

Group Task #4: Sitemap and Design

Group K — Study in Germany Guide Website

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1. Preliminary Sitemap

The sitemap below shows the planned page hierarchy for the Study in Germany Guide website. A maximum of three navigation levels is maintained for optimal mobile usability.

Level	Main Navigation	Supporting Navigation	Supporting Navigation	Legal Menu
Level 0 (Homepage)	Homepage			
Level 1 (Main Pages)	Visa & Applications University Finder Cost of Living German Language Tips Student Life Cities Guide FAQ / Contact	About This Guide	Contribute / Share Tips	Imprint Privacy Policy
Level 2 (Sub-Pages)	Visa & Applications: • Student Visa Steps • Required Documents • Embassy Finder University Finder: • Public Universities • Private Universities • Application Deadlines Cost of Living: • Housing Costs • Monthly Budget Calc. • Scholarships German Language: • B1 Resources • Language Schools • Free Apps Student Life: • Healthcare			

• Banking • Transport Cities Guide: • Berlin • Munich • Hamburg • Frankfurt			
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Note: The sitemap follows the split-menu structure taught in Module 5 — main navigation for core content, supporting navigation for auxiliary pages, and legal menu for compliance pages (Imprint, Privacy Policy as required under German law).

Page Descriptions

Homepage

Landing page with a clear value proposition, hero image, and direct links to the most important sections for prospective international students.

Visa & Applications

Step-by-step guide to the German student visa process, required documents checklist, and embassy locator. Sub-pages break down the process into manageable stages.

University Finder

Overview of public and private German universities, sortable by subject area, location, and language of instruction. Includes key application deadlines.

Cost of Living

Practical breakdown of monthly expenses including rent, food, transport, and health insurance. Features a simple budget calculator and links to scholarship opportunities.

German Language Tips

Resources for learning German before and after arrival: recommended apps, free online courses, B1 preparation materials, and local language school listings.

Student Life

Practical guide to everyday life in Germany — opening a bank account, registering at the city hall (Anmeldung), public health insurance, and navigating public transport.

Cities Guide

Highlights of the most popular student cities in Germany (Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Frankfurt) covering cost of living, university density, and student culture.

FAQ / Contact

Answers to the most common questions from international students, plus a contact form for submitting new questions or corrections to the guide.

2. WordPress Template Selection: Hello Elementor

2.1 Template Overview

The selected WordPress theme for the Study in Germany Guide is Hello Elementor, the official free theme developed and maintained by Elementor Ltd. It is available directly through the WordPress theme repository (wordpress.org/themes) and is specifically designed to work seamlessly with the Elementor page builder plugin.

Hello Elementor is a lightweight, minimalist base theme. Rather than imposing a fixed visual style, it provides a clean blank canvas that Elementor controls entirely — making it ideal for student projects that need full design flexibility without touching code.

2.2 Why Hello Elementor Fits Our Needs

Criterion	Typical Free Theme	Hello Elementor
Design Flexibility	Fixed layouts, limited visual control	Full drag-and-drop with Elementor widgets — any layout possible
Ease of Use	Requires CSS/PHP edits for changes	Visual editor, no coding needed for our group
Performance	Moderate — includes unused styles	Ultra-lightweight (<10KB), fast page loads, good SEO impact
Mobile Responsive	Depends on theme quality	Fully responsive by default in Elementor
Plugin Ecosystem	Varies	Seamless integration with Elementor Free & Pro widgets
Community & Support	Variable	Largest Elementor community; millions of tutorials available
Cost	Free	Free (Hello theme + Elementor Free plugin)
Regular Updates	Varies	Actively maintained by Elementor Ltd.

2.3 Alignment with Our Project Goals

The Study in Germany Guide requires a content-rich, information-dense website with multiple page types — guides, lists, comparison tables, and a FAQ section. Hello Elementor supports all of these through Elementor's section and widget system without requiring additional paid plugins.

Key reasons for the choice:

- Content hierarchy: Elementor's heading, text, and accordion widgets map directly to the content hierarchy defined in our sitemap.

- User-centered design: Elementor allows us to design with our target audience (international students) in mind — clear, readable layouts with prominent calls to action.
- Mobile responsiveness: All Elementor-built pages are mobile-responsive by default, meeting the three-level navigation depth recommended for mobile UX.
- Visual consistency: A single Elementor template applied site-wide ensures consistent color scheme, typography, and spacing — aligned with the web design principles from Module 5.
- Performance: Hello Elementor's near-zero CSS footprint means our page load times will be optimized, which also benefits SEO ranking.
- No cost: As a student project, the combination of Hello Elementor (free theme) and Elementor Free plugin requires zero budget while delivering professional results.

2.4 Template Source

Hello Elementor is available at: <https://wordpress.org/themes/hello-elementor>

Elementor page builder plugin: <https://wordpress.org/plugins/elementor/>

Both are free, open-source, and installable directly from the WordPress dashboard — no third-party download required.

2.5 Planned Design Approach

Using Hello Elementor with the Elementor Free plugin, we plan to:

- Create a global color scheme using the university blue tones to give the website a trustworthy, academic feel appropriate for a study guide.
- Use Elementor's global fonts feature to set a consistent sans-serif font (e.g. Inter or Lato) across all pages.
- Design a reusable header and footer template applied site-wide, including the main navigation menu and legal links.
- Use Elementor's icon box, accordion, and image widgets to present visa steps, university lists, and FAQ content clearly and accessibly.
- Ensure all pages pass basic WCAG accessibility checks — sufficient color contrast, alt text for images, and keyboard-navigable menus.