



# PHD GUIDE

FOR PHD STUDENTS AT THE FACULTY OF BIOLOGY, UNIVERSITÄT INNSBRUCK

# Guideline for PhD students at the Faculty of Biology

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This document is an *unofficial guide for PhD students* at the Universität Innsbruck. We hope this guide will provide some orientation at the beginning of your PhD studies, and help you navigate through all formalities to the day of your defense.

We cannot guarantee that the information we give here is completely correct, so please make sure to read the legally binding texts from the official sources as well. If you have any questions or require help, you can contact your students' representatives ([stv-doktorat-natwi-technik@oeh.cc](mailto:stv-doktorat-natwi-technik@oeh.cc)), or the Dean of Studies of your faculty.

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The guide was adapted on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020 by the student's representatives "Stv PhD NatWi-Technik" Gabriella Fenkart, Magdalena Hagen and Maximilian Zanner.

## 1 Formalities: starting your studies

At the beginning of your PhD studies, you need to go through the following steps:

1. Find a main supervisor and a topic for your thesis
2. Enroll as a student in the corresponding PhD study program
3. Register your thesis topic and supervising committee by submitting an exposé and some paperwork to the examination office
4. Start using the online doctoral thesis agreement
5. Optional: apply for a doctoral program

These steps should typically be completed within the first few months of your PhD studies.

### 1.1 Find a supervisor

It is highly recommended that students first choose a supervisor, research group, and research topic, and ensure a more or less gapless funding (e.g., a job at their institute) for the duration of their PhD studies. However, being employed at the university and joining a research group does not automatically lead to your enrollment as a PhD student or vice versa. Nevertheless, finding a supervisor is no official prerequisite but it facilitates the further procedure and registration.

### 1.2 Enroll as a PhD student

The first formality you should take care of as soon as you start your PhD is enrolling as a student in the appropriate PhD program. Becoming a PhD student at UIBK is a two- step process: you first need to apply for admission, allowing the university to evaluate whether you are eligible for the PhD study course based on your previous education. Once admitted, you can enroll in the course.

- If you have previously studied at the Universität Innsbruck in a related field of study, you can apply for enrollment online via [LFU:online<sup>1</sup>](#), or personally at the “Studienabteilung” (Innrain 52, 6020 Innsbruck).
- In all other cases (diploma from another university in Austria or a foreign country, or diploma in a thematically removed field of study) you have to apply for the PhD study program in person at the “Studienabteilung” (Innrain 52, 6020 Innsbruck). The documents required vary depending on your nationality and degree(s) (you need the original versions of your diplomas, no copies!). The final decision about your acceptance into the program lies with the Dean of Studies. Especially in times of many applications (e.g., end of terms) it will last up to several weeks before the documents can be passed over to the Dean of Studies who makes the final decision.

**Important:** If you are to be employed by the university directly (as opposed to funding through grants or employment with other institutions), **you have to be admitted to the PhD program** (but not necessarily enrolled yet) **before you can start your contract.**

**Important:** Once you have enrolled in a PhD study program, you are formally registered as a PhD student but nothing else. Enrollment does not guarantee that you will get a supervising committee or a dissertation project. Vice versa, even if you already have a research project and a supervisor, you are not automatically enrolled as a PhD student.

**Tuition:** For students from the EU and some others, tuition is waived – please refer to the corresponding [university webpage<sup>2</sup>](#) for details. However, there is a small fee for everyone: Twice a year (at the beginning of each term), every student is required to pay a fee that helps financing the local students’ representation (ÖH<sup>3</sup>). **The payment of this fee is necessary in order to continue your enrollment.** The fee changes every year but is always very small (about 20€). Included is a third-party insurance and accident insurance, which means you have automatic coverage through the ÖH while on campus. You can pay the fee either online by bank transfer, or at the Service Points located on each campus. You can check whether you have paid the fee on [LFU:online<sup>4</sup>](#) by going to “my profile” and then “my tuition fee”. For more information on LFU:online and the ÖH, see below.

