/bewerbung/bewerbungsschreiben/tipps.html)

**4.2.2 The CV (Lebenslauf)**

The German Curriculum Vitae (CV) sums up your educational and academic background in a tabular and listed form and in a chronological order. The CV should normally not exceed one page! In Germany, a passport photograph is required. It is acceptable to insert a high resolution color scan.

There are some required categories; however, the CV should represent your own unique educational and work experiences! Furthermore, the relevance of information differs from application to application, so please ask yourself what information is essential and dare to leave things out that are not decisive for the job you are applying for!

**Paragraph 2**
- Your offer
- Explain your qualifications and experiences corresponding to the requirements in the job advert
- Describe your motivation for the new job

**Paragraph 3**
- How will you proceed
- Express your delight to be invited for the job interview

**Appearance**

It is highly important that all application documents look professional and neat! A clear structure as well as no typographical or grammatical errors should go without saying! Take care not to mix styles or typing or change the order of lists. Do not use abbreviations!

Check examples of cover letters in the attachment

**Check a sample CV (English & German) in the attachment**

**Language**

In general, cover letter and CV should be in the language of the advertisement. If you are not able to write the application in that language, please contact the addressee in advance. However, for jobs where no language skills are required (e.g. most technical HiWi-jobs) applications in English should be accepted. In any case, it is more polite to ask in advance.

**5. INTERVIEW FOR A HIWI-JOB**

Normally, there is no formal job interview for a HiWi-job. Commonly you apply, are invited and just discuss aspects of the work with your direct supervisor. Questions on your education, motivation or on the institution you are applying at won’t be asked. However, it is advisable to be prepared!

**5.1 How to prepare for the interview?**

- Make an honest evaluation of your professional strengths and weaknesses in advance and be able to present both of them in a positive, self-confident manner. The best option for discussing your weaknesses is to show that you are aware of them and have either overcome them or have methods for mitigating them so you can successfully complete a project.
- Research the company you will be interviewing with and, if possible, the person who will be interviewing you. Find out everything you can about the position you will be interviewing for in advance.
- Be aware of and try to understand any cross-cultural communication differences which may affect the interview process.

**5.2 What clothes should I wear?**

Suits or very formal clothes are not necessary; just make sure that you wear clean clothes! Proper jeans and a shirt/blouse will be sufficient for the job interview.

**5.3 How is the course of a job interview?**

- **Greeting:** Look into the eyes of the interviewer, shake hands and say “Guten Morgen/Guten Tag/Hallo Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs.” (know the exact title and name of your interviewer!) and then introduce yourself.
- **Ask the interviewer in what language he/she prefers to do the interview.** If you choose German, please note that you should use the formal “Sie” as address as well as the title of the interviewer (Prof. or Dr.) or just “Herr” and “Frau” if he/she does not have one. In English and German it is common to combine a formal address with the person’s last name, never with the first name!
- **Ask questions about the job/the interviewer’s comments/workin**

**Make sure you are on time!**

If you are late or cannot come, inform your counterpart early enough and in person or by phone!
Know your strengths and be able to...

Don't

Use clear and short words and think of

Structure of your sentence

Listen attentively and also ask well-thought questions that show your competence and interest.

Answer the questions of the interviewer precisely and concise while maintaining the eye contact.

Be confident. Be knowledgeable but not a "know-it-all".

Know your strengths and be able to articulate them. What can you bring to that position that will make an immediate positive impact?

Never use "Du". Please always address your interviewer with the formal "Sie".

Switch off your cell phone! Give full attention to your interviewer!

5.5 What are sample interview questions and how should I answer them?

"Please introduce yourself in some sentences."
Mention your name, country of origin, age, degree, study course, specialization and reference to the job. Do not expect that the interviewer has read your CV or letter of motivation in detail, repeat central points or incorporate the relevant points into your answers!

"What do you know about our institution and why are you interested in working here?"
Show that you have done your homework about the institution and the job you are applying for.

"Tell me about your education so far."
List your university education and work experience that is important for the job you are applying for. Try to point out the experiences and competencies that you have made in each step and their relevance to the job you are interested in.

"Tell me about your current research/project etc."
Use the answer to tell how your research can be used by the institution you are applying at.

"Do you have any work experience?"
Job description of former jobs and what you have learned from that job in short but professional terms!

"Tell me about your experiences with xy-software/a special work task."
This might be a test if you have really done what you mentioned in your CV. Thus, do not exaggerate and be prepared to describe your experiences in short but professional terms!

"What is your motivation for this job? Why are you ideal for this job?"
Be able to describe your strengths and competencies and be prepared to back them up with an example.

"How good is your German?"
Be prepared to answer in German and be honest in your answer. Differentiate your oral and written competencies and point out how you can manage the job with your language capacities. Speak about further learning only if you really intend to do so and describe the aim of your current course.

"How much time do you have for the job?"
Think before about the maximum time that you can work, think about the possible days and hours of work. Be able to make concrete propositions.

6. WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU GOT THE HIWI-JOB

Before you start working, several administrative and social tasks have to be accomplished:

6.1 Work contract
Your direct supervisor or a secretary will pass you over a HiWi-contract that you have to fill in and sign. It consists of:

• Personalblatt: personal data form
• Verpflichtung zur Einhaltung des Dateneheimmess: agreement to maintain confidentiality
• Belehrung einer studentischen/wiss. Hilfs-

kraft: instructions for a student assistant

In most cases the contract is limited to one semester; usually it can be extended up to a limit of six years. If you achieve your final examination, the contract automatically comes to an end. This is possible as a HiWi's contract is a contract of a special kind (thus, it can be terminated at any time). Furthermore, a contract has to be terminated if a student's residence permit or visa expires. Please fill in the forms as soon as possible and give them back directly to your supervisor. If you need help with some expressions, please come to the ISGS and ask one of our HiWis or the staff. Please come with concrete problems or questions! If you have specific questions concerning administration, money, etc., please contact your employer directly or ask the university personnel department: Personalabteilung,

Extension of a HiWi-contract
Note that the extension of your HiWi-contract needs some time in the university administration. Thus remind your employer in time of the extension of your contract!

building 47, 8th floor, room 832. Some documents have to be added to the HiWi-form:

• Certified photocopy of your passport or residence permit (Arbeitsgenehmigung or Arbeitserlaubnis) that allows you to work
• Digitalized wage tax card (Lohnsteuerkarte) which you can get at the fiscal authorities
• Photocopy of the social security number (Sozialversicherungsnr.) that you automatically get from the pension insurance institutes
Try to set a good climate at the first meeting by letting the supervisor be the “leader” of the conversation. However, dare to express things that are very important for you, e.g. if you cannot work Fridays. Try to find out if your supervisor expects you to work independently or if he/she wants to have regular reports. After about four weeks of work, please make an appointment with your supervisor and evaluate your working-cooperation together. Ask him/her if you should change anything or tell him/her that you need more clear instructions, etc.

In general: Discuss personal things that affect your work very early and in a reserved way, e.g. if you have an internship of four weeks duration and therefore need some time off or if you want to go home for a longer holiday.

6.2 First meeting with your supervisor

Please make an appointment with your direct supervisor as soon as all administrative things are ready and discuss with him/her:

- Your tasks (regular tasks, projects, etc.)
- Working hours (how many, fixed time or flexible)
- Place of work (at home, at the institute)
- Working method (guidance of your supervisor, team-work with your supervisor, independent work)
- Communication (via email, regular meetings)
- Personal arrangements (e.g. holidays)

Ask him/her whether it is a common practice at the institute/department that HiWIs document their work & working hours in a worksheet or schedule (Stundennachweis), see annex. Thus, it will be possible for you to prove that you have done your work and fulfilled all your hours! If this is not the case, ISGS suggests that you list your tasks and hours needed for yourself.

Criticism

Germans are fond of honest and clear criticism. Thus, if someone criticizes you, try not to take it personal, but rather consider how it could help to improve your work!

6.3 Introduction at the institution and to the colleagues

Upon start of your work you should introduce yourself to your institution or the group you are working with. If you do not want to present yourself to every colleague on your own, ask your supervisor if he/she can show you around. Do not forget to greet the secretary, the technician, etc. and the head of the institute in a respectful way. If you meet a new person, shake hands, introduce yourself with your full name and keep eye contact while doing one or two sentences of small talk.
# 7. ANNEX

## 7.1 Sample Working Sheet for HiWis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>short task description</th>
<th>for (Staff/Supervisor)</th>
<th>Time from - to</th>
<th>total working time</th>
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</table>

**Monthly working time:**

- 3 h-contract: 13 hours
- 4 h-contract: 17 hours
- 6 h-contract: 26 hours
- 8 h-contract: 34 hours

**Working time during this month**

- Monthly working time according to contract
- Transfer/previous month
- Transfer/current month
- Total working time (+/-)
**Resume**

**Name:** Max Mustermann  
**Address:** Musterstraße 1  
676xx Kaiserslautern  
Berlin  
02 Mai 1982  
German  
**Telephone:** +49 123 - 45678910  
**Email:** Max.mustermann@uni-kl.de

**Education:**
- Since October 2010 to October 2010: Master program „Bioprocess Engineering“ at the TU Kaiserslautern  
- October 2007 - July 2010: Bachelor program "Mechanical Engineering" at the TU Kaiserslautern, July 2010: B.Sc. Mechanical Engineering (Grade 1.8)  
- August 2000 – June 2007: High School xy,in xy

**Work Experience:**
- August 2008 – July 2010: Internship at John Deere, Mannheim, Department of Emission Technologies  
Tasks: xy, vz  
- July 2010 – October 2010: Student research assistant in the Department of Bioprocess Engineering  
Tasks: xy, yz

**Additional Qualifications:**
- July 2010: Presentation at Conference of „Bioprocess Engineering at Interfaces“ at the Dresden University of Technology, Title: xy  
- Since August 2009: Member of KARAT (Kaiserslautern Racing Team – Students as vehicle manufacturers) in the field of „Motor”

