Universität
Bonn
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The University

The University of Bonn was founded almost 200 years ago and is considered to be one of Germany's and indeed Europe's most important institutes of higher education. As home to over 29,000 students, we enjoy an outstanding reputation both at home and abroad.

The University of Bonn is one of the world's leading research based Universities and therefore it is no surprise that we operate on an international level. We particularly specialize in the fields of research and teaching and this has led to its evolution into the position of a truly prominent international institution. With an outstanding reputation both at home and abroad, Bonn is without question one of Germany's leading universities.

Founded in the age of Idealism and the Enlightenment, the University of Bonn was furnished with the spirit of Wilhelm von Humboldt. Even in our first few decades, the liberal approach of the University ensured that we grew very rapidly. The early stages of our development saw eminent scholars, many high-potential students who were to later become household names and indeed many of the blue-blooded sons of Germany's royal houses come to learn in Bonn.

Unfortunately, the sustained growth and reputation that had been achieved came to an abrupt end when in January 1933, the Nazis seized power. Tragically, this saw many professors and students have to leave the University due to their being Jews or dissidents. The loss of such intellectuals was then followed by the physical destruction of the University. On 18 October 1944, Bonn was the subject of fierce aerial bombardment and this resulted in the main University building along with much of the city centre being destroyed.

However, the post Second World War period saw positive changes - a large-scale reconstruction effort was matched with new facilities for the University and a steady increase in student numbers. This period saw the University of Bonn rediscover our great traditions. Furthermore, we were able to expand upon our international approach and this resulted in our gaining an outstanding reputation and becoming even more attractive an Institution to students, teaching staff and researchers alike, from both Germany and abroad.
The International Office

The international approach to research and teaching has a long tradition in Bonn. The International Office is at the very centre of the university’s international exchange activities. It provides support and advice to international students and researchers, and co-ordinates projects and programmes in co-operation with our international partner institutions.

The University of Bonn’s international office is analogous to UCC’s International Education Office. If you have any questions, concerns, or troubles regarding University of Bonn or your time there, please do not hesitate to contact the University of Bonn’s international office.

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A full list of other departmental co-ordinators may be found at:
Bonn

The university, its faculties, centres and facilities form a "city within the city". And both of these cities are closely intertwined. Everywhere you go, you come across students and the academic world. Town and gown: Bonn and "its" university form a harmonious and intimate unity.

The university uses more than 350 buildings scattered all over the Bonn area. The most impressive site is undoubtedly the historic Main Building located in the city centre. It was originally the palatial residence of the prince electors and is now home to the arts and the theological faculties. Together with the adjacent Hofgarten Park, this architectural landmark is an important ingredient of The University of Bonn's unmistakable charm.

Other important university sites include the Juridicum, for Law and Economics, located a short distance south of the Main Building, the grand buildings in Poppelsdorf, which house the agricultural and natural science faculties, and the University Clinic, set high atop Venusberg.
Travel

By Plane:
Three airports connect Bonn to the rest of the world:
- Cologne/Bonn
  - Cologne/Bonn is just 35km outside of the city. After disembarking at the airport, take bus line 670. Bus fare from the airport to Bonn is approximately €6.
- Frankfurt/Main
  - Trains are the easiest method of getting from Frankfurt airport to Bonn. A single ticket may cost between €29 and €68, depending on the train taken and the time of booking.
- Dusseldorf
  - A train is also the easiest form of transportation between Dusseldorf and Bonn. A train ticket costs approximately €15.

By Train:
The Deutsche Bahn is the main train service by which people travel into and out of Bonn. Tickets can be bought in person, online, or from ticket machines. Credit cards are accepted. More information can be found at www.bahn.de.

Accommodation

Ms. Hihn
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Abteilung Studentisches Wohnen
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All Erasmus students can apply for a reasonably-priced room in a student dormitory. Applications for the winter term are due 20 July, and applications for the summer term are due 10 February. The application form for housing can be found at www.erasmus.uni-bonn.de > Housing in Bonn. More information on student housing can be found at www.studentenwerk-bonn.de > Wohnen.

Students who do not wish to reside on university-affiliated housing are welcome to pursue private accommodation. Useful websites for finding private accommodation include:
- www.asta-bonn.de
- www.studenten.wg.de
- www.wg-gesucht.de
- www.bonn.studenten-wohnung.de
Admissions

All Erasmus students at the University of Bonn must enrol at the university. In order to do this, students must present the following:

- Enrolment Form (handed out during orientation. Students who arrive after orientation must speak with their departmental co-ordinator)
- Valid ID or Passport
- Health Insurance Certificate (or “Befreiungsbescheinigung” for students receiving private insurance)

Enrolment will take place as part of the International Office’s orientation programme at the beginning of the semester. After enrolment, all students will receive a provisional student ID card and a money transfer form in order to pay your fees. A final student ID card will be sent by the Registrar’s Office to your address in Bonn.

After moving into your residence and signing your tenancy contract, you must register yourself with the city of Bonn within a week. You will receive the form for this process during the orientation programme.

Academics

In German universities a 1 to 5 scale is used:

- 1,0-1,3 sehr gut (very good: an outstanding achievement)
- 1,7-2,3 gut (good: an achievement, which lies substantially above average requirements)
- 2,7-3,3 befriedigend (satisfactory: an achievement, which corresponds to average requirements)
- 3,7-4,0 ausreichend (sufficient: an achievement, which still meets the requirements)
- 4,3-5,0 nicht ausreichend / nicht bestanden (not sufficient / failed: an achievement, which does not meet the requirements)

Libraries

Bonn has a variety of libraries, the most prominent of which are the general university library (“Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek” or “ULB”) and the public library of Bonn. The University also contains smaller, more specialized libraries covering an array of disciplines. All materials possessed by the University are accessible via the main catalogue. Anything that is not in the catalogue may be requested from the University or loaned through an Inter-Library Loan system.