### 1.3 Register your thesis

Once you have enrolled as a student and discussed your research topic with your supervisor in more detail, you need to register your dissertation. Registering your dissertation amounts to announcing the preliminary topic of your thesis, the research you intend to do, and choosing your supervising committee. This is best done within the first weeks. Note that PhD students holding a university (!) PhD position will initially be hired on a 20 hour contract. The contract will be upgraded to 30 hours per week (with a corresponding higher salary) **only after registration of your thesis!** This does not apply for PhD students employed over funding by third-parties, projects etc., or students employed at other institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://lfuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/lfuonline.home>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/studium/organisation/kosten-foerderungen/studienbeitrag-und-foerderungen/studienbeitrag-und-foerderungen.html.de>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.oehweb.at/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://lfuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/lfuonline.home>

The documents you have to hand in can be found [here](#)<sup>5</sup> (see section “Formulare”).

The Supplementary Sheet 2 is only necessary if financial or non-monetary resources of a department of the Universität Innsbruck are required for the thesis project.

In short, the application for your dissertation includes the following documents:

- The application form, notably featuring
  - a title for your dissertation (a working title and not the final title of your thesis)
  - your supervising committee with at least two supervisors and their signatures
- An exposé (description of your intended research including a time table, 3-5 DIN A4 pages)

The application must be submitted to the examination office (“Prüfungsreferat”) on Campus Technik, Technikerstraße 17. The Dean of Studies will subsequently decide whether the university accepts your dissertation topic and committee.

**Important:** All your supervisors must hold a habilitation, an equivalent, or a higher qualification in the field of study of your PhD program. For further details, please refer to the “[Studienrechtliche Bestimmungen](#)”<sup>6</sup>.

## 1.4 The doctoral thesis agreement „online“ - (Dissertationsvereinbarung)

After your dissertation has been accepted by the university, the doctoral thesis agreement (“Dissertationsvereinbarung”) is automatically created on [LFU:online](#)<sup>7</sup>.

The online thesis agreement is a tool to help you and your supervisors keeping track of your research progress and the intended and completed courses. Also, it provides a way to document and formalize research goals and intermediate steps (very important in case of disputes). The tool will remind you and all your supervisors of any deadlines you have arranged together. For more details, please refer to the [webpage](#)<sup>8</sup>.

## 1.5 PhD Program (Curriculum)

The curriculum of your PhD study program comprises 180 ECTS points. 150 ECTS points are awarded for the written thesis. There are two modes for the thesis: a monography or a cumulative thesis that ties together the research papers you have written in the course of your PhD. The remaining 30 ECTS points are collected via coursework and participation at conferences. Compulsory modules make up 15 ECTS. Further 15 ECTS are allotted for elective modules. Details about the courses you are required to take are given in the [curriculum](#)<sup>9</sup> of your PhD study program. Please read the curriculum carefully! The actual course offerings for the current and past terms can be found [here](#)<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/studium/angebot/phd-biologie/index.html.en>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/recht/gesamtfassung\\_satzungsteil-studienrechtliche-bestimmungen\\_stand-01.07.2015.pdf](https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/recht/gesamtfassung_satzungsteil-studienrechtliche-bestimmungen_stand-01.07.2015.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://lfuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/lfuonline.home>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/studium/dokorate/dissertationsvereinbarung.html.en>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/studienplaene/english-version/phd-biologie\\_stand-01.10.2014\\_en.pdf](https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/studienplaene/english-version/phd-biologie_stand-01.10.2014_en.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [https://lfuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/lfuonline\\_lv.home](https://lfuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/lfuonline_lv.home)

### **Compulsory module 1:**

In order to complete this module, you have to give a short presentation of your intended research in the seminar series of your institute (or in an equivalent context) at the beginning of your dissertation. Your main supervisor is required to write an informal confirmation that you have presented your intended work in front of an audience. This confirmation must be handed in at the examination office "Prüfungsreferat" on Campus Technik as the completion of compulsory module 1 is a requirement for all further modules.

### **Compulsory module 2:**

Compulsory module 2 consists of your scientific contribution at conferences (national/international, posters, oral presentations or summer schools). Please always collect any confirmation you can get at the conference. Once you are ready to submit your thesis, consult the Dean of Studies (check his/her consultation hour) for completion of this module. The Dean of Studies assigns credits for your individual contribution based on the confirmations you provide. The credits you will get for your contributions follow the following rule: 1 ECTS-AP for a poster, 2 ECTS-AP for a national talk, 3 ECTS-AP for an international talk. Note that this rule may change whenever the Dean of Studies changes. If you are unsure whether this rule still applies, please check in with the Dean of Studies at the beginning of your thesis.

