

University of Mannheim, Germany

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Mannheim is a city with affordable living expenses, there are many beautiful views and castles, rich history and cultures to explore. Especially the location of the city is just perfect to discover within Germany and travel in Europe, which make it an ideal place to live. Studying in University of Mannheim has made my life more colorful and the intensive courses definitely enhanced my personal development.

The University of Mannheim offers not only quality education but also a very international campus with around 1,000 exchange students per academic year. The program supports our learning by collaborating with leading companies that enable us to acquire many practical skills through guest lectures and case studies. Most of the school staffs and our classmates speak fluent English and willing to assist international students. Besides study, the student clubs organize several events, parties and day trip offers during the semester. Through these activities, I met many international friends and that has greatly enriched my connections to different cultures. In the following paragraphs, I will share my experiences with regard to visa application, different types of accommodation and transportation in Germany, my student life and some recommended places for shopping and eating in Mannheim.



Visa application in Taiwan:

Once you got accepted to the University of Mannheim, you will receive a confirmation letter from the university. Since the visa application to Germany requires many documents and may take up to three months, it would be better to start applying visa earlier. For the requirement of visa application, there are information listed on the website of [German Institute Taipei](#). Please be aware that you need to make an appointment online first, in my case, I applied the visa with two other students so it is eligible to make group appointment by email, you will be able to find all the guidelines on their website.

Visa extension in Germany:

In general case, you will need to extend your visa in Mannheim at least one time, the [office for citizen's service](#) is located at K7. You need to prepare 1) the filled out form for the visa extension, 2) your passport, 3) a confirmation of enrollment of the University, 4) a proof that you have a valid health insurance, 5) bank statements that prove you can finance your stay in Germany, 6) a proof that you have a lease agreement – contract with your landlord and 7) one passport size picture. The fee of visa extension for 12 months is about 113 euros.

Accommodation:

The University of Mannheim provides many spots in the dorm for international students, common types are 1) WG – private room with shared kitchen and bathroom and 2) Apartment – private room with kitchen and bathroom inside, you will receive email to inform you how to apply for these spots. Especially the dorms which are located in the city center are difficult to get so it is important to carefully read all the notices and follow the guidelines. In my personal opinion, it would be cheaper and more convenient to stay in the dorm. However, it is also possible to find private housing in Mannheim. In case you didn't get any place to stay in Mannheim before you depart, you can contact [Katharina Dröghoff](#) who works in the Mannheim double degree office for assistance. (**contact person may subject to change*)

Transportation:

It is easy to get around the city using public transport as there are regular bus services and tram lines that connect to Ludwigshafen and Heidelberg. Moreover, the semester fee of University of

Mannheim also includes a semester ticket for local public transportation, so there will not incur extra transport costs within the region covered by semester ticket. The most popular transportation for long distance travel among students is taking Flixbus, it offers affordable prices for trips near Germany. However, it is also possible to discover Germany and Europe by taking train, Deutsche Bahn (DB) is a German train company which provide faster and more convenient travel experience. For students in University of Mannheim, you can register Nextbike – local bike rental system in the city, it allows you to rent a bike for 30 minutes free of charge.

Student life:

Mannheim is a city with tons of leisure and culture activities, from festivals to big fairs. As mentioned before, you will be able to get one semester ticket which allows you to travel to near cities. There is an organization called [VISUM](#), they frequently organize activities such as hiking, day tour or international dinner, furthermore, you can sign up for the [buddy program](#) if you want to meet some more new international friends.

Shopping:

Mannheim is a city with relatively low living expenses compared with other big cities in Germany. However, eating at restaurants still quite costly, so learn how to cook is necessary. Here I list some shops that I go often and the restaurants that I like the most, please note that all shops close on Sunday in Mannheim.

Places for groceries:

Lidl, Aldi, Netto and Rewe are the biggest local supermarkets in Mannheim where you can find many kinds of fruits, vegetables, meats and almost all food you'll need for daily life. However, if you want to buy anything imported from Asia countries, there is an Asian supermarket located in the underground of Galeria Kaufhof, and there is 5% off if you show your student ID at the cashier.

Clothing store: C&A, Primark, H&M, Zara, Mango

Houseware store: Bauhaus, IKEA

Necessaries/stationaries: DM, Muller, Woolworth, TEDi

Electronics store: Satern

Asian food restaurant:

- Chang: 15% off for students
- Amas Thai Imbiss
- Ha Noi Pho
- Supan's Kuche
- Soban
- BORI

Conclusion:

IMBA Double Degree program provided a great opportunity for me to study abroad and experience multicultural environment as well as different life style. This is absolutely an unforgettable journey in my life and I hope this report could provide some more information for future students who wish to study in University of Mannheim.

