



# GETTING STARTED -

All the basics for a perfect  
start to your career

# Welcome

Dear Students and Graduates,

Since 2004, the Careers Centre and Office for Regional Cooperation have supported our students and graduates in their studies, practical training and careers. Our extensive network of regional and national companies, associations and institutions offers countless opportunities for making professional contacts as you begin your career. With "Connect You - Regional Exhibition for the Social Economy and Industry" in Stendal and our annual Company Contact Fair in Magdeburg, the university provides excellent platforms for beginning a dialogue with future employers.

To help make sure that this dialogue and any future interviews go well, the Careers Centre can help prepare you in the best way possible for your entry into the world of work with a variety of workshops and seminars within the General Studies programme as well as answering any questions that you might have about the application process. Moreover, in separate orientation and career consultations you will have the chance to discuss your personal résumé. If you would like to do so, you can make an appointment with our staff members on site. Our university also offers a tool that can help you to make a more successful start to your career with the "Nachwuchsmarkt" (recruitment market) jobs and information portal, which you can find at [www.nachwuchsmarkt.de](http://www.nachwuchsmarkt.de). Companies, organisations and associations from the region



and throughout the entire Federal Republic present attractive internships, part-time jobs, permanent positions and final thesis collaboration opportunities here.

This brochure is intended to give you an overview of both German and international application processes and help you to compile your own individual application portfolio. Take a moment to browse the many useful tips and tricks for application letters, interviews and starting your career.

"The key to success is self belief. The key to self belief is good preparation."  
(Arthur Ashe)

With this in mind, we wish you lots of success and self belief on your future path!

Prof. Dr. Anne Lequy  
Rector

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# 1 What is this application guidebook for?

BEFORE, DURING and AFTER your application, the guidebook provides help with

- > tips and tricks,
- > examples,
- > hints,
- > comments and
- > specific contacts

Through our everyday work with students who are currently at the stage of making applications, be it for internships, final theses, part-time work or starting their careers, we find over and over again that they encounter similar difficulties and uncertainties as far as following the right procedure is concerned. In our application workshops too, students from all subject areas come looking for advice on recurring topics.

We have compiled this guidebook to give you an overview of the current application procedures. You can use the steps and tips included here to put together your own individual application portfolio and so ensure that you leave the best possible impression with your future employer right from the very start.

The guidebook provides advice and support for BEFORE, DURING and also AFTER the application phase. In addition, we have compiled some useful tips about making applications in English for you, as these are becoming increasingly important in a global world.

If you have any further questions about this, feel free to contact us in person at any time. Until then, we wish you every success in searching for and applying to the employer of your choice!

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Mon to Fri: 9.30 – 11.30 am  
Tues and Thur: 1.30 – 2.30 pm

## 2 Before you apply

Before submitting an application, there are various steps and possible ways of making contact with your prospective future employer. Here is a summary on this subject.

### 2.1 Job hunting

The first step when job hunting is to carry out a self-assessment. Think about where your professional and personal strengths lie and how you can develop your potential accordingly in order to purposefully further your career.

There are numerous search facilities available to help with this. Online job exchanges are often the first port of call when looking for a job. However, you may also come across interesting vacancies on company websites, at job fairs, in industry or trade publications, on company visits or through personal networks. A traditional hunt through newspaper advertisements can also reap rewards. Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences Careers Centre's search portal, "Nachwuchsmarkt", also provides support in your hunt for employment. Our jobs portal

#### Where to look for a job:

- › online job exchanges
- › company websites
- › recruitment fairs
- › industry or trade publications
- › company visits
- › personal networks

is specially aimed at students and graduates and offers a multitude of job advertisements for permanent posts, trainee jobs, internships, writing final theses in companies and part-time work.

Take your time looking for a job! If you find an interesting advert, start by doing plenty of research. Look on the website of your prospective employer to find out about locations, specialist fields, the content of the job and the corporate philosophy, and make notes.

#### The university's careers portal: [nachwuchsmarkt.de](http://nachwuchsmarkt.de)



### 2.2 Telephone conversations

Don't be shy to reach for the telephone as you do your research! You can take the opportunity to make a positive impression with your future employer with a telephone call.

Just remember: it is worth being well prepared before you make the call. To help you, use the information on the company's website and think in advance about the questions you could ask the HR officer.

You should expect to be asked questions about your professional and/or academic career during the conversation. It is therefore a good idea to keep the necessary documents such as your CV to hand. This will help you to arm yourself for any queries.

Briefly introduce yourself to start with and refer to the job advertisement that you are interested in. Then mention the most important aspects of your (educational) career so far and talk a bit about your skills and potential.

If you have spoken with somebody previously, refer to the telephone call and person with whom you spoke in your covering letter. This will not only make it easier to remember you, but also leave a positive impression.

#### Telephone conversation checklist:

- ✓ gather together info on company
- ✓ have CV to hand
- ✓ keep things brief
- ✓ name of contact for the advertised post



### 2.3 Visiting a recruitment fair

Recruitment fairs provide an opportunity to make direct contact with representatives of your employer of choice. Here too it is important to prepare yourself as well as possible. Draw up an overview of the companies that you would definitely like to visit and find out about their philosophy and the person you need to speak to.

Not only is it important to be prepared, but you should also be aware of your appearance on the day of the recruitment fair. Dress formally and in an understated fashion. A smart overall impression is just as important as your first words.

For the actual conversation at the recruitment fair remember the following: begin the conversation in a spontaneous and relaxed manner. Answer the questions that you are asked and maintain eye contact as you do so. Do not be afraid to ask if there is anything that you don't understand.

If the employer would like one, at the end of the conversation hand them a copy of your CV or application flyer and ask for a business card. The following day, send an email in which you thank them for the interesting conversation.

## Example of an application flyer

## Front cover

References	Personal Details
<p>“In addition to her outstanding technical qualifications, Ms Jane Doe stood out thanks to her friendly nature, optimism and excellent team skills. She always carried out the tasks assigned to her to our complete satisfaction.”</p> <p>Mr. A Smith Company A</p> <p>From the very first day, MsJane Doe stood out thanks to her quick wits and high level of dedication. She quickly fitted in with the team both professionally and personally and gained the respect and liking of her colleagues. She proved to be equally open to suggestions and criticism!”</p> <p>Mr. Z Jones Company B</p>	<p>Jane Doe</p>  <p>Place of birth: Berlin Date of birth: 22.05.1993 Marital status: single</p> <p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p>Jane Doe Leibnitzstrasse 123 D-39104 Magdeburg jane.doe@xyz.de 0171 68 42 xxx</p>

## Back page

University studies / education	
2016 – 2018	M.A. Title
2012 – 2016	B.A. Title
2013 – 2014	Study visit / internship abroad
2011	Secondary school diploma
<hr/>	
Practical experience / professional career	
2015 – 2016	Research assistant at XYZ company
2012	Internship at ABC company
<hr/>	
Training courses and further study	
2019	Sample title, sample provider, qualification
<hr/>	
Qualifications	
Foreign language skills	German (native language) English (business fluent) French (basic knowledge)
IT skills	Adobe Photoshop (advanced), Premiere Pro CC (expert), basic knowledge of HTML programming and Typo 3

## 3 Your application

You have taken the first step. You have found a job, for which you would like to apply. The next task is to bring your application portfolio up to scratch, as this is your own personal calling card. We have summarised the most important aspects below.

### 3.1 The checklist

Your application is usually the first direct contact with the company. To make sure that your application is even seen by the relevant HR officer, you should bear the following in mind:

Pay attention to the following:

- ✓ good-quality paper (DIN A4, 90 – 100g)
- ✓ legible font (e.g. Arial, 11 pt.)
- ✓ personal signature (handwritten, written out in full, blue ink) on the covering letter and CV
- ✓ current date on the covering letter and CV
- ✓ application photo by a photographer
- ✓ full contact details: address, telephone no., email
- ✓ businesslike email address (should include your own name)
- ✓ the covering letter should be placed on top of the application portfolio

Try to avoid the following:

- x impersonal mass-produced applications
- x creases, dirty marks, errors, damage etc.
- x spelling mistakes
- x incomplete company addresses
- x spelling name of contact incorrectly
- x exaggerated familiarity (Dear Ms/Mr ..., warmest greetings)
- x poor copies, originals
- x unexplained gaps in your CV
- x insufficient postage on letter and where relevant return envelope
- x loose-leaf binders, bound documents, transparent sheets

### 3.2 Your application portfolio

According to need / taste, a professional application includes a cover page, plus a covering letter and CV. The “third page” and / or additional appendices are optional. The following pages are intended to help you put together your individual application.

The cover page (optional)

A cover page has long since ceased to be a must, however it gives you the option of standing out from other applicants through an individual layout that increases the recognition value of your application.

The choice of font, font size and text layout are entirely up to you. However, here too you should make sure that you use a legible font and that it is not too small.

In addition, the following information should be included on your cover sheet:

Cover page checklist:

- › Title (bold): “Application for...”
- › Contact details (address, tel. no., email address)
- › high quality application photo, which is then not included on the CV
- › personal details (date of birth, place of birth, poss. educational background)
- › Appendices

The covering letter

The covering letter is the “calling card” of your application. The challenge is to convince your future employer in just a single A4 side of your suitability for the post that they are looking to fill.

The covering letter should be divided into the following sections:

- › Sender (ensure completeness)
- › Recipient (pay attention to completeness and accurate spelling)
- › Place, date
- › Subject line (without “Re:...”)
- › Salutation (no unaddressed applications, find out the name of the person to whom you should send your application)
- › Introduction (with the help of an original beginning that arouses the interest of the reader)
- › Main part
- › Closing sentence (at this point indicate your readiness to speak with them)
- › Complimentary close (“Yours sincerely”)
- › Signature (if sending by post: handwritten in blue ink)

Use brief, meaningful and active sentences and avoid convoluted sentence structures. Do not simply repeat your CV either. Emphasise points that are relevant to the advertised post and the challenges associated with it.