As an alternative to conferences, you may obtain credits by attending summer/winter schools, courses at other universities, internships at universities, companies, workshops etc. You are required to provide proof of your participation. Depending on the type of school or course, the credits are counted towards compulsory module 2 or elective module 4 (scientific basics, core skills). The amount of credits is determined by the Dean of Studies.

## **1.6 Doctoral programs (Doktoratskollegs)**

Over the last few years, several "Doktoratskollegs" (doctoral schools, or doctoral programs in the official translation) for different topics have been established at the Universität Innsbruck. These are content-based programs offering events and support in addition to and beyond your enrollment in a PhD study program. They are a possibility to get in touch with several thematically close (but not too close) students and researchers in addition to your supervisors. Participation is voluntary. The application process differs between programs, but is usually competitive. In some cases, PhD students are funded by the doctoral program.

Please inform yourself about the diverse doctoral programs at the Universität Innsbruck. Discuss with your supervisor which program suits your PhD project best.

**Note:** Your supervisor has to be a member of the doctoral program (in some cases also your co-supervisor). Please also note that participation in a doctoral program does usually not count towards your curricular course requirements. However, some doctoral programs organize courses for which you can get credit points.

For more details, please refer to the website of the [doctoral programs](#)<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> [https://ifuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/ifuonline\\_lv.home](https://ifuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/ifuonline_lv.home)

## 2 Formalities: finishing your studies

Make sure that all compulsory modules and enough elective modules are completed. Then please visit the examination office “Prüfungsreferat” on Campus Technik as they must guide you through the finishing process. Finishing your PhD studies involves the following steps:

1. You upload a digital copy of your thesis to the university library and submit digital and physical copies of your thesis along with some paperwork to the examination office. It may well be that your supervisor wants a physical copy of your thesis.
2. Two reviewers grade your written thesis and submit their reviews to the examination office directly. This may take up to three months. It is recommended to suggest at least two reviewers (see 2.1 Submit your thesis).
3. After a waiting period of another month, you defend your thesis orally in front of a board consisting of two examiners and one chair. This is the last requirement for your degree. You are done!
4. After a few days, you can collect your grade reports and certificates from the examination office.

Some information on deadlines regarding the end of your studies can be found [in this document](#)<sup>12</sup>. Please also read [this webpage](#)<sup>13</sup> for current information of the examination office.

**Note:** if all parties involved in the review process make full use of their allowed time frame, it can take up to four months after submitting your thesis until your defense takes place (six months if a third reviewer is required). However, usually the process is faster.

### 2.1 Submit your thesis

You are required to hand in both printed and digital copies of your thesis. The digital copy needs to be uploaded to the university library through [this form](#)<sup>14</sup> before you can hand in the physical copies. The digital copy may (but does not have to) be made public if you wish, more information on this topic can be found [on this webpage](#)<sup>15</sup>. But be careful with copyrights of your published articles and ask your co-authors and supervisors as well if you wish to make your work public! Further, digital and printed copies of your thesis have to be submitted to the examination office. Please see below:

The documents required for submission at the examination office are:

- The form “Einreichung der Dissertation” which can be downloaded from the webpage of your study program [here](#)<sup>16</sup> (see section “Formulare”)
- 2 bound copies of your thesis
- An electronical version of your thesis that has to be submitted to [pruefungsreferat@uibk.ac.at](mailto:pruefungsreferat@uibk.ac.at). If your thesis is too big as attachment, please use <https://wetransfer.com/>.
- Plag-Scan [confirmation](#)<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/studieninfos/einreichfristen-doktorat.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/studieninfos/#EinreichungDiss>

<sup>14</sup> <http://diglib.uibk.ac.at/ulbtiroloa/wiki/uploadselect>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/ulb/services/erfassung-wissenschaftlicher-arbeiten.html>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/studium/angebot/phd-biologie/index.html.de>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/plagiatspruefung.html.en>

- Printout from the registry of [Austrian dissertations](#)<sup>18</sup>

**Note:** The digital copy of your thesis is to be submitted to the examination office ([pruefungsreferat@uibk.ac.at](mailto:pruefungsreferat@uibk.ac.at)), and subsequently graded by two reviewers. The Dean of Studies selects the reviewers from the reviewers' list suggested by yourself (see form "Einreichung der Dissertation"). Note that the reviewers are required to hold a habilitation (or equivalent qualification) in a field of study related to the topic of your thesis.

