



You want to apply for a place in a hall of residence at the Studierendenwerk? Then watch out, Regina Rose from the hall of residence administration has a few useful tips. In the second part of our series on housing, she reveals what is important in the application process and how you can increase your chances of getting one of the coveted places.

Mang: I'd like to say hello to a new episode of our My-StuWe podcast. In the last part of our housing series, you heard first-hand from students about what life in a hall of residence is actually like. We talked openly about the pros and cons of this way of life. And today we want to go a step further and take a closer look at the application process at the Studierendenwerk. I'm Philipp Mang, the press officer of the Studentenwerk, and I'll be answering your most important questions again today. I would like to welcome Regina Rose from the dormitory administration, who will be with us once again. Ms Rose, first of all, thank you for taking the time for us again today. In this episode we are talking about the application phase. This is certainly the most stressful time of the year for our colleagues here in the residence hall administration, isn't it? How do you and your team experience this time?

Rose: This time is really very exhausting. The winter semester is even more exhausting than the summer semester. Even more applications come in here, we have even more cancellations and there is even more to do. But we know, there is an end sometime. All the rooms are occupied. It's getting quieter again.

Mang: Yes, I think so. You yourself have been working in this field for many years now. And I can imagine that you always come into personal contact with the students. Are there, let's say, application stories or personal fates that have particularly stayed in your memory?

Rose: I remember one student quite well, but that was a few years ago. That was also the winter semester and we had no more free dormitory places. And every morning at the same time, a student stood in front of the door with her suitcase. Every morning the same time and we just couldn't offer anything. And that

was extreme for me. How can I say it – it gets to you. Especially because you can't help. And to this day I don't know where she stayed those days. I don't know. But there are several of these events. But as I said, they stuck with me.

Mang: Let's now move away from these personal stories and towards the formalities of this application process. Who can actually apply for a hall of residence at the Studierendenwerk? Are there certain exclusion criteria?

Rose: Basically, we can only offer rooms to students. That means for those for whom we are also responsible: Tübingen, Hohenheim and the small university locations in Reutlingen, Rottenburg – and so on.

Mang: Okay, so let's assume I am one of these eligible students, study at one of these universities and apply for a place at the Studierendenwerk. What tips would you have for me? What do I need to bear in mind when applying? On the Studierendenwerk website you can read that the application should be made exclusively online, for example. Are there any other deadlines that you have to meet or documents that you have to submit? That's a lot of questions, but maybe you could summarise them for us?

Rose: Basically, it is very important to apply very early. Then you are already on our waiting list. Of course, the application is not the end of the story. For a complete application, I need either an admission letter or a notification of enrolment if I am already in an advanced semester. As soon as all documents have been submitted in full, we regularly send you a link. Every 14 days. And you have to confirm this link. If you don't confirm it, you fall off the waiting list. Then you have to reapply. We don't have the possibility to put students who

don't confirm the link on the waiting list. What often happens is that our link ends up in the spam folder. This is an important reminder that students also check the spam folder. When the link arrives, you have five days to confirm it. Once you have confirmed, you are on the active waiting list.

Mang: That is really a very important hint. The application alone is not enough. You have to check your mails again regularly afterwards. Maybe you can add one more thing briefly. What about the deadlines? So when can I apply for the winter or summer semester?

Rose: Of course, you apply as early as possible. Currently, you can already apply for the winter semester. Of course, if you are a first-semester student, you don't have an admission letter yet. You can submit it later – by email. But if you apply, you are already on the waiting list. What's also important: if I apply for the winter semester, I naturally have to submit a certificate for the winter semester or a letter of admission.

Mang: Well, I'll try to summarise the whole thing again very briefly, simply because it's so important. You have just heard Ms Rose. Basically, the motto is to apply as early as possible. However, you also have to observe certain deadlines. You can only apply for the winter semester from 1 April onwards, and the deadline for the summer semester is 1 October.

All right, now for a question, Ms. Rose, that you might have to answer every now and then. Probably none of us would sign a tenancy agreement without first seeing the flat ourselves. But why is it unfortunately not possible for us at the Studierendenwerk to view the rooms in advance?

Rose: That's because we have semester tenancy agreements. That means the last tenancy agreements ended at the end of March, the new ones start at the beginning of April. There is no possibility to view the rooms. We are mostly occupied throughout. Only rarely is a room free during the semester. But we have a lot of pictures on the homepage and you can actually get a good overview of how the rooms are equipped and what the residence looks like.