Pointing out the link between the requirements of the post and your own qualifications

To make your cover letter as attractive to the HR officer as possible, you absolutely must ensure that preferably in every section you make a connection between the requirements of the employer and the focal areas of your course of studies and your strengths.

If, for example, you are applying for a post

Requirements in the company	Professional career
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Purchasing</li> <li>· Marketing</li> <li>· Logistics</li> <li>· Crisis intervention</li> <li>· De-escalation</li> </ul>	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Auto CAD, production and project planning, statistics, financial controlling, quality management, mediation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Wind power</li> <li>· Solar</li> <li>· Street work</li> <li>· Soft skills: flexibility, team skills</li> </ul>	wind power, photovoltaics, energy storage, technology, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Matlab, "Street Child" project, semester abroad, part-time employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Maintenance</li> <li>· Project management</li> <li>· Manufacturing</li> <li>· Producing reports and documentation</li> </ul>	maintenance systems, project management, process analyses, technology, Matlab, AutoCAD, Catia, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, practical projects, internships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Data management</li> <li>· Organisation</li> <li>· Copy editing</li> <li>· Introduction CHM</li> </ul>	translation, intercultural communication, research, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, CHM, project groups, part-time employment

in the Marketing department, indicate your skills in Word, Excel or MiniGab. If you are applying to a logistics firm, you should draw attention to your skills in production or project planning. If you are targeting a post in journalism, stress your skills working with editing programmes such as Premiere.

### Sample covering letter

Jane Doe - Leibnizstrasse 5 - D-39104 Magdeburg  
0171 68 42 xxx – jane-doe@xyz.de

Name of company  
Address of company

Magdeburg, xxx

Application as an intern in the XXX department

Dear Mr XXX,

Thank you very much for yesterday's informative telephone conversation. Your remarks reinforced my desire to complete an internship followed by final thesis at XY GmbH.

Not least because of my internship with the Toulouse company in France, a manufacturing engineering supplier, I am aware of your company's activities in the field of planning and execution of automation projects for industrial plants. During this internship I was able to obtain some initial practical experience in manufacturing and electrical engineering and used the content of my Bachelor's degree studies in Electrical Engineering in my own project.

During my voluntary work on the student council in the Institute of Electrical Engineering, I have demonstrated that I am able to focus consistently during the execution of projects.

I would be very happy to be able to put the skills that I have acquired so far to use in supporting your company with its project management. For my final thesis I envision conducting research in the field of process optimisation by observing and analysing automation plants.

I look forward to being invited to a face-to-face interview and remain,

yours sincerely  
Signature



### Your curriculum vitae

Your curriculum vitae is, so to speak, your “document of facts”. It is intended to briefly and clearly demonstrate to the company that your profile fits the advertised post.

In Germany the chronological CV is the most commonly used type. Arrange your information clearly and set it out in reverse chronological order. You could divide your CV up into the following thematic sections:

#### CV checklist:

- › Personal details / contact details and photo (unless already on cover sheet)
- › Professional experience
- › School education
- › University studies
- › Study visits / internships abroad
- › Further training courses
- › Voluntary commitments
- › Language skills, IT skills
- › Scholarships, publications, Driving license
- › Poss. leisure activities

Overall the CV should not be longer than 3 pages.

Gaps in your CV that do not amount to more than 4 months need not be explained. However, it is important that you address any longer periods of time. Be honest and make sure that you use positive phrases, such as: “professional reorientation” or “actively seeking employment”.

### The third page

The “third page” is ideal for taking a closer look at certain facts.

#### In particular for individuals with:

- › frequent changes of employment or who have practised many different occupations
- › a CV that features many breaks and/or gaps
- › special projects that have been undertaken in your own career
- › particular skills or individual soft skills
- › experience abroad

If you choose to include a “third page”, select a meaningful and creative title that will pique the interest of the HR officer. For example: “My motivation”, “Why choose me?” or “What matters to me”.

Make sure that you do not simply repeat your CV or covering letter, but instead give your application portfolio an individual flavour. Take care that the “third page” does not exceed one side of A4 paper. Break the content down into an introduction, a main section and a conclusion. The main section should consist of 3 or 4 succinct headings. For example, “Experience”, “Successes”, “Personal Attributes” or “Interests”.

Round off the “third page” with the place and date and your signature. Afterwards, attach it behind the covering letter.

### The appendices

The appendices and certificates attached to your CV are an important part of your application.

You should arrange the appendices in the same order as they are mentioned in the CV. Do not attach any documents about which there is no information in your CV. Language certificates and certificates of participation are also a valuable part of an application portfolio. Equally important are your final grading certificates, further training certificates and employers’ references.

Do not include any original documents in your application portfolio!

Order your appendices according to their importance. The most current information should be attached directly to the CV. In this regard, the following order is advisable:

#### Appendices checklist:

1. Proof of employment (part-time jobs etc.)
2. Educational qualifications (apprenticeship/training, school)
3. Certificates, proof of qualifications
4. Optional: references and samples of work

## Tips for your application

The “right way to apply” should be practised in the course of your studies, since for the famous “first impression” there is often no second chance. A well-structured, easy-to-read and visually appealing application portfolio is a good “calling card”.

With the help of our various workshops and events, we can support you in compiling your application documents and give you helpful tips and tricks to enable you to meet the challenge of beginning your working life in the best possible way.

Katrin Gruschka, Careers Centre Project Manager  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences



## The sample CV

Jane Doe - Leibnizstrasse 5 - D-39104 Magdeburg  
0171 68 42 xxx – jane-doe@xyz.de



**Curriculum vitae**  
Personal Details

First name, last name  
Date of birth  
Place of birth  
Marital status  
Nationality

**Education**

Since 04/2014 International technical communication  
Social Work,  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences  
Prospective completion 09/2017  
Focal areas of degree: xxx

10/2011 – 03/2015 Bachelor's degree studies  
Electrical Engineering  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences  
Topic of final thesis: xxx  
Focal areas of degree: xxx  
Final grade: 2.2

10/2013 – 02/2014 Studies abroad

08/2002 – 07/2010 School, secondary school diploma: 2.2

**Employment experience**

05/2014 Student assistant in the Institute  
of Electrical Engineering at  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences  
Tutor in the Department of Mechatronic  
Systems Engineering

Jane Doe - Leibnizstrasse 5 - D-39104 Magdeburg  
0171 68 42 xxx – jane-doe@xyz.de

**Voluntary commitments**

Since 05 / 2014 Participation in the Student Council of the  
Institute of Electrical Engineering at  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences

Since 10/2011 Tutor for children in the  
neighbourhood centre  
Subjects: maths, physics

**Languages**

German native language  
French business fluent, certificate  
English good skills

**IT and programming skills**

Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint very good skills

LibreOffice Writer, Calc very good skills

Java, Python good skills

WinCC basic skills

**Leisure time**

Programming,  
travel, juggling

Magdeburg, date  
Signature

### 3.3 Application photos



The application photo is almost always the first thing that an HR officer looks at. It should not have been taken longer than 2 years ago and it must have been taken by a professional photographer. Decide upon the clothing that fits with the company and which you would also wear to a subsequent interview.

Women can, for example, combine a dark trouser or skirt suit with a simple light-coloured blouse. Men should also opt for a dark suit, at least it should have a jacket with shirt and optionally a neatly knotted tie. Only wear a few accessories and ensure that tattoos are covered up.

Try to give a friendly, open-minded, motivated and professional impression with your application photo.

In the case of printed applications, the photo should be placed in the top right-hand corner of your CV or in the centre of the cover sheet and should not exceed 6.5 x 4.5 cm. Alternatively, a landscape format photo is also possible. If sending your application by post, stick the photograph to the relevant place on the page.

### 3.4 Speculative applications

A speculative application shows the employer that you have initiative, you are independent and have a particular interest in the company. Another big advantage is that there is less competition.

If you opt to submit a speculative application, it is essential that you collect important information about your desired employer and the relevant jobs.

Use the information that you have obtained when drawing up your speculative application. Basically, this differs only a little from the traditional application. However in this case the effort to link your own talents with the needs of the company is heightened in order to highlight how employing you would benefit the company. Therefore, you should also refer to soft skills such as your working style or communication and problem-solving skills.

Once you have sent off your speculative application, after around a week check whether your letter has been received and if there is any interest from the company.

Do not be disheartened if your speculative application is rejected. Even a rejection can result in opportunities. You may be added to an internal selection list or even receive an alternative offer. No matter what, stay on the ball!

### 3.5 Online applications

Since with an online application it is not possible to score points with the first impression given by an individual application portfolio, here the content is all the more important.

In most cases, the information you can give in the forms about your education and work experience is standardised. For this reason, it is vital that you fill out as much of the form as possible. Should your training course or industry not be listed, select the option that matches the best.

You should use free text fields to introduce yourself. Make sure that important key words for your position appear there. Only in this way can you be certain that your application will show up in the results list, should the HR officer filter by a free text search for certain qualifications and skills.

Avoid typing mistakes, slang, a clipped style and abbreviations. Here too you should use generally polite forms and use a salutation and complimentary close.

Once you have sent the online form, you should print out the relevant content as this could be pivotal in a subsequent interview.

If you need to register to complete the application, make a note of your password and user name.

### 3.6 Anonymised application processes

Anonymised application processes are intended to counteract discrimination of all kinds and promote equal opportunities. Before the application portfolios are received by the HR officers, passport photos, first and last names, age information, sex, origin and marital status are all removed or masked. The idea is that all applicants' chances of being recruited should be improved.