The form "Einreichung der Dissertation" includes the following three fields:

- "Thema der Dissertation": title of the thesis
- "Hauptbetreuer/in": your main supervisor. Your main supervisor can but does not have to be one of your reviewers.
- „gewünschte/r Erstbeurteiler/in, gewünschte/r Zweitbeurteiler/in“: propose at least two reviewers for your thesis. Only one member of your supervising committee, for instance your main supervisor, may act as a reviewer.

**Important:** Your suggestions for reviewers can be considered by the Dean of Studies, but do not have to. If anything is unclear or you need further assistance please contact the examination office (Campus Technik, Technikerstraße 17), or the Dean of Studies.

## 2.2 Assessment of the thesis

The examination office sends a copy of your thesis directly to the two reviewers that the Dean of Studies has selected, along with instructions and grading guidelines. You will be informed on who was selected as reviewers; this information is private and does not have to be shared with other members of your supervising committee.

The entire assessment including the administration process may not take more than three months. You are not permitted to interfere with this process by direct communication with the reviewers. If you do receive questions by the reviewers, please turn to the Dean of Studies for advice. The reviewers then send their review reports directly to the examination office.

If one of the reviewers rejects the thesis, or if the reviewers' evaluations differ by more than two grades, the Dean of Studies appoints a third reviewer who has to evaluate the thesis within two months. More details can be found at "[Studienrechtliche Bestimmungen](#)"<sup>19</sup>.

## 2.3 Thesis defense (Verteidigung der Dissertation, Rigorosum)

After the examination office has received all positive review reports, you can register for the defense of the thesis. The thesis defense is the last formal act required to obtain your degree. The date of your

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/ulb/service/erfassung-wissenschaftlicher-arbeiten.html>

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/recht/gesamtfassung\\_satzungsteil-studienrechtliche-bestimmungen\\_stand-01.07.2015.pdf](https://www.uibk.ac.at/fakultaeten-servicestelle/pruefungsreferate/recht/gesamtfassung_satzungsteil-studienrechtliche-bestimmungen_stand-01.07.2015.pdf)

defense has to be suggested by yourself and accepted by the examination board and the Dean of Studies. The examination office must be informed about time and date one month before the examination. Please use the form “Anmeldung zum Pflichtmodul – Verteidigung der Dissertation (Rigorosum)” which can be downloaded [here](#)<sup>6</sup> (see section “Formulare”):

The requirements for the registration of your defense are:

- Positive assessment of all necessary modules documented on the completed test protocol (“Prüfungsprotokoll”) which can be downloaded on the same webpage. The “Prüfungsprotokoll” must be submitted to the examination office. Only then, an assessment of the completion of all requirements for the registration of your thesis defense can be carried out.
- Obtained positive reviews of your thesis.

**Important:** The examination board of a final doctoral examination has to have at least one member who neither supervised nor graded the doctoral thesis. Choose three examiners, suggesting one of them as chair. All three examiners must hold a habilitation (or equivalent).

If the above criteria are met, the examination office will confirm the date of the defense two weeks before the final examination.

## 2.4 Collect your certificates

Before you can collect your grade reports and certificates, you need to complete a federal statistical survey [online](#)<sup>20</sup>, and hand in a printout of the confirmation at the examination office (Campus Technik, Technikerstraße 17). The certificates will be available some days after you have successfully defended your thesis.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.statistik.at/ustat2/>

## 3 At Universität Innsbruck

### 3.1 Online services

The most important online services of the university are accessible from the “Quicklinks” menu on the [university website](#)<sup>21</sup>. Among others, they include:

- [LFU:online](#)<sup>22</sup>: Each student at the Universität Innsbruck has an account on LFU:online. In your role as a student, this platform allows you to manage your study affairs. For instance, you can access the university calendar (the list of courses), register for courses, view exam results, pay your ÖH fee, generate study confirmations, access your online thesis agreement (see above), and more.
- [VIS:online](#)<sup>23</sup>: In your role as a lecturer, this platform allows you to manage the students registered for courses you are teaching, as well as some aspects of the course itself. In your role as an employee of the university, you can for instance download your pay slips and apply for vacations.
- [OLAT](#)<sup>24</sup>: This is an eCampus platform that provides access to digital content that might be distributed by the lecturer in courses you attend. You might not have access to this service automatically, see below for details. The OLAT group pertaining to a particular course can for example be accessed through the entry of the course in the university calendar in LFU:online.
- [Webmail](#)<sup>25</sup>: You can access your university e-mail account in the browser, both as a student and as a university employee.
- [VPN](#)<sup>26</sup>: The virtual private network provides secure remote access to the internal network of the university (e.g., enabling you to access scientific journals when outside the university).
- [Intranet](#)<sup>27</sup>: The intranet is a service for LFU-employees. It offers information about promotions, workshops, professional development, useful information for new employees, and much more.

A [full list of the services](#)<sup>28</sup> offered by the [ZID](#) (“Zentraler Informatikdienst” – the IT department of the university) is available online. The ZID for example offers free or discounted software licenses.

In some cases, you might not have access to some or all of the ZID services automatically after starting your work contract and inscribing as a student. In this case, you can [request access using a form](#)<sup>29</sup>, or contact the “Benutzerservice” at the ZID office in the basement of “Architekturgebäude” on Campus Technik.

### 3.2 Course registration

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<sup>21</sup> [www.uibk.ac.at](http://www.uibk.ac.at)

<sup>22</sup> <https://lfuonline.uibk.ac.at/public/lfuonline.home>

<sup>23</sup> <https://orawww.uibk.ac.at/public/home>

<sup>24</sup> <https://lms.uibk.ac.at/dmz/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://web-mail.uibk.ac.at/imp/login.php>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/zid/netz-komm/vpn/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/intranet/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/zid/servicekatalog/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/zid/antrag/#bewilligung>

You are required to register for courses online, through the [LFU:online](#)<sup>16</sup> system. To do so, access the course information on the university calendar (called “courses” in the main menu of LFU), and sign up for the course. For some courses, multiple groups at different times may be available.

The start date and deadline for the registration may differ between different courses. Registration generally opens around two months prior to the beginning of the term, and may end some weeks before the course actually starts. Refer to the course information on the university calendar for the individual deadlines.

### 3.3 Time recording

You may be asked to record your work time. That is the actual work time (not the work time in your contract) plus ½ hour (lunch) break. If your supervisor, employer, or institute does not have any special requirements, you can just use an excel-file for time recording. More information on time recording at Universität Innsbruck can be found on the [Intranet](#)<sup>30</sup>.

### 3.4 Scholarships and financial support

The Universität Innsbruck offers **performance-based** and **needs-based scholarships**. Further information on these scholarships, for instance if you are eligible for a scholarship, how to apply for it, and the application dates can be found [online](#)<sup>31</sup>. Applications for performance-based scholarships can be submitted once a year, those for needs-based scholarships twice a year.

**Other scholarships** include research funding for young researchers. Further information on each scholarship and if you are eligible for it can be found [online](#)<sup>32</sup>.

### 3.5 ÖH

The “Österreichische Hochschülerschaft” (ÖH), or Austrian Union of Students is the legal body of study representatives. Founded in 1946, the ÖH is represented on three different levels:

- each study program
- each university
- Austria-wide

The ÖH acts as the students’ political and public representation and intends to improve each student’s everyday life. As soon as you are enrolled in your PhD study program, you are automatically part of the ÖH. Please visit the [national ÖH website](#)<sup>33</sup> and the [website for Innsbruck](#)<sup>34</sup> for further information.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/intranet/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/studium/organisation/kosten-foerderungen/stipendien/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/ffq/forschungsfoerderung/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.oeh.ac.at/>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.oehweb.at/>

## 3.6 ÖH services

The ÖH features different departments for different student needs. There are departments for social inquiries, for non-Austrian students, for women and equal treatment, for legal consultations, and others. Further information of each department can be found [here](#)<sup>35</sup>. The ÖH also offers psychological consultations.

