

Warning: rental scams

Unfortunately, international students searching for housing in a new country are sometimes targeted by fake flat listings and rental scams. Scammers take advantage of the fact that students may not know the local rental market well.

To protect yourself, please read the following tips carefully:

Watch out for the following red flags:

- Being asked to pay money before seeing the flat.
- Messages written in awkward or unnatural German is often a sign of automatic translation.
- Rent that seems way too cheap for the area or flat size.
- Listings with only professional photos but no chance to visit in person.
- "Landlords/landladies" who claim to be abroad and will send you keys after you have paid.

Stay safe by following these tips:

1. Always visit the flat yourself or ask someone you trust to do it for you.
2. Do not send any money before
 - You have seen the place,
 - You have signed a rental agreement with a verified landlord/landlady and
 - You are sure the offer is real.
3. Never sign contracts you do not understand. If you are unsure, contact the International Office for support.

If you suspect a scam:

- Do **not** send any money.
- Take screenshots of e-mails, listings or messages as evidence.
- Report the incident to the **police** and inform the International Office or send an e-mail to international.students@hsbi.de

Important:

In Germany, it is not common to pay rent or deposits via Western Union, PayPal (friends and family) or cryptocurrency. If someone asks for these payment methods, it is likely a scam.

Please note that the International Office is not affiliated with the offers made by private property owners and acts solely as an intermediary. While we are happy to assist you in establishing contact, any rental agreement or contract will be concluded directly between you and the property owner. The International Office assumes no liability for the content, execution or outcome of such agreements.

Kind regards,
International Office