The advantage is that the HR officer's main focus is on the qualifications and it is possible as a result to better compare applicants with one another. Therefore, you will need to make sure that they are even more clearly emphasised in your covering letter.

However you need to be aware that in anonymised application processes, the personal and individual flavour can be lost. The opportunities to market yourself are consequently limited. With this type of application process it is definitely more difficult to stand out from the competition.

Nevertheless, you should not be frightened off by them. Concentrate primarily on writing an informative covering letter and do not forget to stress the skills and strengths that you have acquired through your studies.

## 4 Applying in English

Internships and work experience abroad are becoming increasingly important. In the following sections you can find useful information and tips for completing an application in English. From the correct form of address to the Europass.

Fundamentally, the structure of an application in English does not differ from a German application. Nevertheless, alongside the language aspect, there are some special features that you must take into account when putting together an English application.

Unlike the German application, the English variant consists solely of the so-called covering letter (letter of motivation) and the curriculum vitae (CV). These should be sent as attachments to your email. Alternatively, the email can be your covering letter. In the English-speaking world, postal applications have now fallen out of fashion.

### 4.1 Covering letter

Like the German letter of motivation, the covering letter should not exceed one A4 page in length. Use active and positive phrases. Corresponding "action words" are, for example: "achieved" or "enabled". A list with the most important English vocabulary can be found on page 28. A common error is the correct way of writing the date for the English-speaking world.

Here too there are differences between American and British English. Basically, the following applies:

Date in the USA: June 15, 2017

Date in GB: 14 May 2017

The salutation used depends upon the information that you have. If you know the name of the person you are contacting, then the salutation will include both their name and title. The male salutation is Mr(.) and the female Ms(.). Only use the form Mrs(.) if you are certain that your contact is married. Here too, pay attention to the distinction between British and American English:

Title in GB: Mr, Ms, Mrs

Title in the USA: Mr., Ms., Mrs.

Whether or not you use a comma after the salutation is again dependent on the English you are using. In British English, as a rule there is no comma after the salutation, whereas in American English a comma is used. Unlike in German, in your English application, start the sentence after the salutation with a capital letter. Then, depending on whether you used a comma after the salutation or not, the same will apply after the complimentary close.

Dear Mr. XY, ... Yours sincerely,

Dear Mr XY ... Yours sincerely

If you have opted for "Dear Sir or Madam" in the salutation, then you must conclude your covering letter with "Yours faithfully".

The structure of the covering letter:

- › your contact details
- › contact details of the person to whom you are writing and the company
- › subject line
- › salutation and title
- › introduction
- › main section (personal strengths, soft skills, specialist qualifications)
- › conclusion
- › complimentary close and signature

### 4.2 Curriculum vitae

The English CV differs considerably in some aspects from its German equivalent. Moreover, a distinction needs to be made between two variants: the British CV and the American résumé.

The American résumé is presented briefly and memorably on a single side. The British CV, in contrast, should be detailed and set out exactly on 1-2 sides.

Basically, the following applies: Neither the CV nor the résumé should contain an application photo! Details such as date of birth and marital status are not mentioned in the CV. This is intended to prevent discrimination and inequality.

Structure of an English CV:

- › personal details
- › career objective (motivation and future plans)
- › personal profile (strengths and skills)
- › work & professional experience (career path to date)
- › academic education / professional training
- › skills (language skills and IT skills)
- › personal interests / activities
- › references

Contact details:

- › first and last name, address
- › telephone number (attention: country code!) and email address
- › date of birth and nationality (in British CV only!)

In the English-speaking world, HR officers prefer to receive references. It is important to provide the contact details of your former employers, managers or colleagues. If you have applied for several posts in the English-speaking world and want to avoid your referees being contacted multiple times, it is quite usual to write the phrase "references available on request".

Finally, you should be aware that neither the American nor the British CV is signed or dated.

## Curriculum Vitae – A template

YOUR NAME

Address: xxx  
 email: xxx  
 Tel.: xxx  
 Date of birth: xxx

## Personal profile &amp; career objective

- Your current position, qualifications etc.
- What are you looking for? Refer to the job advertisement!
- Key experience: xxx

## Work &amp; professional experience

01 / 2015 – today  
 Job title + company address  
 Briefly describe your most important responsibilities

02 / 2013 – 12 / 2014  
 Job title + company address  
 Briefly describe your most important responsibilities

## Academic education / professional training

10 / 16 – today  
 Master of Arts in (course title) (MA)  
 Place of study  
 Main areas of study, e.g. Marketing, financial controlling  
 Master's thesis: title of your thesis  
 Finished with (final grade)

10 / 13 – 09 / 16  
 Bachelor of Arts in (course title) (BA)  
 Place of study  
 Main areas of study, e.g. Mechanical engineering  
 Bachelor's thesis: title of your thesis  
 Finished with: 1.3

YOUR NAME

## Skills

EDP  
 (electronic data processing) this is where you should mention your IT skills, for example MS Office: PowerPoint, Word, Excel, Java Script, SQL Databases etc.

## Languages

German: Native language  
 English: proficient user (poss. result of language course)  
 Spanish: advanced user  
 French: basic user

## Personal interests

Travelling  
 Football  
 Global politics  
 Economics

## References

Enter your references here, e.g. the contact details of your former employer or professor.

## Covering letter - a template

## Covering letter

Your address

Date

Address of company

Dear Mr/Mr. or Ms/Ms. XY,

I am writing to apply for the position of X, as advertised on your website.

The opportunity presented in your advert is very interesting, and I believe that my in-depth training and previous work experience as a XY in the German company XY will make me a very competitive candidate for this position.

After my graduation from secondary school, I began studying XY. Because of my quick-wittedness and excellent performance I was able to \_\_\_\_\_. In particular, I have acquired basic skills in \_\_\_\_\_, e.g. \_\_\_\_\_.

Explicitly, my tasks were \_\_\_\_\_.

The highlight of my activities was \_\_\_\_\_ (soft skills, experience of living and working abroad, internships).

I would very much welcome the opportunity of an interview to introduce myself in person.

Please find my CV attached.

Yours sincerely,  
XXX

## Gross Boernecke Children & Young People's Welfare Centre

The Careers Centre at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences is a strategic partner with whom we are able to communicate our interests to the students and teaching staff.

We especially value the straightforward and helpful support when we are attending exhibitions and the specialist advice concerning a wide range of further training programmes. Our successful collaboration is characterised in particular by a growing awareness of our organisation and its work.

My verdict is that the centre has helped us to increasing growth through skilled employees, personal satisfaction and a good feeling for the future - thank you!

Sven Schulze  
Managing Director  
Children & Young People's Welfare Centre  
Gross Boernecke

Feedback on the Careers Centre of Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences



Ausbildung	training
Auszubildende/r	apprentice, trainee
Bewerbung	application
Bewerbungsformular	application form
freie Stelle	vacancy
Vorstellungsgespräch	job interview
Gehalt	salary
Lohn	wages
Teilzeit	part-time job
Gleitzeit	flexitime
Facharbeiter	skilled worker
selbstständig	self-sufficient
geduldig	patient
kompromissbereit	prepared to compromise
aufgeschlossen	broad-minded
kontaktfreudig	outgoing
pünktlich	punctual
ehrgeizig	ambitious
lernfähig	adaptive
Führungsqualitäten besitzen	(to) have leadership qualities
zielstrebig	focussed
CV	Curriculum Vitae (CV)
References	references

Hiermit bewerbe ich mich um die Position als xxx, die Sie in der Zeitung vom xxx ausgeschrieben haben.	I wish to apply for the post of xxx, which you advertised in xxx [name of paper] on xxx.
Bezugnehmend auf Ihre Anzeige auf ... schreibe ich Ihnen...	I am writing in response to your advertisement posted on...
Ich eigne mich für diese Position, da...	I would be well suited to the position, because...
Während meiner Arbeit bei... bin ich in ... sehr fachkundig geworden.	Whilst working at... I became highly competent in...
Zusätzlich zu meinen Verantwortlichkeiten als... habe ich auch Fähigkeiten in ... erworben.	In addition to my responsibilities as ..., I also developed ... skills.
Auch unter Belastung behalte ich hohe Qualitätsstandards, wie ich bei ... bewiesen habe.	Even under pressure I can maintain high standards, as I proved at ...
Ich bin hochmotiviert und freue mich auf die vielseitige Tätigkeit, die mir eine Position in Ihrem Unternehmen bieten würde.	I am highly motivated and look forward to the multifaceted work which a position in your company would require of me.
Ich würde mich über die Gelegenheit freuen, weitere Details zu der Position mit Ihnen persönlich zu besprechen.	I would welcome the opportunity to discuss further details of the position with you in person.
Anbei erhalten Sie meinen Lebenslauf.	Please find my CV/résumé attached.
Ich würde mich sehr über die Gelegenheit freuen, Sie in einem persönlichen Gespräch davon zu überzeugen, dass ich der geeignete Kandidat für diese Position bin. Bitte kontaktieren Sie mich per...	I look forward to the opportunity to discuss in person why I am particularly suited to this position. Please contact me via...

#### 4.4 The Europass - your opportunity to study and work in Europe

If you plan to apply to another country within Europe, then since December 2004 it has been possible to apply in line with the general standards of the Europass.

The Europass consists of five documents: your CV, Language Pass, Europass Mobility, Diploma Supplement and finally the Certificate Supplement. You can create your CV and language pass independently online at [www.europass.cedefop.europa.eu](http://www.europass.cedefop.europa.eu). In addition, on this website you can find all of the information for completing the required documents.

The CV is the most important document here and is made available to every citizen free of charge. It does not differ significantly from the German standards with which you are already familiar. Alongside the usual information about your person, work experience and schooling and professional training, you should focus particularly on your personal skills and qualifications. Set out the information clearly and succinctly, and under all circumstances avoid spelling and grammatical errors. With the CV too, in accordance with the general standards of the Europass, you must adapt your information to the respective employer of your choice. Once you have created your personal CV, it is available for you to download free of charge.