## 3.7 Studia

[Studia](#)<sup>36</sup> is a private company residing within the university premises. It offers specialized services like printing, digitalization, bookbinding and other publication services, and sells books and printed lecture notes. In particular, you will be able to print posters for conferences and your thesis. They maintain several shops, for instance on Campus Technik.

## 3.8 USI

The Universität Innsbruck offers good sports facilities. Located close to the Innsbruck Airport, the [Universitäts- Sports Institute](#)<sup>37</sup> (USI) is a very cheap option for all kinds of sports and exercising. Enrollment is at the beginning of each semester via the USI webpage. A small fee, usually ranging from around 20 – 50€ has to be paid per course.

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.oehweb.at/beratung/>

<sup>36</sup> [www.studia.at](http://www.studia.at)

<sup>37</sup> <https://usi.uibk.ac.at/usi/page>

## 4 In IBK/Tyrol/Austria

### 4.1 Registration of residence (“Wohnsitzmeldung”)

You are required by law to register at the town magistrate of your current place of residence within three days of moving there. As long as you stay in a hotel, the hotel administration will register you automatically. Upon moving to private accommodations, say into a rental flat, the responsibility falls to you.

To register your new address of residence, you need to fill in a form and file it in at the town hall (office of residence administration, “Amt für Melde- und Einwohnerwesen”). Visit the website of the [Innsbruck town magistrate](#)<sup>38</sup>, or the [help website of the Austrian government](#)<sup>39</sup> to download the form and to obtain more information.

**Note:** you require the signature of your landlord\* lady!

### 4.2 Certificate of registration (EU citizens - “Anmeldebescheinigung”)

If you are a citizen of the EU (and associated states), but foreign to Austria, you are required to obtain a certificate of your residential status under EU legislation, within four months of your arrival in Austria. This is also done at the residence administration in the town hall. When registering your residence (see above), you will be given instructions on how to proceed. You can also obtain more information on the [help website of the Austrian government](#)<sup>31</sup>.

### 4.3 Visa (non-EU citizens)

Please refer to the appropriate authorities, for instance your nearest Austrian consulate.

### 4.4 Tax refund

You may be eligible for a refund on the taxes you pay on your salary (or owe additional taxes if you have other sources of income). In particular, this is the case for the first year of your employment if you did not start in January. Tax returns can be filed online on [FinanzOnline](#)<sup>40</sup>. For regular employees, the type called “Arbeitnehmerveranlagung” is often sufficient. If you have additional income, for instance from stocks held in a foreign country, you might have to file a full “Einkommensteuererklärung”. Additional information in German and English is available at the [help website of the Austrian government](#)<sup>31</sup>. If you need assistance, you can for example contact the [chamber of labour](#)<sup>41</sup> (“Arbeiterkammer”). You can also directly contact the [Innsbruck tax center](#)<sup>42</sup> (“Finanzamt Innsbruck”).

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<sup>38</sup> [www.innsbruck.gv.at](http://www.innsbruck.gv.at)

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/18-1/Seite.180201.html>

<sup>40</sup> [finanzonline.bmf.gv.at](http://finanzonline.bmf.gv.at)

<sup>41</sup> <https://tirol.arbeiterkammer.at/index.html>

<sup>42</sup> [https://service.bmf.gv.at/service/anwend/behoerden/show\\_mast.asp?typ=sm&distyp=FA&disid=FA81](https://service.bmf.gv.at/service/anwend/behoerden/show_mast.asp?typ=sm&distyp=FA&disid=FA81)

## 4.5 Chamber of labour (“Arbeiterkammer”)

Most employees in Austria are automatically members of the chamber of labour (“Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte”, or short “Arbeiterkammer”, “AK”), which is a legal body acting as representation of employees’ interests. The AK offers a range of services for its members. Most notably, you can obtain professional advice and help on topics like family, employment, law, education, taxes, housing, or insurances.

In some sense, the AK does the same for employees as the ÖH does for students. We strongly recommend you to [contact the AK Tirol](#)<sup>43</sup> if you have legal problems, questions on your tax return, or trouble with your landlord\*lady.