Mang: Mrs Rose has just mentioned that our website is really very well done. You can click through a picture gallery and really get an impression of the buildings and rooms. Let's also stay on the subject a little bit. When we talk about the furnishing of the rooms, what kind of equipment is there? Well, one topic that I'm sure

many students are interested in is the internet. It's not entirely unimportant when you're studying. How does that look?

Rose: Well, of course we try to provide internet everywhere, but there are certainly one or two halls of residence where it doesn't work one hundred percent. But of course we are working on it. The IT department tries to make everything possible.

Mang: What can you do if you have problems on the internet? Who can you turn to? You're certainly not in the right place in the dormitory administration. Right?

Rose: The Netz-AK usually helps. If you have questions, they are actually the right contact for most halls of residence.

Mang: And what else about the equipment? You already mentioned it in our last podcast. We have very differently furnished rooms, so the conditions are not always the same. But what do I find in a furnished room, for example?

Rose: So a bed, of course, a wardrobe. A mattress is also part of it. We have already had the requests. We have a desk inside, a desk chair, a shelf and a waste bin. Sometimes we also have a small bedside table next to the bed. I don't know if it's everywhere.

Mang: But otherwise? In principle, you also have your own design options, I'd say, you could add something, if there's space, another shelf here and there.

Rose: If there is space, yes. When you move out, it has to look like it did when you moved in, just like everywhere else.

Mang: One more thing occurs to me at this point. There is another very useful offer that we make to students in case of need. We have a so-called starter set. What can you say about it? What is it exactly?

Rose: The starter set is mainly intended for the internationals who come here by plane. The set consists of a pillow, a blanket, a cover for the mattress and at the same time a cover for the pillow and the blanket. The five-piece set currently still costs 50 €. However, this will certainly change for the winter semester.

Mang: Simply that you already have basic bedding. And if you need anything, you can also contact the dormit-

ory administration.

Rose: Actually, we already make a reference to the Starter Set with our rental contract offer. Simply transfer 50 € or soon 80 € in addition to the reservation protection fee. Then the caretaker will hand it over to you. If I haven't paid yet, when I think I need a starter set on site, I let my caretaker know and I get an invoice afterwards.

Mang: Also organised in a very practical way. The number of students in Germany is high, but housing is rather scarce. And especially in the winter semester, you always get countless applications. It must be incredibly difficult to make a selection. Now I'm wondering: Are there certain criteria that you and your team use to make your selection?

Rose: Well, we have a few criteria that we consider here when we give out rooms. First and foremost, the distance to the place of study is at the top of the list. Am I coming from Tübingen or am I coming from Hamburg? Berlin? The second: Am I a first-semester student or have I already studied for a few semesters? And what you might also say: When did I apply? Of course there are other criteria, but these are the most important ones I'll mention now.

Mang: I think you've definitely noticed that it's not just an arbitrary selection here, but that it's done on the basis of very specific criteria.

Rose: And of course, students with disabilities are at the top of our list.

Mang: The topic has just been mentioned a little bit. There is a lot of competition on the housing market. And you have already mentioned fixed quotas for internationals. Let's be honest: What are the chances of me applying for a room at the Studierendenwerk?

Rose: Of course they are still there, the chances. They are higher in the summer semester than in the winter semester. We also have to say that we have an agreement here in Tübingen with the University of Tübingen because many international Master's students study here. The fact that they are only allowed to live here for four semesters compared to our general criteria, so that we can get free dormitory places more quickly – we always have complaints about that. But these are the requirements of the University of Tübingen, and in this case we have a shorter period of residence.

Mang: What alternatives do you have in such a case, if you can no longer live in the hall of residence or if your application was not successful at the Studierendenwerk in the first place? We will discuss this in more detail in a later episode of our podcast.

That brings us to the end for today. Ms Rose, thank you very much for your time. We hope that we have been able to clarify the most important questions about applying for a job today. The next episode of our housing series will be about moving in. So we will clarify how it is with the deposit, how you get your key or what you can do in case of possible damage in your hall of residence.

Yes, these are exciting topics and I hope that you will join us again. As always, you can also give us feedback on the podcast or individual episodes via social networks. So just follow us on Instagram and Facebook. Thanks for listening and see you next time. Ciao!

*\*Note: This transcription of the podcast was generated with the help of machine software. We apologise for any minor discrepancies or spelling mistakes.*