With the help of the Language Pass you can evaluate your language skills yourself. Listing your language certificates makes it easier for the HR officer to obtain a picture of your language skills.

In contrast to the CV and language pass, you cannot create the three other documents

(Europass certificate supplement, Europass mobility and diploma supplement) yourself. They are needed especially for internships and semesters abroad and must be issued by the relevant institutions. The diploma supplement clarifies national university degree certificates and makes it possible for HR personnel to carry out Europe-wide comparisons. If you have gained qualifications or study experience in another European country, you can enter and link these in the Europass mobility document. Finally, the certificate supplement describes the skills and competences that you have obtained in the framework of your vocational diplomas. Alongside the original certificates you can also provide additional information on your career path and make it easier for the HR staff to understand.

Although the Europass is not a mandatory requirement, the documents, which are recognised throughout Europe, are a useful aid when drawing up your application portfolio. Simply take a look at the website mentioned and collect some useful tips for improving your documentation.

## General studies

Our General Studies courses provide students with an opportunity to experience the proverbial "look beyond the ends of their noses".

They offer the opportunity to obtain key skills, knowledge and capabilities that are useful for your studies, your future professional career and your personal development. The range of open courses at the university combines numerous topics and interdisciplinary courses and lectures.

Currently there are over 50 programmes available that range in length from 4 hours to 2 days and can be attended for a small fee. Alongside working and studying techniques for university and career, the courses comprise language and computer skills and training courses dealing with leadership skills.

Moreover, for the first time, General Studies is dedicated to a particular theme, This semester the theme is "innovative thinking". This theme includes programmes on design thinking, creativity techniques, storytelling and social innovation. The aim of these courses is to give students, workers and interested citizens the opportunity to further expand upon their innovation skills.

Take a look at our programme and visit our website! We look forward to seeing you!

Ilona Darius  
General Studies Programme Coordinator  
Centre for Continuing Education  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences

Introduction to General Studies





## 5 After your application

You have sent your application portfolio to your desired employer. Now you need to convince them during the selection process. In this chapter you can find useful information about the best way to prepare yourself for a telephone interview, assessment centre or face-to-face interview.

### 5.1 Telephone interviews

You will usually receive an invitation to a telephone interview by email. However, not all telephone conversations will be arranged with you in advance.

Do not get involved in a telephone interview in an unsuitable environment. If necessary, ask the person who has called you to push the interview to a later time. It is vital that a telephone interview be held in a quiet and familiar place.

The HR officer will use the telephone interview to check the accuracy of the information you have provided. For example, questions about your foreign language skills are often especially popular, in order to assess your language level.

Other questions might be of a more personal nature. These include traditional enquiries about your strengths and weaknesses, and also possible questions about why you might have dropped out of a training course or degree.

Although the person you are speaking to cannot see you, nevertheless you should pay attention to your body language. A "soundless smile" makes you seem more friendly and creates a positive atmosphere.

### 5.2 Assessment centres

Assessment centres are used to set applicants a range of tasks in which soft skills and specialist competences are evaluated. Typical tasks include presentations, group discussions, construction exercises and role plays. In this way, HR officers can, for example, test your spontaneity, rhetorical, communication and team skills. Often the ability to concentrate is also tested by deliberately placing applicants in stressful situations.

Do not be afraid of assessment centres! Refresh your basic mathematical skills. These include, for example, the ability to calculate percentages or use the rule of three. Alongside analytical skills and knowledge about the company, you must also prepare to present yourself. Practice introducing yourself in 3-minute and 10-minute presentations.

If you get the opportunity, attend a preparatory course for the assessment centre. In this way you will not only become familiar with the most important tasks, but also be able to gauge your own strengths and weaknesses.

The invitation to a face-to-face interview will include a suggested appointment date. The best way to confirm this is by telephone. This will give you the opportunity to enquire about the name of the person you will be meeting. It makes a good impression

if you can greet your interviewer by name.

Prepare thoroughly for the interview. Go through your application documents again. Study the advertisement again for the post for which you have applied.

Usually you will need to briefly describe your career so far at the start of the interview. You can practice this step in advance. Think about how you can present your CV in a clear and logical way. In doing so, make sure you keep pointing out the links between your experience and the job advertisement and / or company.

Draw up a list with questions for the HR officer. This will show that you have taken the time to find out about the company. Show that you are the right person for the vacancy.

Punctuality is the top priority in an interview. Preferably, you should build in a generous time buffer for your journey there. Arrive at the agreed meeting place a quarter of an hour before your interview. This will help you to mentally prepare yourself calmly for the impending conversation. There is no second chance

to make a first impression! For this reason, it is essential to make sure that you are correctly dressed and your make up is subtle. Take the "dress code" for your industry into account:

at the end of the interview you should give a small amount of feedback and emphasise that you are really keen to be hired.

### Order of events - face-to-face interview:

- > Welcome, start of discussion, small talk, run-down of interview
- > Presentation of the company, team and position
- > Presentation of self, professional / social skills, motivation
- > Working conditions: work days, holiday, salary, bonuses
- > Ask your prepared questions
- > Conclusion of conversation: what happens next, goodbyes

### Important documents for the face-to-face interview:

- > Invitation letter
- > Copies of application
- > Job advertisement
- > Telephone number of the HR department with the name of the contact person
- > Poss. work samples
- > List with questions for the HR officer

#### 5.4 List of useful questions

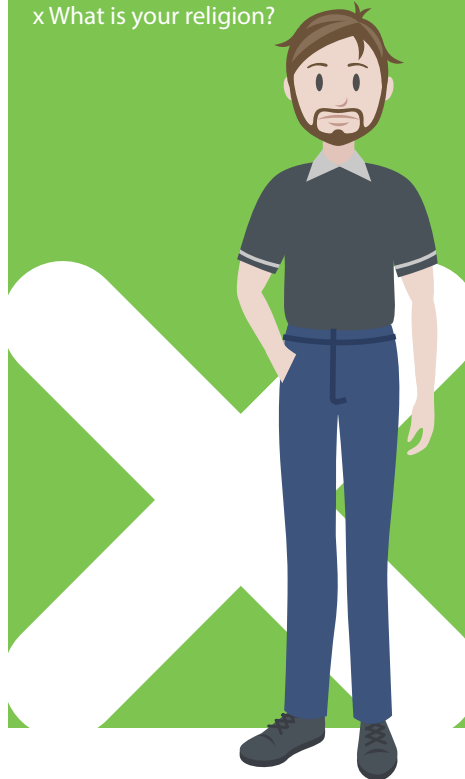
To help you overcome any nervousness you might feel before getting to know your interviewer in person, we have detailed some questions on the following pages that are frequently asked in a face-to-face interview. We have also added some questions that should not be asked and which you need not answer. This overview should also help you to formulate your own questions for the HR officer.

Questions that might be asked by the company:

- ✓ How did you become aware of us?
- ✓ Why are you applying for this position?
- ✓ Have you applied for other vacancies?
- ✓ What do you expect the work to be like?
- ✓ Can you briefly summarise your curriculum vitae?
- ✓ What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- ✓ Why should we hire you?
- ✓ How do you keep up-to-date with developments in the field?
- ✓ What do our company and products mean to you personally?
- ✓ Would you be prepared to move home for the advertised post?
- ✓ How do you organise your work?
- ✓ Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?
- ✓ How would you assess your performance in the interview so far?

Questions that should not be asked and which you do not need to answer:

- x To which party or political groupings do you belong?
- x Are you planning to have a child in the near future?
- x What is your partner's profession?
- x Do you have any criminal convictions?
- x Are you in a steady relationship?
- x Are you gay or straight?
- x What is your religion?



Questions that you could ask the company:

- ✓ Why was this post advertised? Is the position a new one?
- ✓ For which tasks will I be responsible?
- ✓ What will take the highest priority?
- ✓ Are there project-related tasks to be undertaken in addition to the everyday activities of the role?
- ✓ What would a typical working day look like?
- ✓ How would you describe your corporate culture?
- ✓ How has the company evolved over the years?
- ✓ Do you have any plans to expand in the next few years?
- ✓ Do you collaborate with any other organisations?
- ✓ Does the company operate internationally?
- ✓ How many employees work together in one office?
- ✓ What working equipment will be available to me?
- ✓ How is work distributed within the team?
- ✓ What is the induction period like in the company?

- ✓ Which management style is practised?
- ✓ What further training opportunities do you offer?
- ✓ What are the promotion and development opportunities?
- ✓ What salary does the position attract?
- ✓ What are the regulations concerning holidays?
- ✓ When will you make your final decision?



## 6 Starting your new job

You've done it! The company wants to hire you. The following section explains how you can prepare for signing your employment contract and your first few days in the job.

### 6.1 The employment contract

The main thing to remember here is to give yourself time! Read the contract and its appendices thoroughly and perhaps you could even have a lawyer check it through.

#### Employment term

If your contract is for a fixed term, the end date must be clearly stated in the contract. If the appointment is limited due to a particular circumstance such as cover for parental leave, then this must also be written in the contract. Generally, in the case of a fixed term employment relationship, no notice is necessary at the end of the term. Fixed-term employment is only permitted for a maximum of two years and within this time, the contract may only be extended three times.

#### Job content

The job content should be listed in as much detail as possible in the contract. This will protect you from having to carry out every possible activity. If, however, the clause "these and equivalent duties" is contained in the contract, you must ask what exactly this means.

#### Place of work

If the company has more than one location, your place of work must be clearly and separately specified. If this is not the case, the

place indicated in the letter head as the corporate address applies. If it is relevant for you, a relocation clause should also be included in the contract.

