

GUIDELINES

Information for the Buddy Program for FAU-Students

Dear Volunteers!

Here we gathered all information you need as a buddy at the FAU. If you have questions, you can always contact your faculty coordinator. Their contacts can be found at fau.eu/buddy.

What is a buddy?

Buddies are volunteers who are interested in international contacts and take care of one (or more) international students during and especially at the beginning of the semester. You are not responsible for administrative questions but only for helping the new students to get around in German daily life in general and the university. For your buddy you are the first contact person in Erlangen/Nürnberg if he or she has questions, and you may be the first friend abroad.

When do I have to start working as a buddy?

Most students are coming to Erlangen/Nürnberg either one month before semester starts or shortly before semester start, that means

- In winter semester: end of August/beginning of September or at the end of September/beginning of October
- In summer semester: end of February/beginning of March or end of March/beginning of April.

Outside these times rarely any student comes to Erlangen/Nürnberg, so if you want to be a buddy, you should be in Erlangen/Nürnberg at these times.

Apply as soon possible so you will be assigned to a buddy partner! You will be assigned to your buddy partner two or three month before they arrive in Erlangen/Nürnberg.

What is your job as a buddy?

- As soon as you get the contact data (e-mail-address) of your buddy partner, get in contact with him or her. It is always nice to hear a first friendly voice from abroad. Introduce yourself, offer your help with questions (about the city, the university or the culture) and make an appointment for a first meeting (e.g. it is always nice if you pick up your buddy at the train station so they don't have to find their dormitory on their own). If you have problems with getting in contact, tell your faculty coordinator as soon as possible!
- Introduce yourself at the arrival and welcome your buddypartner heartily – you are the first representative of the university he or she is meeting!
- Accompany your buddy at the move-in at the dormitory or his room. You may help to understand what the housekeeper is telling or know better what to do.
- Offer your help with creating an university schedule and registering for courses. If there are problems, your buddy should contact his/her departmental coordinator!
- In the first weeks you should support your buddy in everyday life (for example with possibilities for grocery shopping, leisure time activities etc.)

- What follows depends on how much you like each other and how intensive you want to stay in contact. If you get along well, you can do things together (you may go to the first party in the semester or make a trip to the surroundings of Erlangen/Nürnberg).
- During the semester there are some buddy meetings you can attend. You are going to be informed via e-mail before.

What is NOT your job as a buddy?

- Administrative questions and legal issues. At the orientation courses at the office for international affairs or at the faculties most formalities are taken care of (registration at the city, applying for a residence permit, open a bank account, enrolment, health insurance, signing renting contracts at the Studentenwerk). If your buddy has questions about that you can point out the office of international affairs.
- A buddy is not a language tandem partner! Therefore we have the program "Sprachduo" (www.sprachduo.de). This is based on reciprocity – neither you nor your buddy should see the other partner as someone to expand your language knowledge (of course unless you have a private agreement!).
- You are volunteers and not official contact persons which means you must not be available 24 hours a day. You are kind of a friend – the energy and time you spend with your buddy is your decision. You should not feel exploit as a buddy.

What do I have to keep in mind when getting in contact?

- Take the E-Mail-address of your buddy in your „safelist“, otherwise E-Mails may go to your spam-folder.
- Offer your buddy German and English (or the national language), then he/she can decide what they rather like.
- Empathize with your buddy partner: what might be uncommon for him/her? What should he/she know?
- Keep in contact until your buddy arrives and check your mails regularly.

Helpful tips for the buddy program

- If your buddy arrives not within the move-in-times (usually on weekdays between 8 and 11 a.m., move-ins on weekends and holidays are not possible!) of his/her dormitory it might be that he/she does have to get a place to stay for the first night. Take notice when your buddy arrives and ask him/her again if they need an accommodation for the first night. You are NOT responsible that your buddy has a place to sleep! But of course you can offer help with finding a room for a few nights.
- If you are insecure how to behave around international students, we have a little intercultural training for you.
- If you want to get in contact with other buddies, join our facebook-group (Buddyprogramm Uni Erlangen-Nürnberg).
- Ihr könnt auf dem Anmeldebogen eure Präferenzen bezüglich eures Buddies angeben. Diese werden bei der Verteilung berücksichtigt, aber wir können uns nicht dazu verpflichten.
- On your application form you can give your preferences about a buddy. We try to take into it, but we can not promise anything.

Can I get a confirmation I was part of the program?

Yes. If you need a confirmation you took place in the program, tell your coordinator, he or she will arrange your confirmation is issued.

Where can I get more Information and the application form?

More information is given on the webpages of the office for international affairs <https://www.fau.de/international/willkommensangebote-fuer-internationale-studierende/buddy-programm/> there you can also find the application form.

You can always reach your coordinator via e-mail, they will always try to help you or send you the application form.

If your contact data or the time in which you can take care of a buddy partner changes, please tell us in any case!

We expect you to take your job as a buddy seriously and get in contact with your buddy reliably and with self-responsibility. Help your buddy as good as you can. With all problems you can contact your coordinator or the office for international affairs.

We are very happy you are a part of the buddy program and engage yourself for international students! Thank you!