

TARIFINFO #6 ON THE NEW GUIDELINE OF THE TARIFGEMEINSCHAFT DEUTSCHER LÄNDER (TDL)

On 28 February 2024, the TdL published its new guideline on working conditions for student and academic assistants. It incorporates the minimum standards for student employees resulting from the collective agreement of 9 December 2023. Editorial work on the collective agreement between the unions and the TdL is still ongoing and is not expected before May 2024.

1. Hourly Pay

In the TdL guideline of 28 February 2024, **the minimum hourly pay** for student assistants (SHK) without a degree is set at €13.25 from the 2024 summer semester and at €13.98 from the 2025 summer semester in accordance with the contractual agreement.

As in the past, the individual federal states and universities will only be given room for manoeuvre with regard to wages by allowing an **upward deviation of no more than 10%** and the **optional payment of an annual bonus** (see 2.).

In addition, the TdL maintains that the federal states may convert the amounts to the weekly working hours applicable in the respective federal state (cf. § 6, Subsection 1, TV-L). As this varies from state to state, the universities are given the opportunity to reduce the upper wage limits accordingly.

While the TdL had rejected the usual grading of salaries according to experience in the negotiations, it is now once again arbitrarily applying the logic

of collective bargaining – albeit to the detriment of us employees.

Only in the case of the minimum hourly wage (€13.25 from summer semester 2024/€13.98 from summer semester 2025) is this option not available! **Here, the contractual agreement overrides the TdL directive.**

The only positive aspect is that the TdL guideline also includes an increase, albeit minimal, in the upper wage limits for graduate research assistants. For research assistants with a Bachelor's degree, these will be up to €13.83 from the 2024 summer semester and up to €14.59 from the 2025 summer semester, and for research assistants with a Master's degree up to €18.78 from the 2024 summer semester and up to €19.81 from the 2025 summer semester.

2. Special Annual Payment

The TdL directive gives higher education institutions the voluntary (!) option of paying an annual bonus for auxiliary staff, e.g. in accordance with § 20 TV-L, i.e. graduated according to salary groups.

This was already possible prior to the contractual agreement by means of the TdL directive. In some federal states, such as

NRW, the annual bonus is included in the maximum hourly wage on the basis of 19 hours per week as follows:

Type of employment	New maximum rates including pro rata bonus from summer semester 2024 (in euros)
SHK	13,25 € + 0,82 € pro rata annual bonus = 14,07 € plus max. 10 % = 15,48 €
WHK (with BA degree)	13,83 € + 0,86 € apro rata annual bonus = 14,69 € plus max. 10 % = 16,16 €
WHK (with MA degree)	18,78 € + 0,73 € pro rata annual bonus = 19,51 € plus max. 10 % = 21,46 €

3. Minimum Contract Duration

With regard to the **standard contract duration of 12 months** agreed in the contractual agreement, the TdL guideline merely points out that this should apply to all auxiliary staff and that deviations are possible in justified cases. **It now depends on the local organisation.** In Hamburg, employees and trade unions on the one hand and university representatives on the other have jointly drawn up a code of conduct for the working conditions of student workers. This includes specific rules on the application of the 12-month contract and exceptions to it in individual cases. The Hamburg regulations are to be applied at higher education institutions in Hamburg from 1 April 2024.

The Hamburg example shows that it is worth taking action now and encouraging universities and state governments to negotiate the interpretation and implementation of the contractual agreement.

So far, the agreed standard contract duration (as of 1 April 2024) seems to have been implemented in very few cases in the

job advertisements. In many places, there is an increasing number of job offers that fall short of the 12-month standard contract duration. We need to work together to stop this!

Report these job advertisements using the [report form on the TVStud website](#) and/or collect them locally and forward them to the relevant union secretaries.

4. Cuts in the Number of Hours Worked

There are now reports that faculties, and in some cases entire universities, are cutting the hours in student workers' contracts for financial reasons. We raised this concern on several occasions during the negotiations and called for a minimum number of hours to be set, which was ultimately rejected by the employers. A **unilateral reduction of hours by the employer is not allowed in existing contracts!** Do not allow yourself to be forced to sign any change contracts and take action against them.

Contact your local union secretary and, if there is one, your university staff representative.

5. Summer Semester or 1 April – What applies from when?

The TdL directive comes into force on 1 April 2024, as does the contractual agreement. However, if the summer term begins on 1 March 2024, the agreed minimum hourly wage must be paid from that date. The start of the summer term will be determined by national and university regulations. If wages are not adjusted and the minimum contract periods are not implemented by these dates at the latest, you should always take action! The best way to do this is to talk to your line manager, your staff council and/or your union secretary.

6. Co-determination

Staff councils, as part of their responsibilities under national staff representation legislation, monitor compliance with minimum wages and minimum contract terms.

In many federal states, the staff councils also have co-determination rights for student employees and it is therefore their task as interest representatives to ensure that the contractual agreement is implemented.

However, the use of wage ceilings is not subject to co-determination, but can be used by universities at their own discretion. The demands for wage increases for student workers can therefore only be effectively put on the agenda of university management if company and trade union actors jointly push for the existing scope for improving student working conditions to be used.

The TdL has largely remained faithful to the logic of the old directive (e.g. maximum hourly wage, separation by degree). It is now up to us to use the room for manoeuvre and get involved in local shaping. Contact your local staff council and trade union structures to exert internal and political pressure. Call on your universities and state governments to negotiate the structure and implementation of the contractual agreement!

Unite, organise and speak out against violations and attempts to circumvent the agreement!

Report such violations via [the website!](#)

