

Tipps and Tricks to get a VISA in The Philippines

Hints from the Program Coordinator:

- The official **Program** acceptance letter you get via post does not differ from the one we send you via e-mail (there is no additional stamp on it or something alike. You can print the e-mail version for your appointment in the embassy)

Steps to take (which requirements do you need to fulfill in your country?)

- Make an appointment with the embassy once you received the Program acceptance letter and/or the LMU acceptance letter from the International Office
- Money (how much?)
 - All non-EU citizens are required to have a Sperrkonto or Student Blocked account unless your country has special agreements with EU like Korea. You can apply for this bank account via Deutsche Bank only, go to the website for the required documents and contact the student account representatives. The application process for this account would be about 1-2 weeks. The minimum amount in the bank should be at least 7,000EUR.
 - If you have a scholarship or someone will be sponsoring your studies in Germany then this would also suffice. But you also need documentation on this. Check your embassy's website and usually they would have the templates uploaded, if not email them.
- Acceptance letter (from the program and/or LMU)
 - Some embassies would require both acceptance letter, from the program and from the international office, other time, either letter would suffice. It's best to apply when you have received both, or if you only have one letter, contact the program coordinator to testify (via email) that the letters are still being sent out but you are officially accepted. Print the email thread and bring it with you during your appointment.
- Insurance
 - You can apply for student insurance online and via post, just go to the website (e.g TK and AOK), the effectivity of the insurance starts on the first month of your semester, so some embassies might require you to have travel insurance to cover the period that you don't have student insurance (that is if you arrive earlier than the first month of the semester). Travel insurance is easy to buy and virtually costs nothing (minimum 10 euros), you can buy such online like AXA. Print the certificates and also email threads if you have any.
- Past academic requirements and motivation letter
 - Depends on what your embassy is asking, so check the website. But in any case, bring your graduation certificates, transcript of records, recommendation letters and the like.

Peculiarities of your country (e.g. meetings at the embassy cost money, missing documents lead to rejection or only put your VISA process “on hold”, ...)

- Embassies in The Philippines tend to be very picky, and the German embassy there is not an exception. The reason for this is that many Filipinos tend to use routes like students or tourist visa as a cover to overstay or find a job or be an illegal. If you are applying for a student visa, the consulate expects you to be smart sounding and looking and also speak good English. That also means that your financial documents should be very well prepared. From my experience, missing documents or pending documents are okay, and the embassy tends to be lenient on this, wrong documents on the other hand are more 50-50.
- It also boils down to the quality of the interview. Speak concisely and just answer the questions directly and don't go around in circles. Nervous people and very talkative ones tend to be rejected, in general, the consulate base their judgment on approving or rejecting you on the impression you made on them.

Tips and Tricks (what helped you to get your VISA in time?)

- I put in a lot of money in my Sperrkonto as well as gave copies of my credit cards, and my and my parent's bank account to prove that I can sustain living in Germany for the duration of my studies. I made sure, also, to have complete documents. Unfortunately, it helped a lot that I was Chinese and came from a good university with high academic standing, from what I've heard embassies in developing nations or ones that are in the not-so-safe list (e.g. poor or warring countries) usually have profiles of the usual people they tend to reject. But at the end of the day, if your intent is genuinely for education, then you would pass and get your visa!
- Also, try to book a flight already and tell them the deadline for enrollment! If your documents are good and your interview went well, the embassy would sometimes give priority to your processing.