Guide to Finding Work in Germany
Career Service

Eva Maisel
08 October 2018
Welcome at University of Konstanz!

You have been admitted to the University of Konstanz, you are here to begin your studies – now you have four semesters before you need to think about the next step: FINDING A JOB (IN GERMANY)

WRONG. You need to start right now.

And the Career Service, the International Office and the departments are here to support and assist you.
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Walk-in consultation during lecture period: Mon, 2.00 – 3.30pm, room D411 (Eva Maisel) (20 minutes slots for small questions and application documents check) Please sign up on the list on the door.

Extensive individual consultation by appointment: Please write to career.service@uni-konstanz.de Please feel also free to ask your questions via e-mail or telephone.
Outline

What is the German job market?  Facts and figures  Employers’ expectations

How should I prepare?  Which skills you should acquire  and how you could acquire them

Where can I find jobs?  Where to look for openings  and how to apply

What happens when I found a job?  A few words about German business culture

The Career Passport program  How we help you to prepare for a career in Germany
German Labour Market – employment rates

In general

- **Low unemployment rate** (5.3% in 2018; especially amongst academics: 2.3% in 2017)

- Demand for high skilled workers – so called „**Fachkräftemangel**“ – especially in the field of IT and Engineering and in small and medium sized enterprises.

For recent graduates

- **Average time to find employment** after finishing degree: 4 months (ca. 60% after 3 months, 80% after 6 months, highly dependent on subject)*

- After 1.5 years, 69% are regularly employed (6% looking for work)*

* International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel 2014. Data for NRW
What do employers in Germany look for?

**Study performance**
- Final Grade
- Masters degree
- Standard period of studies
- University reputation

**Additional skills**
- English
- Internships
- Practical experience
- International experience
- Other languages
- Social engagement

What do you rate higher, an excellent final grade in standard time or practical experience via internships?

JobTrend 2017, Staufenbiel
What about German language knowledge?

- Persons with a fluent knowledge of German earn on average 22% more than persons with no or basic language knowledge (as well as 12% more than persons with good knowledge) and

- are 20% less likely overqualified for their position.

https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/ImFokus/Arbeitsmarkt/ZuwandererSprachkenntnisse.html
If I work at an international company in Germany, I won't need German skills.

Wrong:

- Contact to **German customers or business partners** will require German (you don't want to make communication hard for them).

- Even in an international team, you usually **have to talk to a German occasionally** (for example to an electrician).

German employers rate German language knowledge as highly important.
Outline

How should I prepare?

Which skills you should acquire

and how you could acquire them
Which skills should you have when applying for a job in Germany:

- Expertise – hard facts
- Practical skills – more than just internships
- (German) language knowledge
Expertise

What?

Knowledge you have gained through your studies or related projects.

How?

• Studying
• Doing project work
• Writing papers/thesis
• Joining conferences, scientific work shops, Summer schools
• ...
Practical skills

**What?**

All kinds of experiences where you were able to implement your expertise or gained practical knowledge.

**How?**

- Internships
- Student jobs
- Previous work experience
- Voluntary work/associations
- Key qualifications (SQ center)
- Project seminars
- …
Small note: Should I work during my studies?

Benefits of working during your studies:
• Income
• Practical experience – rated as important by employers
• Learning German faster
• Getting first hand experience of working with Germans
• …

Typical student jobs:
• Internship/Werksstudent -> first hand experience in potential working fields
• Hiwi (research assistant) -> insight into research, recommendable for students planning an academic career
• Part-time jobs: In all kinds of business fields (gastro/tourism, language schools, retail, offices…) -> soft skills, adaption to German (business) culture

Links to find student jobs:
• Career Service internship job portal and other selected portals:
• Research assistant position: advertised in CS job portal, department notice boards and department mailing lists.
• Part-time jobs in Konstanz:
  https://www.seezeit.com/Community/SuchenJobangebot.do

Further information on legal requirements:
„Legal requirements for working in Germany“, Alexandra Frasch (International Office)
Thursday, 15th of November, 5-6.30pm
Room G300
(German) language knowledge

What?

German language knowledge
English language knowledge
(Native language)
(Other languages)

Where to learn German?

• Uni courses
• Language schools
• Work
• Sports
• Tandem
• Voluntary work/associations
• …
Which specific skills should I acquire during my studies?

Orientation and information:

- read job advertisements
- research career biographies
- Portals informing about job perspectives (for example berufe.net and watchado.com in German)
- make contact, ask questions -> Career fair Kontaktspunkt on Nov 22
- make an appointment with the Career Service
Services you can use at Uni Konstanz

Career Service
- Workshops, career counselling, application check …
- Kompetenzportfolio Campus & Career (for persons with German language knowledge)
- uni-konstanz.de/cs

Career Passport
- Career related activities, portfolio for your skills
- informatik.uni-konstanz.de/beratung-und-service/career-passport/

SQ - Schlüsselqualifikationen
- Transferable skills, project management, workshops …
- uni-konstanz.de/sq

SLI - Sprachlehrinstitut
- (German) language courses, tandem …
- uni-konstanz.de/sli

Departmental Coordinators
- Help to find internships
- Information about potential working fields
Outline

Where can I find jobs? Where to look for openings and how to apply
Where to find job offers

- Job advertisements online or print (ca. 40%)
- Speculative application
- Offer after an internship/student job
- With help of friends, family, professors etc.
- Contact on a job fair (kontaktpunkt Nov 22) www.messen.de
- Career Networks (XING, Linkedin, …)
Which documents do I need to apply?