## 4.6 Radio & TV license fee (“Rundfunkgebühren”)

If you own devices that receive radio or TV programs (except car radios), you are likely required to register them with the GIS (“Gebühren Info Service”) and pay a small monthly license fee. The registration can be filed online on the [GIS website](#)<sup>44</sup>.

## 4.7 Public transport

Innsbruck and the ÖBB (“Österreichische Bundesbahnen”) maintain an extensive public transport system (city buses, tram, intercity buses and intercity trains). Refer to [IVB](#)<sup>45</sup> for transportation in the city, to [Postbus](#)<sup>46</sup> for regional buses, and to [ÖBB](#)<sup>47</sup> for intercity trains. In addition, there are several companies offering intercity and international bus services.

Also note that IVB offers an inexpensive bike sharing service called “[Stadtrad](#)<sup>48</sup>”, which is a great way to be mobile in Innsbruck without having to buy a bike locally.

As a student (under the age of 27), you are eligible for a [discounted ticket](#)<sup>49</sup> valid for six months on IVB vehicles. If you are employed at the university, you are also eligible for a [subsidized annual ticket](#)<sup>50</sup>.

## 4.8 Looking for an apartment?

The ÖH runs a popular [website to find rooms](#)<sup>51</sup> in shared flats, studios, or whole apartments in and around Innsbruck. In case you cannot find the right place to stay, there is also [www.wg-gesucht.de](#). If you are looking for an apartment using these two websites, you usually do not have to pay fees for a housing agent.

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<sup>43</sup> <https://tirol.arbeiterkammer.at/index.html>

<sup>44</sup> [www.gis.at](http://www.gis.at)

<sup>45</sup> [www.ivb.at](http://www.ivb.at)

<sup>46</sup> [www.postbus.at](http://www.postbus.at)

<sup>47</sup> [www.öbb.at](http://www.öbb.at)

<sup>48</sup> [www.stadtrad.ivb.at](http://www.stadtrad.ivb.at)

<sup>49</sup> [www.ivb.at/de/fahrgast/tickets/uebersicht-tickets.html](http://www.ivb.at/de/fahrgast/tickets/uebersicht-tickets.html)

<sup>50</sup> [www.uibk.ac.at/rektorenteam/infrastruktur/ivb-topticket/](http://www.uibk.ac.at/rektorenteam/infrastruktur/ivb-topticket/)

<sup>51</sup> [www.oehboersen.at](http://www.oehboersen.at)

## 4.9 Health services

### 4.9.1 Insurances

A health insurance plan is mandatory and chosen by your employer, which means you have health insurance as soon as you are employed. Employees of the Universität Innsbruck are usually either insured by the "[Versicherungsanstalt öffentlicher Bediensteter, Eisenbahnen und Bergbau<sup>52</sup>](#)" (BVAEB) or the "[Österreichische Gesundheitskasse<sup>53</sup>](#)" (ÖGK).

### 4.9.2 E-card and social insurance number

As soon as you are employed, a so called "e-card" and a social insurance number is provided to you. The **social insurance number** is 10-digit number, and serves as an identification throughout the social insurance system. The **e-card** is a green check card and should be carried in your wallet. You have to show your e-card each time you visit a medical doctor, ambulance, or hospital. The e-card contains only basic data, such as your name and your social insurance number. It does not contain any personal medical information, however access to medical information is provided through the e-card.

### 4.9.3 Medical doctors

You can choose between medical doctors (MD) who have a contract with your health insurance company (referred to as "Kassenärzte") or private MDs. If you chose a MD that has a contract with your health insurance company, you are not required to pay anything for your visit, or just a reduced amount.

In case of urgent medical predicaments, you can go to the emergency room at any hospital. Usually, treatment in hospitals are billed directly to your insurance company.

The Universität Innsbruck also employs a **works doctor**. Please find further information and office hours [online<sup>54</sup>](#). The works doctor has to be consulted in the wake of any laboratory accident.

### 4.9.4 Vaccinations

The Universität Innsbruck offers special vaccinations for free or for a reduced fee. If you need to get vaccinated, the university works doctor will help you.

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<sup>52</sup> [www.bva.at](http://www.bva.at)

<sup>53</sup> [www.tgkk.at](http://www.tgkk.at)

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.uibk.ac.at/arbeitsicherheit/arbeitsmedizin/startseite-amed.html>