**Computer Knowledge and Foreign Language Skills:**
- Computer knowledge: MS Office, Solid Edge, ANSYS, LabVIEW  
- Foreign language skills: English: Fluent in spoken and written language  
  French: Basic knowledge

---

**LEBENSLAUF**

**Name:** Max Mustermann  
**Anschrift:** Musterstraße 1  
12345 Kaiserslautern  
**Geburtsort:** Berlin  
**Geburtsdatum:** 02.05.1982  
**Staatsangehörigkeit:** Deutsch  
**Telefon:** 0123 - 45678910  
**Email:** Max.mustermann@uni-kl.de

**Studium und Schule:**
- Ab 10/2010: Masterstudium der Bioverfahrenstechnik an der TU Kaiserslautern  

**Arbeitserfahrung/Berufspraxis:**
Aufgaben: xy, vz  
- 07/2010 – 10/2010: Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft (HiWi) am Lehrstuhl für Bioverfahrenstechnik  
Aufgaben: xy, yz

**Zusätzliche Qualifikationen:**
- Seit 08/2009: Mitglied bei KARAT (Kaiserslautern Racing Team – Studenten als Fahrzeughersteller) im Bereich „Motor”

**Sprach- und Computerkenntnisse:**
- Computerkenntnisse: MS Office, Solid Edge, ANSYS, LabVIEW  
- Sprachkenntnisse: Englisch: fließend in Wort und Schrift  
  Französisch: Grundkenntnisse

---

Kaiserslautern, 15.03.2011  
Max Mustermann
7.4 Sample Cover Letter for an Application for a HiWi-job

Max Mustermann
Musterstraße 1
676xx Kaiserslautern
Tel.: 0123 45678910
E-Mail: max.mustermann@uni-kl.de

TU Kaiserslautern
Fachbereich Maschinenbau – und Verfahrenstechnik
Lehrstuhl für Bioverfahrenstechnik
Dipl.-Ing. Frank Beispiel
Gottlieb-Daimler-Straße 42
676xx Kaiserslautern

Application for a Student Assistant for/ at xy

Dear Prof./ Dr. / Mr. / Mrs. FirstName LastName,

I would hereby like to apply for the position of a student/ research assistant for xy.

My name is xy und I am currently studying xy (study program) in my xy. semester at the TU Kaiserslautern.
I am especially interested in xy and have attended multiple lectures about this field during my studies.
I have a good knowledge of the programming languages xy and basic knowledge in xy.

Alongside my studies, I have worked as xy at xy / I have completed an internship at xy in the field of xy. There, my tasks consisted of xy...

Enclosed please find my resume in which my knowledge and abilities as well as my language skills are listed.

It would be my pleasure to support you in your work.

For any further questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

_____________________________
Max Mustermann

7.5 Sample Cover Letter for a Master thesis

Max Mustermann
Musterstraße 1
12345 Kaiserslautern
Tel.: 0123 45678910
E-Mail: max.mustermann@uni-kl.de

TU Kaiserslautern
Fachbereich Maschinenbau – und Verfahrenstechnik
Lehrstuhl für Bioverfahrenstechnik
Dipl.-Ing. Frank Beispiel
Gottlieb-Daimler-Straße 42
67655 Kaiserslautern

Application for a Master thesis

Dear Mr. X,

My name ist xy and I am currently studying xy (course of studies) in my xyth semester at the University of Kaiserslautern. I will complete my last examinations in xy (month) and am planning to write my Master thesis starting from xy (month).
I would be very pleased to have the opportunity of carrying out my thesis within the framework of an industrial project in your company.
I became acquainted with your company through … / which seems to be suitable for my intention because ….
Due to my fields of study/ my areas of concentration / experiences I am especially interested in the working field of xy / of the xy department.

I have advanced knowledge in the programming languages xy and basic knowledge in xy.
Besides my studies, I have worked as xy at xy/ I have completed an internship at xy in the field of xy. My tasks there included xy.
Enclosed please find my CV which contains additional information about my qualifications and language skills.

I would appreciate being able to broaden the knowledge I have received during my studies within the scope of my Master thesis and in practice of your company.

I would be glad to answer any further questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

_____________________________
Max Mustermann
Notes:

―― Exclusion of Liability:
    All information is without guarantee.
    Please note that we assume no responsibility for acts performed due to our information, the
    up-to-dateness, correctness and completeness of the contents of these freely usable pages.
FAQ about Student Assistants in Germany

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: ISGS

Become a STUDENT ASSISTANT & find your HiWi-part time job

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Publisher:
Department of International Affairs: ISGS

Contact:
Technische Universität Kaiserslautern
Department of International Affairs: ISGS
Gottlieb-Daimler-Str. 47
67663 Kaiserslautern, Germany
Tel: +49 (0) 631 - 205 4998
E-Mail: info@isgs.uni-kl.de
Web: www.uni-kl.de/international

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Finanziert aus Mitteln des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) mit freundlicher Unterstützung des DAAD.