<table>
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<th>Optional Cover page</th>
<th>Cover letter</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>Certificates and reference letters</th>
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Put effort into compiling your documents – it’s a work sample!

An internship and a job application usually include the same documents.

**Always read the job advert carefully** for required documents:

Nothing mentioned or “vollständige Bewerbung“, „übliche Unterlagen“:
Cover letter, CV and Certificates/References

„Kurzbewerbung“: Only Cover letter and CV
German style application documents

Possible differences to other counties:
- maximum one page
- subject line mandatory
- own and company address mandatory
- Date mandatory
- Recommended to address a person directly
- 4-5 sections
- salary expectations only if asked for
- Signature, also if applying online
- …
German style application documents

Possible differences to other countries:
- personal details including photo
- focus on hard facts, no description of personality
- bullet point structure
- two pages are possible
- date and signature at the end
- clarity and brevity
- …
More information about application document formalities:

- **Seminar „Job Application Documents in Germany“**
  - Wed. 16 January at 5pm in G300

- **Career Guide (available in German and English)**

- **Get your application documents checked**
  - Mondays between 2pm and 3.30pm in D411 or send your documents to career.service@uni-kn.de

- **Download section of the Career Service website**
The job interview

Preparation is key!

- Gather information about the company
- prepare for standard questions
- plan your outfit and how to get to the office
- think of questions you would like to ask
- think about how to present your skills and yourself (but be authentic)
More information about job interviews:

Seminar „How to prepare for a job interview“
Wed. 6 February, 5pm in G300
Outline

What happens when I found a job?  A few words about German business culture
**German business culture**

**Reliability:**

Wherever you work in Germany, you are expected to be 100% reliable. This includes:

- You are expected to **fulfill your assignments**, this is your responsibility. Should there be a problem, **communicate openly and as early as possible**.

- Deutsche Pünktlichkeit: **Always be on time**, this includes deadlines as well as being on time for meetings etc.
German business culture

Structures and rules

German businesses usually have a structure (for example who makes certain decisions, how to address business partners, who is able to spend company money, how to apply for holidays) and a set of rules which all employers are expected to follow.

Such rules often exist in written form and/or are part of the work contract. Failing to comply with the rules can lead to a warning or even termination. Therefore, make sure you know the rules or ask beforehand if unclear.

Beware: There are also often hidden (hierarchical) structures.
German business culture

Task focussed

Most German companies and professional teams work very task focussed. This means:

- **Communication is very direct and straight forward.** This also applies to criticism, which is usually not intended to be personal. You are expected to have a **professional attitude towards criticism**.

- If your German colleagues or business partners do not share a lot of private information with you right from the beginning, this does not mean that they don’t like you. Most Germans separate between private and business, although you should be ready to make some small talk as well.
Outline

The Career Passport program

How we help you to prepare for

a career in Germany

Finding work in Germany
The Career Passport – boost your career opportunities!

Your way into a graduate job in Germany

The Career Passport Programme is designed to help prepare international degree-seeking students to successfully apply for graduate-level jobs in Germany. With our four-pillar programme lasting four semesters, students increase their employability and expedite their future integration into German working culture.

This programme will help you
- prepare effective application documents
- learn to handle Germany and the Germans
- acquire work experience during your studies
- meet your future employer at fairs and thorough networking events

We support you by
- providing regular email updates
- guiding you as you complete the programme
- offering a number of activities to choose from every semester
The Structure of Career Passport

- **Apply**
  - Mandatory activities
  - Compulsory elective activities (min. five)
  - Other activities

- **Speak**
  - B1/2 recommended (min.)
  - Two German courses/two departmental German courses (min.)

- **Live**
  - Take advantage of courses at the Centre for Transferable skills
  - Two activities (min.)

- **Work**
  - Fulltime internship (min. 6 weeks)
  - Possibly: master thesis with a company, voluntary work with an international students organisation (min. 60 hours/semester)
Steps to your Career Passport Certificate

1. Register for Career Passport programme http://www.informatik.uni-konstanz.de/career
2. Take your Career Passport to all activities you cannot register for in ZEuS to get a proof of your attendance (stamp and/or signature)
3. Take advantage of all mandatory activities and choose from compulsory elective activities as many you can (min. five)
4. Hand in your complete career passport to receive your certificate
5. Add your certificate to your applications
Register now!

On our website: informatik.uni.kn/career

Pick up your Career Passport and get started!
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