

FU/BEST

Feeling at Home in Berlin

We advise students hoping for a positive cultural immersion and integration experience here in Berlin to be open-minded and realistic, show initiative, and demonstrate commitment and reliability. During a FU-BEST semester, **cultural and social learning takes place to a considerable extent outside the classroom setting**. Getting to know Germans is the best and most insightful way to learn more about German culture, practice speaking German, and establish new overseas friendships.

Our program offers **volunteering** as well as **language tandem** opportunities for which FU-BESTers can sign up, but they also require good time management as well as openness and reliability. Cultural exchange is a process of give and take, and will succeed if all sides involved are engaged and dependable.



Transportation

Berliners are **urban commuters**: whether they rely on public transportation or take the car to get to places, the commute within Berlin is **inevitably time-consuming** for everyone on a daily basis. Getting to the Lankwitz campus may also take a while, especially depending on where one lives. All students in Berlin are by definition commuter students.

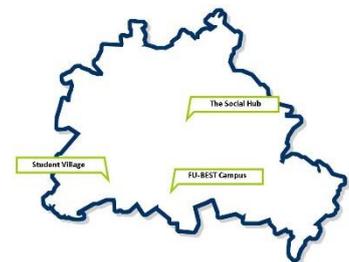


To give you a better and more precise idea of commuting time, and what that means for personal time management: Getting somewhere in under **30 minutes** in Berlin is considered fairly quick and close-by; planning to get from door to door in **30-45 minutes** is normal, while **60 minutes** is still viewed as acceptable by Berliners. It rarely takes more than an hour to get anywhere inside the city's borders.

Housing

FU-BEST students are given the **choice of opting for housing provided by the program** (either apartments or homestays). Every semester we also have a few students who decide to find a semester-long accommodation in Berlin independently. However, this independence comes with more responsibilities on the student's side.

Our apartment option is **not comparable to the type of dormitory housing participants from the U.S. might know from their home universities**. FU Berlin does not own any accommodation, and the apartment complex used by FU-BEST is not in close proximity to any of Freie Universität's facilities. FU-BEST participants living there are considered regular and independent tenants, living in studio apartments on their own.



Students choosing a homestay will ideally have a communicative and enhancing language learning experience involving the person or people with whom they are living. Please keep in mind that the homestay host could be anything from a family of five to a single-person household, and it is therefore important that students be curious and open to meeting and living with locals who have different backgrounds. FU-BEST participants are usually very happy with their homestays and describe their experiences as valuable and overall positive.