#### Working hours

The weekly working hours must be stipulated. It is important that you pay attention to special provisions regarding your working hours (e.g. core working times, break times etc.). Furthermore, you should check if the way in which overtime is dealt with is stipulated in the contract. The clause "is compensated with the monthly salary" should only be accepted if the contract states the maximum number of hours per week that you must work for and in which cases. At this point, the contract should also state whether overtime is remunerated separately or compensated for with time off.

#### Probationary period

The probationary period may only last for a maximum of 6 months. During this time, both you and your employer have to adhere to a notice period of 2 weeks.

#### Holiday

Your holiday entitlement should also be contractually regulated. As a rule, you should be entitled to at least 2 days per month and therefore 24 days per calendar year. You should also ask about the possibil-

ity of carrying forward unused holiday time into the following year. In most companies, this should happen by the 31st March of the following year, otherwise the extra days will be forfeited. Many employers grant one day extra holiday in the event of an employee getting married, moving house, or on the death of an immediate relative. However, this must be applied for separately. Ask your employer about this. Depending on the company, educational time off may also be applied for.

#### Salary

Your gross salary must be stated in your employment contract as a monthly and annual figure. Alongside this basic salary, possible supplements (payments for overtime) and/or special payments (Christmas or holiday bonus, profit-sharing) must also be detailed. Furthermore, a monthly payment day must be stated. A possible increase in salary after a certain period of time working for the company may also be set out in writing already.

#### Notice

The notice period both for the employee and the employer must be specified in the contract. Equally, any notice period extensions after a certain duration of employment must also be set out. During the probationary period, the notice period is 2 weeks. In the course of your employment by the company, this period may be extended to several months or years. Here, there is a distinction between ordinary and extraordinary termination. Another possibility of ending the employment relationship early is a so-called termination agreement, which must be implemented by mutual consent. If the employee hands in his or her notice, as a rule there is no entitlement to unemploy-

ment benefit for the first 12 weeks.

#### Sickness

The way in which illness / sick days are dealt with should also be governed by the contract. Ordinarily, doctor's notes should be submitted to the employer within 3 working days. In this case, a copy must be sent to your health insurance provider. In the case of sickness of their own child, parents are entitled to a total of 10 calendar days leave.

#### Confidentiality obligation

Usually, every company has a clause concerning confidentiality. Caution is advised if in this case skills are included that you might learn in the company and may not use in any subsequent employment.

#### Special benefits

Depending on the company, the employer may contribute to the costs of child care, travel to work, work telephone / laptop, work clothing or further training and possibly trade literature.

## 6.2 The first few days and probationary period

Although you have successfully completed the application process and have been able to snag a position in the company of your choice, you might come across numerous hurdles and blunders in the first few days in your new job. What is important is that you take on board the corporate culture so that you can be sure of working well with your colleagues in the long term.

## 6.3 Your personal development

When you have settled well into your new job and have enjoyed your first successes, it is a good idea to start looking for suitable further training courses.

Speak with your employer about whether particular additional qualifications are desirable. There might also be in-house possibilities for further training.

Always view these possibilities as an asset, including in terms of being able to demonstrate additional qualifications in the event that you decide to change jobs. As a rule you are also entitled to what is known as "educational leave". Find out about the legal position in this regard in your place of work.

Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences offers countless further education and training opportunities for companies and skilled employees. Company-specific further training courses can be carried out on a flexible basis in terms of dates, in keeping with the particular situation and in accordance with the wishes of the company

in the form of in-house seminars, in conference hotels or on the premises of Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences.

### Tips on how to act during your probationary period:

- › Ask if there is something you do not understand or you are unsure!
- › Do not be over-familiar with your colleagues to begin with: show them respect and esteem.
- › Do not take a long holiday during your probationary period. If, however, you had already booked the holiday during the application phase, you should notify your new employer before signing the employment contract.
- › Furthermore, you should also notify your employer about any ongoing or planned training courses, in-service study programmes or part-time work.
- › If you have any criticisms or suggested improvements regarding the processes involved in your job, you should share them only after plentiful observation and analysis. It is important to be constructive!
- › Win your colleagues over with your cooperative attitude and professional competence!

## Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences Alumni Network

With the alumni network, Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences offers its former students a central point of contact with which they can keep up-to-date about current events, further training opportunities and other worthwhile information from the university. Current students benefit from the network by learning from the experiences of former students and building contacts.

The Careers Centre serves as an important strategic partner for the alumni work, since many former students find their way back to the university via the programmes offered in the careers field or in the role of an employer. Alumni provide useful support on the path to future careers as they make internships and final thesis projects available and provide recruitment opportunities, which can be conveyed via the Careers Centre with the help of the [nachwuchsmarkt.de](http://nachwuchsmarkt.de) job portal, and also in personal career consultations.

And finally, here is one more piece of personal advice: start networking in good time and keep in touch with us in the network.

Bianca Henneberg  
Alumni Coordinator  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences

About the Alumni Network and  
the benefits for students



## 7 Using networks to achieve your goal

A good network can prove very useful in furthering your career. For this reason it is important to begin building up contacts with companies, like-minded people and successful graduates as early as possible. The following chapter aims to provide you with tips on taking the first networking step.

### 7.1 Networking – developing your own connections

“I am a networker!” Networking is not only contemporary, but also modern and up-to-date. Networkers are people who make contact with others both professionally and privately or bring several parties together. In the modern style, networking can open doors for you that otherwise might remain closed. Connections play an increasingly important role in everyday working life. Leadership positions and expert jobs are often filled by recommendation.

In general, networking means developing and maintaining contacts that might be of use to you when searching for a job. Networking is based on the principle of “friends of friends”. Ideally, every member of a network brings new contacts with them, so that the network can benefit from them and can continue to grow through relationships.

To become a successful networker, you should adhere to a couple of basic rules. Contacts that are pursuing similar goals to you are not your competitors but instead are overcoming similar hurdles or gaining experience from which you too can profit. You can only benefit from exchanging these experiences regularly!

1. First of all, work out what your own career goals are.
2. Ask yourself what you want to achieve with the network and what you hope to gain from your contacts.
3. Make sure you focus on what is important! A network is only as valuable as its members.
4. Look for people who are pursuing similar goals to you or who are already where you want to be.

People who are already in the kind of position you are seeking are probably even more valuable contacts for your personal network. With their skills and insider knowledge they can assist you with any questions you may have concerning your career path. And who knows, you might even one day take their place as their successor.

Nowadays, networking has been made much easier by a range of different internet platforms. You can quickly build up your network on social media channels such as XING, LinkedIn and Facebook. In addition,

you will receive information on second or third degree contacts. Create an impactful profile and search purposefully for contacts that might be helpful to you as you progress through your career.

However do not solely rely on online platforms. Personal contacts are no less valuable during the digital age. Company contact fairs, company presentations and club work also offer the excellent opportunities to establish connections. Act strategically. Find out about participating companies and think about what you can offer your future employer and what you expect from them.

With its annual Company Contact Fair and the regional “Connect You” fair, Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences provides opportunities to build and strengthen your personal network. Countless companies from a wide range of industries use the opportunity not only to introduce themselves but also to recruit future graduates for their companies as skilled employees.

1. Pay attention in the process to your body language (open demeanour, appear self-confident and competent).
2. Smile, listen attentively and actively to the person you are speaking with and allow them to finish speaking.
3. Start with an innocuous chat (small talk about the journey, the event, catering etc.)
4. Make firm commitments and make sure you stick to them. (“I will call you tomorrow;” “I’ll send you an offer for that tomorrow;” “I’ll send you an email tomorrow”.)
5. Have business cards and short applications / flyers ready for this kind of encounter. If necessary, ask the person you are speaking to to give you their business card too and make a note of their name and what you discussed.

“Good relationships only harm those who do not have them.”

Lothar Schmidt,  
German political scientist and  
writer

## 7.2 Why you should not miss Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences' Company Contact Fair!

For over 16 years the Careers Centre at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences has held its Company Contact Fair every year.

With a theme of "students meet industry", the Company Contact Fair represents an excellent opportunity to make initial valuable contacts with future employers and to develop important networks.

You are just who companies from the construction, industrial, engineering, and social and health care sectors are looking for! So make sure that you prepare yourself well and find out about the employers that will be present in the extensive exhibitors' catalogue provided by the Careers Centre. You will also find a list of all study programmes there and the companies that are a match with them. In this way you can find out immediately which exhibitors are looking for you.

In order to counteract any nervousness on your part, you can also make use of the various seminars and workshops run by the Careers Centre and General Studies. Exercises and role plays will enable you to be fully prepared and to ace the challenge of attending the fair. Preferably, you should see every stand visit as your personal practise in presenting yourself.

Alongside making initial contacts, moreover, you will have the opportunity to make use of an application portfolio check and a free application photo shoot. This helps us to ensure that you are ideally prepared for the application process. You can also use

the information gained for the multitude of job advertisements for internships, part-time jobs and permanent positions on our job wall.

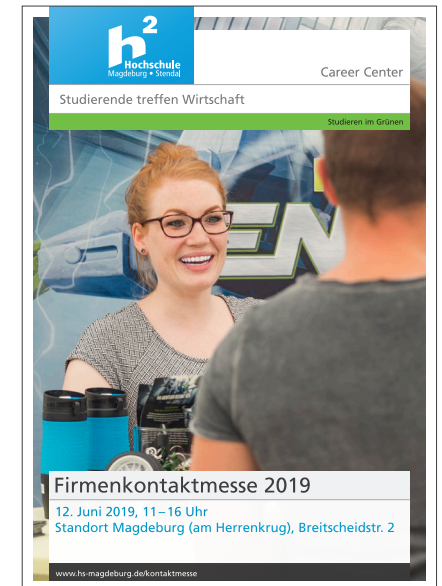
In addition to the application portfolio check, the free application photo shoot and the job wall, the Company Contact Fair also provides a platform for a wide range of company presentations, during which you can find out about the different areas of focus of the participating employers.