To use the libraries at the University, a student must have a library card. This is gained by going to the library’s front desk with a student ID card and the registration certificate received after registering oneself with the city of Bonn.
Computer Rooms

All students at Bonn have free access to the internet in the University Library as well as in the CIP pools, where computer use is free of charge. Some CIP pools, however, may only be used by students in a specific department. Some CIP pools also require users to make a one-time purchase of a magnetic ID card, which is sold for €10.

Practical Matters

Health Insurance

In Germany, all students require health insurance. Citizens of EU member states are required to have a European Health Insurance Card. Students from Turkey require an A/T 11. The forms for both are available at health care institutions in the respective countries.

A semester fee is due upon enrolment that includes insurance coverage for accidents that may occur while on university grounds or en route from the university to the place of your residence. It is further recommended that students take out a form of liability insurance in Germany, as the liability insurance from their home country may not be valid in Germany.

Acclimation and Immersion

The University of Bonn operates an orientation programmes for incoming Erasmus and international students that covers, among other topics, the matter of adjusting oneself to life in Bonn and making the most of one’s stay there. During this orientation, students will be introduced to a number of different societies and programmes that will aid them in their attempts to absorb the culture of Bonn.

The University also supplies incoming Erasmus students with an Erasmus Student Guide, which will provide them with a source of information regarding activities in Bonn, student groups, sports facilities, and general information about the University and the city.

German Language Courses

The University of Bonn strongly suggests that incoming Erasmus students have a good knowledge of German in order to be able to properly follow their classes. It provides links to several websites at which one might test one’s aptitude with the German language. The websites are:

- http://www.goethe.de/cgi-bin/einstufungstest/einstufungstest.pl

German language courses are available for incoming Erasmus students both before and during the semester of study at the University of Bonn.
Sports Facilities

The University offers 90 different types of sports and over 400 sports classes, many of which are free of charge. All students have free access to the University’s sports facility, which contains football and volleyball fields, a gym, and many other sports facilities. Access to these facilities is dependent upon the possession of a student ID card, which will be distributed upon registration during the orientation programme. Students who are unable to attend the orientation programme must contact the International Office in order to pursue other means of receiving the ID card.

The University also has several student sports clubs that international students may join. Membership to these clubs is usually free, though some may require a small fee in order to cover the provision of basic materials for the respective sport.

More information on the University’s sports facilities may be found at:

http://www.sport.uni-bonn.de/sportangebot

Tips from UCC Students

Academic Matters

- The workload at Bonn is similar to that at UCC. It may seem like a lot more, and more difficult, but that is only because it is in German. Taking the German language courses are a great help.
- More advanced courses at Bonn might be better taken in the 2nd semester, when your grasp of the language has improved.
- The lecturers are very flexible and helpful, but be sure to approach them early in the semester and let them know that you are an Erasmus student.
- The main library on the campus can be confusing and rather like a maze, so it may be a better use of your time to use your department-specific library. Each department has its own.
- The German language courses are extremely helpful. They take a lot of stress out of attending your other courses, as you won’t be confused and only understanding half of what is said.
- The fact that German is your second language is not taken into account in the exams.

Accommodation

- Many of the student accommodation buildings are located within a short distance of the University of Bonn.
- Bed linens are provided in most, if not all, accommodation buildings. Kitchen and bathroom facilities tend to be shared between residents of a suite.
- Always be sure to look through the peephole before opening the door of your residence to visitors.
● Bring pictures of home to put on the walls.

Travel

● The best flight path students have travelled seems to be from Dublin airport into Dusseldorf. It has been the most affordable. Dublin to Cologne is also convenient, as Cologne is very close to Bonn.
● Koln is the nearest city to Bonn, sitting at about ½ hour away. Amsterdam and Luxembourg are about 2 ½ hours away, all by train. The Deutsche Bahn is the best way to travel
● Get a “Bahncard.” It costs €50, but it also gets you discounts on your travels and it is great for longer trips on the train.

Bureaucracy

● The German bureaucracy may seem confusing at first, but it all sorts itself out quickly. It is important to remember that the German word for “to register” is “anmelden.” You’ll see it plenty!
● Bring your passport everywhere you register, and definitely bring a handful of passport-sized photographs.
● In case your European Health Insurance Card isn’t accepted or recognized by an individual working at a hospital, bring the form given to you by the health insurance people at the University of Bonn. It will say that you do not have to pay. This should rarely happen, but it is best to be on the safe side of things.

Social

● Buy local newspapers and magazine, and listen to local TV, radio, and music.
● Immerse yourself in the culture.
● Try to interact with German students and the local community. The University offers loads of ways to do this with its clubs and societies.
● Though many Germans speak English, try to attempt German after you have learned some of the language. They are even friendlier than they usually are if you show an attempt!

General

● Don’t give up and go home early in the semester. It may feel difficult, but you’ll pull through fantastically. You will love your Erasmus study at Bonn!
● Unlock your mobile phone before you leave Ireland if you want to put a German SIM card in it.
● Look into phone cards – they are one of the cheapest ways to phone home.
● If you have a laptop and internet access in your accommodation, look into getting Skype or other internet phone packages.
● Look forward to Christmas. Bonn is at one of its best times during the Christmas season.