Make use of all the available offers to start building a network. Networking is no longer only important within the corporate world, but also plays an increasingly large role among students. The basic idea here is to make a name for yourself! Seek conversations with a multitude of exhibitors and keep in touch with them, for example through social networks. Here you can simply link a contact request with a message in which you refer to the previous conversation or a presentation at the fair. Make sure people remember you! The more time you invest in networking, the more you will save later when searching for a job.

The Company Contact Fair at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences is the perfect platform for making contacts. Whereas in 2012 around 50 exhibitors took part in the event, 6 years later the fair was able to welcome around 90 companies to the Herrenkrug campus.

Many of the participating companies come from the immediate vicinity of Magdeburg and use the Company Contact Fair to recruit young, highly qualified and skilled employees in order to cover the high level of demand for specialist workers. In this way

you can be sure of meeting highly-motivated companies who are looking for just your qualities and want to give you a chance!



7.3 Nachwuchsmarkt (trainee market):  
competent,  
career-promoting and free

Since 2006, students and graduates have had the chance to find job offers on our “Nachwuchsmarkt” job and information portal. Alongside advertisements for internships or part-time jobs, in Nachwuchsmarkt, trainee positions, permanent posts and offers for final theses are also published.

Almost 6,000 regional and national companies (as of 04/2019) currently use our jobs portal. Every day new positions are published, which match the profiles of our students. There is certain to be something to suit you there too!

Our online platform performs many different functions. You can search individually for job advertisements, apply to the employer of your choice directly via the portal or even appear in employer searches. To do so, you only need to register and create an impactful profile.

If, despite all this, you do not find the job you want straight away, there is no reason to despair. We will let you know immediately if a suitable job advertisement is placed.

Nachwuchsmarkt Saxony-Anhalt is, however, not just purely a jobs portal. Over and above this you will receive information about exciting university events and General Studies programme offers. Be it seminars about successfully applying for jobs both at home and abroad, further training courses of all kinds, language courses or workshops on happiness research – as an information portal the Nachwuchsmarkt offers you countless opportunities to obtain information or be informed.

As part of a workshop, our local contacts will pass on all of the tips and tricks that could be helpful when it comes to using the jobs portal. Simply take a look in the General Studies programme or speak to us directly.

“Nachwuchsmarkt” is more than just a jobs portal. Rather it is a communication and information platform that is intended to facilitate your entry into the world of work.

And who knows, perhaps you too as a future graduate will one day publish job advertisements in Nachwuchsmarkt.



## My experience with Nachwuchsmarkt.de

When I began my Master's degree programme in Peace and Conflict Research at Otto von Guericke University in September 2016, after a couple of months it became clear to me that I would like to work alongside my studies. During my Bachelor's degree studies I already had a job in a supermarket so that I could earn a little money on the side.

Once I had get to know Magdeburg a little, I began to look for a part-time job. Ideally I wanted to work as a graduate assistant at the University. After a more or less fruitless search on the websites of various institutes, I came across the “Nachwuchsmarkt” Saxony-Anhalt site. I quickly registered and found countless job advertisements that matched my profile.

After just a short time I was invited to an interview in the Careers Centre at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences and got the job. For two years now I have been working as a graduate assistant and not only do I look after the “Nachwuchsmarkt”, but also support the organisation of the university's annual Company Contact Fair.

Without the “Nachwuchsmarkt” jobs portal, I would never have found the right job for me so quickly and easily. I can only recommend every student to register on the portal and simply have a look to see what the site has to offer.

Anna  
Student  
Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg

Report of experiences with the  
“Nachwuchsmarkt.de” jobs portal.



## Careers Guide glossary

**DIN 5008 applications**

Behind this term is a uniform standard that should be consistently used for applications in the German-speaking world. The DIN 5008 standard governs the formalities of an application such as page margins, line spacing, font size, font style and the date format.

**Blind applications**

Although the terms speculative and blind application are often used to mean the same thing, nevertheless they do differ in one significant aspect. Whereas in the case of speculative applications, at least the name of the addressee is known, in a blind application, it is usually only the company. Like a short-form application, the blind application consists of a covering letter and a curriculum vitae in tabular form. As you only know the name of the company, your application need not be personalised at all and can be used often. You must make sure, however, that you have changed the company name in the address line.

**Business dress code**

This is a style of dress that is usually associated with the business world. For men, this means that a suit is a must! This can be kept in a dark colour. Under the suit, a light, single-coloured shirt should be worn. The outfit should also include a tie and neutral-coloured shoes. Women can also wear a trouser suit, or a skirt suit is also part of the dress code. Make sure that the colour you wear is discreet, and the skirt should be knee length. The heels of your shoes should not be too high. Accessories and make-up should also tend to be unobtrusive.

**“Come as you are” dress code**

Although “come as you are” would lead you to believe that you can wear casual jeans

and a t-shirt for work, in fact that term means something different. This dress code means that, exceptionally, you do not need to get changed after work but instead can take part in a company evening event in your office clothes. Men can loosen their tie a little and women can swap their blazer for a cardigan.

**“Smart casual” dress code**

At more informal appointments such as business dinners or a reception when travelling on business, you can dispense with the “business” dress code and instead dress in accordance with “smart casual” rules. This lies somewhere between sportiness and simple elegance. Women can wear a two-piece or a single-colour / discreetly patterned blouse combined with trousers or a skirt. Men can leave their ties at home and either wear a day suit or single-colour dark cotton trousers with a matching long-sleeved shirt.

**Casual Friday**

The term “casual Friday” comes from the USA and means that men can leave their tie at home and women, instead of a blazer, may wear a cardigan. As the dress code can vary on Casual Friday, you should find out how it works in the company from your colleagues.

**Flat hierarchies**

A flat hierarchy describes an organisational structure in the company where the leadership positions make fewer interventions in the decisions of the employees. This is supposed to foster the personal initiative and responsibility of the whole team.

**Salary**

In general linguistic usage, the term “salary” is used for the remuneration received by staff members. Usually this is paid in the form of a fixed monthly sum.

**Guerilla application**

The term “guerilla application” comes from the Marketing field. Here, above all, it is about standing out! The guerilla application is especially popular in the media and advertising industries. There are no limits placed on your creativity when it comes to this special form of application. However ensure that your application matches the company and that you do justice to your qualifications and strengths.

**Kununu**

Kununu is an online platform on which you can find a multitude of company reviews. Employees, trainees and applicants can give anonymous reviews of employers or the application process.

**Short application**

Short applications are fairly rare. They consist only of a covering letter and a CV in tabular form. As documents such as certificates and references are not included, the short application usually consists only of 2-3 pages. The advantage of the mini application is that they require relatively little expense and effort for applicants. However they also do not offer much opportunity to present yourself. The short application is therefore often only a kind of bait for the HR officer, which comes ahead of the actual application process.

**Wages**

Wages are a form of remuneration that are dependent on the work actually performed. For this reason they may also vary at month end. Often wages are determined using time recording systems, which capture the exact working hours through the employee clocking in and out.

**Mirroring technique**

The mirroring technique is supposed to help keep nervousness under control during an interview. The technique involves paying attention to the body language of your counterpart and imitating it. In the process, not only can you reflect their body language, but also use the HR officer’s formulations or phrases. Using this psychological trick you convey that you are a good match for the company and appear more likeable.

The current glossary can be found on our website:  
[www.h2.de/careercenter](http://www.h2.de/careercenter)  
[www.h2.de/careercenter](http://www.h2.de/careercenter)



## PTB Engineering - PTB Magdeburg GmbH

For over 25 years, as an engineering consultancy we have been providing a broad spectrum of skilled engineering services in the region. Over engineers at our eight locations in Germany, Switzerland and Poland plan, implement and monitor countless projects in the area of infrastructure facilities belonging to Deutsche Bahn AG, in road construction, environmental and landscape planning and in structural civil engineering and special foundation engineering.

As a regional company, we rely particularly on qualified employees who wish to base themselves in the Magdeburg region. As a university of applied sciences, Magdeburg-Stendal University therefore represents an important partner in the region.

Since 2016 we have taken part every year in the Company Contact Fair on the Herrenkrug campus. The fair enables us to raise our profile as a company in the region and to recruit future young talent for our engineering consultancy. In fact, since the first time we took part, we have been able to employ 10 graduates and interns in our company.

The Company Contact Fair at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences and our collaboration with the Careers Centre in the Technology and Knowledge Transfer Centre have proven to be more than worthwhile for us!

Stephan Dudda  
HR Department  
PTB Magdeburg GmbH

Feedback on the Company Contact Fair held by  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences



## Hochschulteam Agentur für Arbeit (University Team Employment Agency)

I have been working with Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences for many years. There has also been a cooperation agreement in place since 2015. Together with the Careers Centre we coordinate advisory offerings, information events, participation in the Company Contact Fair and other activities for the students and future graduates.

The majority of students only know the employment agency from "hearsay" and ask if they have to register with it once they have finished their studies. There is no obligation to register as unemployed or seeking work after completing a degree. As a student or soon-to-be graduate you can take advantage of the advice available by registering at Arbeitsagentur Magdeburg Employment Agency at Hohepfortestr. 37. Then there is a personal consultation, individual job suggestions and also financial assistance during the application and/or matching process such as, for example, travel expenses for interviews and many other forms of support. These are services offered by the employment agency that are aimed at helping and supporting students as they transition from university into the world of work.

The prognosis for future graduates is good however a successful transition into that first graduate job is not a foregone conclusion. A certain amount of job hunting know-how is needed in order to position oneself and one's profile correctly and be identified by employers as a suitable employee. For this reason, a personal consultation at the Employment Agency or during the consultation hours on campus is an important complement to doing your own research via the many job and careers portals.

Christian Damboldt  
Business Graduate and Consultant  
Magdeburg Employment Agency

Graduate advice direct on campus



## M Plan GmbH offers aspiring engineers a wide range of development opportunities in the automotive sector

Are you an automobile enthusiast or looking for experience in the fields of research and development? Be it working as a student trainee, doing an internship or as a direct starter - we are always looking for (aspiring) engineers who share our passion for the automobile.

As Kerstin Schniers, Personnel Officer at the Wolfsburg branch of M Plan, one of the country's leading engineering service providers in the automotive sector with 880 employees across twelve sites, says: "For almost a decade we have maintained a close, personal and constructive cooperation with the university. We have been taking part in the Company Contact Fair since 2010 in order to introduce ourselves to you directly. One of our employees, a former student at the university, has presented lectures in the field of "technical mechanics" and delivered speeches to the students as part of the Company Contact Fair for two years. This shows how closely networked we are in the region.

Moreover, M Plan is a great point of contact for all questions concerning application document and interview tips, internships during your studies, career planning and starting work.

Want to know more? Then find out about us at [www.m-plan.com](http://www.m-plan.com) or get in touch directly with Kerstin Schniers on +49 (0)5308 5219343 or by email to [bewerbung-wob@m-plan.com](mailto:bewerbung-wob@m-plan.com).

Kerstin Schniers  
M PLAN GmbH

Feedback on the Company Contact Fair held by  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences



## Job interview tips

Be brave!

When I hold interviews, I want to know how the applicants have dealt with university and their chosen field of work. That, alongside a pinpoint covering letter, is an important factor in my decision.

It does not make a very good impression if I have the feeling that somebody is surprised to have been offered an interview. What else is important is did we manage to have a good conversation? That works best if you do not try to be somebody else. Which, incidentally, is much easier than trying to pretend.

So, be brave!

Norbert Doktor  
Press Officer at  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences

Job interview tips



## Department of Water, Environment, Civil Engineering and Safety (WUBS)

Before starting their studies, prospective students usually ask themselves: "what will I do afterwards?" It is exactly this dovetailing of theory/knowledge and practice/industry that is successfully implemented through the central services of the Careers Centre at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences.

Job advertisements that are only sent to the department are forwarded to the Careers Centre - no matter whether the jobs on offer are for undergraduate or graduate assistants, interns or career starters. In this way, all of the threads come together in the Careers Centre and students and graduates alike are able to gain a comprehensive overview at any one time.

Once a year the Company Contact Fair takes place on the Magdeburg campus. Here the students can, among other things, have their application documents checked and make personal contact with potential regional and also national employers. The close connection to companies in the region is especially important to the WUBS department. For example, the Engineering Chamber of Saxony-Anhalt forecasts a marked shortage of skilled workers in the coming years. So it is all the better for the companies seeking well-qualified specialists to be able to obtain thorough advice in the Careers Centre.

In short, for all those looking for a job and offering vacancies, the Careers Centre is pleased to be of assistance and is ideally equipped for the needs of the current labour market.

Katja Lange  
Assistant to the Dean's Office  
Department of Water, Environment, Civil Engineering  
and Safety

Feedback on the Company Contact Fair held by  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences



## Department of Engineering and Industrial Design

Universities are guided by state-of-the-art knowledge and the present and future challenges with which skilled employees and managerial staff are faced. As a university of applied sciences, we place a great deal of importance on the connectivity between science, industry and society from the very earliest stages of an individual's studies. In order to be able to do justice to the practical relevance aspect of our study programmes, we rely on continuous collaboration with regional and national companies.

Knowledge and technology transfer in associations and networks has proven to be very effective here in building and maintaining partnerships. Our extensive Careers Centre network has frequently proved its worth at our university. It is an important starting point for students wishing to build initial contacts with industry. At the annual Company Contact Fair, our students have the opportunity to initiate relationships with future employers. They gain an initial impression of the corporate structure in a wide range of sectors. The staff in our Careers Centre continuously support the students in seminars, workshops and individual consultations with regard to making contacts, the application process and interviews.

Linking theory and practice at an early stage is still highly topical. With digitalisation, the social responsibility of the universities is all the greater to ensure that graduates are enabled to assess technology and act in accordance with their judgement.

Prof. Dr. Harald Goldau  
Professor  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences

The interaction of  
theory and practice



## Safety and Hazard Defence study programme

At a very early stage in my studies I asked myself which direction I wanted to develop in professionally. After completing their studies, many possible pathways are open to graduates and this range of offers can sometimes be overwhelming.

Consequently I came across the information materials at the Careers Centre consultation. Ms Gruschka was able to help me with my questions about my future career and further training and gave me excellent advice dealing with many of my concerns. And "Nachwuchsmarkt" helped me, for example when I was looking for a student assistant's job.

Furthermore, the Company Contact Fair was useful for making initial contacts with the world of work and for completing the Bachelor's thesis or an internship semester with a company's support.

Florian  
Student  
3rd semester Safety and  
Hazard Defence

Feedback on the Careers Centre and Company  
Contact Fair held by Magdeburg-Stendal University  
of Applied Sciences



## FERCHAU Engineering GmbH

For many years, FERCHAU Engineering GmbH has had a successful cooperation with Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences in the area of careers. Alongside carrying out applicant training sessions for technical study programmes, the Magdeburg branch of FERCHAU regularly participates in the search for suitable employees at the Company Contact Fair. In this way, several former students of the university have been welcomed as new FERCHAU employees.

Currently more than 8,400 engineers, IT consultants, technicians and technical draughtsmen and women work at FERCHAU Engineering GmbH in over 100 branches and locations as well as in over 100 technical offices and project groups. FERCHAU operates in the following specialist fields: machinery and plant construction, electrical engineering, automotive technology, information technology, aerospace technology and in ship-building and marine engineering.

FERCHAU's Magdeburg branch has set itself the goal of strengthening the innovative power of the medium-sized companies with a strong presence in the region. This applies above all in respect of the mechanical and special mechanical engineering sectors as well as automation and information technology. Our development engineers, design engineers, technical draughtsmen and women and IT employees are at work in almost every area of engineering. Are you ready to explore new horizons with us too? Then take your chance at FERCHAU and get your future heading in the right direction.

Stefanie Hellbach and Stefanie Ebel  
FERCHAU Engineering GmbH

Feedback on the Company Contact Fair held  
by Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied  
Sciences



## Research, development and transfer

As Prorektor for Research, Development and Transfer at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, I place a great deal of importance on the interconnectiveness between industry and science. Thanks to the strong practical relevance of our study programmes, our students are able to gain initial experience in industry during their studies. The Careers Centre is able to offer them advice and guidance when searching for internships, part-time work and permanent employment.

However, it also offers companies a central point of contact when looking for qualified and highly motivated young employees. Moreover, they are able to benefit from the countless training opportunities offered by the Centre for Continuing Education and make use of individually tailored programmes on subjects such as project management, business English and intercultural communication.

The connectivity between science and industry also plays a big part at our annual Company Contact Fair. With the motto "students meet industry", the students have the opportunity, as part of the Company Contact Fair, to initiate conversations with company representatives and to make initial contacts for their own professional futures.

Prof. Dr. Kerstin Baumgarten  
Prorektor for Research, Development and Transfer

Feedback on the Careers Centre and Company  
Contact Fair held by Magdeburg-Stendal University  
of Applied Sciences



## Department of Economics

With the relatively fresh second semester students studying the programme in Business Administration at Stendal, in 2018 we attended the Company Contact Fair on the Magdeburg campus for the very first time.

At the beginning of the programme, students are, of course, often rather shy of approaching companies directly and / or actively asking about possible jobs, especially when their internship semester is not even fully on the horizon. In the entrance, as an ice breaker so-to-speak, we were all given stickers saying "Business Administration" which helped potential companies to see that we were Business Admin students. This was generally well received.

Depending on their own goals and courage, students were able to initiate conversations with company representatives more quickly than they had expected. We may not have been actively picked out by the companies as we could see was the case with our engineering colleagues. However, there were many very interesting companies there for us Business Admin students too! Some students were offered an internship or part-time job in the region directly. The application photo shoot rounded the Company Contact Fair off. The next time we returned once more - this time with more experience.

Dr. Beate von Velsen-Zerweck  
Substitute Professor of Economic Sciences /  
Macroeconomics  
Department of Economics

Feedback on the Company Contact Fair held by  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences



## The Connect You Fair

Since 2012, Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences has invited social economy and industrial institutions, organisations and companies from the region to the university's campus in Stendal each year in order to enable them to introduce themselves in person and enter into conversation with you.

On this day, you can find out about internship places and jobs in the region on campus, begin building a network with contacts from regional employers and find suitable cooperation partners for your projects or final theses.

You should therefore make sure that you prepare well for the day and check in advance on the university's website to see who will be present at the event. To help you conquer any nerves, you can make use of various seminars and workshops run by the Careers Centre and the General Studies department. Exercises and role plays will help you to be as well prepared as possible and successfully tackle your visit to the fair. Best of all you can use every stand visit as your personal practice at presenting yourself.

To help you leave a lasting impression in writing too, you also have the opportunity to have your application portfolio checked over. The participating stakeholders provide an insight into their everyday working lives in brief company presentations and also invite you to themed talks. Speak with a multitude of exhibitors and keep in touch with them, for example through social networks. After the fair you can simply connect through a contact enquiry with a message, in which you refer back to your previous

conversation or to a presentation at the fair. Make sure people remember you! The more time you invest in networking, the more you will save later when searching for a job. The Connect You fair at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences is the perfect platform for making contacts. You will meet companies who are looking for precisely your qualities and who want to give you a chance!

Contact:  
Anja Funke

Tel.: +49 (0)3931 2187 4894  
Fax: +49 (0)3931 2187 4870  
email:  
anja.funke@h2.de

Visitors' address:  
Osterburger Str. 25, Haus 3,  
Room 2.05

To the ConnectYou website:



## The Internship Office / Office for Regional Cooperation at the University's Stendal Campus

Are you studying on the university's Stendal campus and looking for an internship institution or a part-time job, or do you need help with finding a topic for your final thesis? Then get in touch with our contacts in the Internship Office.

As the Office for Regional Cooperation, we act as intermediaries in close cooperation with the university's Careers Centre for graduates and companies, institutions and other establishments. We have current vacancies, a large database of possible organisations for internships and information about the study programmes at the Stendal campus. In our network with over 1000 addresses of institutions and companies from every sector you are sure to find your dream job.

Furthermore, we are the central point of contact for all external enquiries to the university campus regarding the publication of internships, job advertisements and the forwarding of project enquiries to the university teaching staff as well as the publication of practical topics for Bachelor's and Master's theses.

In order to constantly foster the networking of science, industry and the social sector and to recruit skilled young employees to our region, in the Service Building in Bahnhofstrasse in the Altmark district of Salzwedel, every month we offer information to entrepreneurs on the possibilities of working with the university. Prospective students can also find all of the essential information on our study programmes here. These comprise both Bachelor's and Master's study programmes as well as a variety of other training courses and continuing education

possibilities.

Visit our home page or agree a personal consultation appointment on site! We look forward to your visit!

Contact:  
Doreen Falke

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doreen.falke@h2.de

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Osterburger Str. 25, Haus 2,  
Room 2.05.3

Consultation hours:  
Mon to Fri: 09:30 – 11:30  
Tues and Thur: 13:30 – 14:30

To the website of the Office for Regional Cooperation:



To the industrial hub of Magdeburg-Stendal

The industrial hub of Magdeburg-Stendal offers the ideal conditions for a successful career path. Excellently well-developed industrial sites, good transport links and its role as a university location are just some of the many advantages of the region.

#### Magdeburg region

The Magdeburg region focuses particularly on the innovative development of machinery and plant construction and on environmental technology, the circular economy, logistics and the health industry.

The distinctive theatre culture of the state capital also favours the creative industries and tempts ever more new creatives to the city. The tourism sector benefits from the city's location on the "blue ribbon" of the Elbe and boasts many leisure, sporting and recreation activities.

In its role as a university city, the state capital draws over 20,000 students and countless research institutions to the region every year. The cooperation between science and industry is of great importance to both universities and companies alike.

You can see this for yourself at our regular Company Contact Fair on the university's Herrenkrug campus, in which over 90 regional and national companies participate, in order to find qualified specialist workers. Stendal / Altmark region

The region around the district of Stendal features many small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Above all, the agricultural sector and the food and wood industries dominate. But the steelwork and mechanical engineering, ship-building and automotive industries, as well as the glass-making and processing and the renewable energies

sectors are also important in the region. Biogas and wind power plants play a predominant role.

The tourism sector too is becoming increasingly important for Stendal and the Altmark. Countless cycling and hiking trails, historic towns and villages and the Romanesque Road tempt many tourists to visit. The eight Hanseatic towns of the Altmark are especially well worth visiting.

Of course Stendal also benefits from excellent infrastructure, since it is only 110 to 200 kilometres from Berlin, Hanover and Hamburg with their international airports. The ICE (intercity express) railway link to the town is another advantage.

Stendal, as a university town, also offers excellent conditions for networking between science and industry. For example, the regional "Connect You" fair on the university campus in Stendal invites countless companies from the surrounding area and offers students the chance to make contacts with the representatives of local institutions in order to develop long-term working relationships.

A portrait of young scientists:

#### Maria Schimmelpfennig – for a healthy dose of information

As a doctoral student and research associate on the State Strategy for Health (Competence) project, Maria Schimmelpfennig is continuing to remain loyal to her alma mater. After studying Health Promotion / Management for her first degree, the Halle native completed a Master's in Social Work in an Ageing Society and brought her scientific knowledge to bear after completing her studies on the "GeWinn - Gesund älter werden mit Wirkung" (Benefit - Ageing Healthily with Impact) research project.

"Making digital health information accessible to different groups and making it so that it can be understood by them is one focal area of health competence," explains the doctoral student. In a cooperative doctoral study programme with the Faculty of Medicine at Otto von Guericke University, the student, who now calls herself a Magdeburg native by choice, deals with the health competences of vulnerable, that is socially disadvantaged, groups of people. Through her research, she hopes to help older people deal effectively with the new media so that they can make appropriate decisions about their health in their everyday lives.

She recommends that students who are interested in an academic career should seek to gain experience as research assistants on research projects during their studies and build networks and maintain close contacts with their professors. "The advancement of young scientific talent, that is that of graduates, doctoral and post-doctoral students, is especially close to my heart," says Professor Dr. Kerstin Baumgarten, dissertation supervisor and Prorector for Research, Develop-

ment and Transfer. "In my time in office, we aim to develop new formats to strengthen the scientific non-professorial teaching staff and their interdisciplinary exchanges," the health scientist goes on to report.

Maria would like to integrate findings from the "GeWinn" project into her current project work. The sub-project, "Regional Strategies for Health (Competences) is one of a total of eleven projects that are ongoing in conjunction with Harz University of Applied Sciences and Merseburg University of Applied Sciences within the framework of the "Innovative University" funding programme. In the "Transfer and Innovation Service in the Federal State of Saxony-Anhalt" project (for short "TransInno\_LSA"), 36 research associates are working to tackle the social challenges of our state.



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Publisher  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences  
Postfach 3655, 39011 Magdeburg

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Magdeburg Campus  
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Internet  
[www.h2.de](http://www.h2.de)  
[www.nachwuchsmarkt.de](http://www.nachwuchsmarkt.de)

All information corresponds to the current situation at the time of going to press. Current information can be found on our website:  
[www.h2.de](http://www.h2.de)

Editorial deadline  
April 2019

Editorial staff  
Katrin Gruschka, Anna Nagel and Antonia Pilz

Editing  
Nadin Nitschke

Photographs  
Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences,  
Matthias Piekacz

Illustrations  
[www.freepik.com](http://www.freepik.com)

Layout  
Sally Bo Hattar

Printing  
Harzdruckerei GmbH, Wernigerode

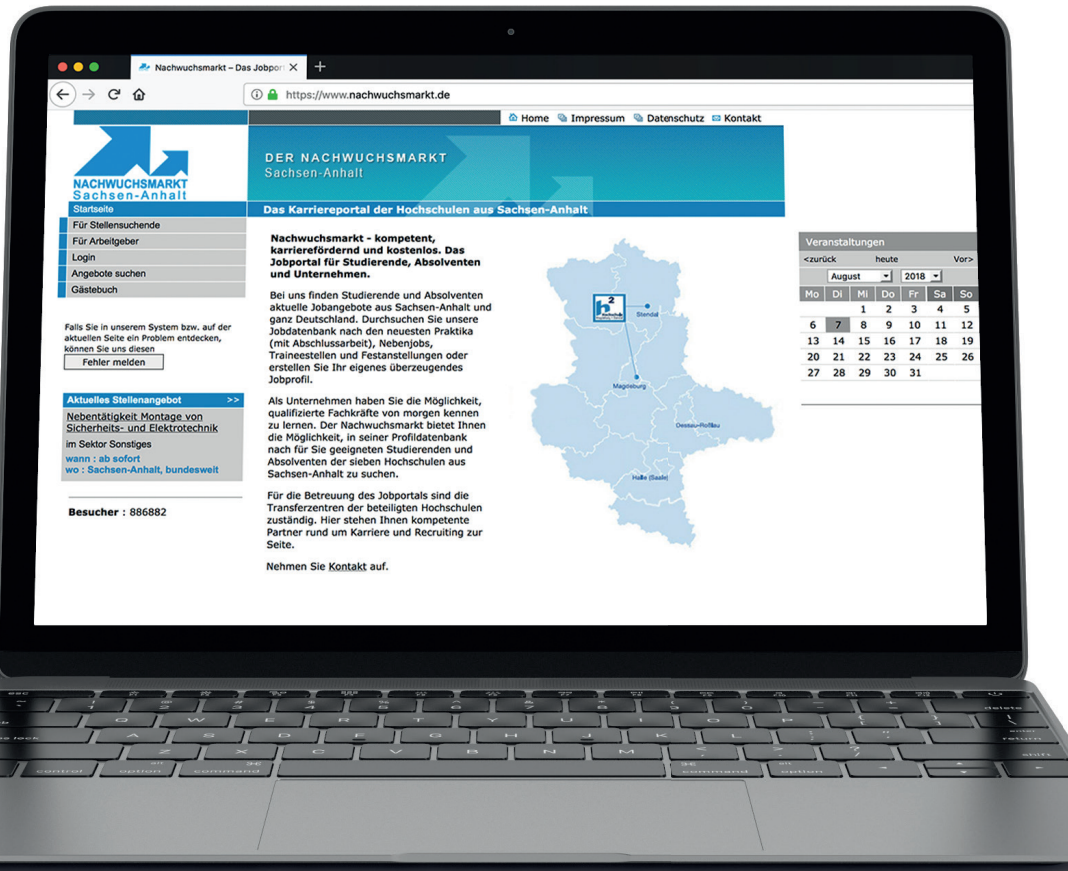
Gender clause  
In this brochure, for readability, the generic masculine has been used. Female and other gender identities are expressly included by this, to the extent required for the statement being made.





# NACHWUCHSMARKT Sachsen-Anhalt

www.nachwuchsmarkt.de



Ihr Stellen- und Informationsportal der Hochschule Magdeburg-Stendal