

**Summary:**

Student Anna wants to go abroad. At a counselling appointment at the International Office, she wants to learn about her options. She gets to know a lot about the role of the International Office - also through the Polish student Anna, who is happy about the many offerings of this institution.

- Narrator:** It is Tuesday afternoon. A German student of German language and literature is waiting in one of the central buildings of the University of Augsburg, known as A3, in the rooms of the International Office.  
The International Office is called in German "Akademisches AuslandsAmt" and is therefore sometimes abbreviated to AAA.  
The student's name is Anna, she is 21 years old and in her third semester. Her wish is to spend a semester at a foreign university - Anna loves foreign cultures. But first she wants to learn about the opportunities on offer. Therefore she has an appointment with Ms. Schneider for the study abroad counselling.  
While Anna is waiting, Magdalena approaches her. Magdalena comes from Poland and spends her fifth semester as an Erasmus student at the University of Augsburg. She is also studying German language and literature and has been learning German for a couple of years. She has come to Germany in order to improve the language and to get to know the German culture.
- Magdalena:** Hi, Anna, how are you doing today? And how come that you are here at the International Office?
- Anna:** Magdalena, hi! I have already told you, that I'd like to spend a semester abroad, too. And therefore I want to get some advice. I am about to have an appointment, but I still have to wait a little bit.
- Magdalena:** Do you know by now where you would like to go to?
- Anna:** Well, as you know I have been learning Spanish for quite a while. That is why I would fancy going to Spain or South America, but I haven't made up my mind yet. But what about you, why are you here? Do you have an appointment with Ms. Schneider, too?
- Magdalena:** No, not with Ms. Schneider. You know, she is just responsible for the German students. I need to go to my Erasmus counsellor, Ms Reißner-Jenne as I want to ask her a few questions.
- Anna:** You can also ask me, whenever you want to know something! You sure know that, don't you?
- Magdalena:** Thank you very much. But I have to ask some specific questions about my rental agreement, which has been mediated by the International Office. I would also like to know who my contact person in my faculty department is. And I have a few questions about my courses.

**Narrator:** Magdalena is grateful for the help from the International Office. For each question she can contact the appropriate contact person for foreign students. She can either go directly to the International Office or just send an e-mail. There is also an introductory evening and an orientation day for international students. On orientation day, the facilities at the University of Augsburg are being presented and a campus tour is provided. Then Anna looks at the clock - her appointment with Ms. Schneider is about to begin.

**Anna:** Hey, I really got to go now! It is already three o'clock!

**Magdalena:** Gosh, me, too! I guess my appointment won't take that long. So, I could wait for you afterwards, if you'd like to?

**Anna:** Yeah, cool, that would be great! See you soon!

**Narrator:** Anna is looking forward to the conversation with Ms. Schneider, because she has many questions. As for Anna and Magdalena, the International Office is a starting information point for many students, like Ms. Schneider explains:

*Ms. Schneider: The International Office has two main functions: on the one hand, we are mediators for the German students who want to go abroad, i.e. we convey to them a course of study or an internship abroad. And on the other hand, we are contact persons for international students, coming from Erasmus partner collaborations or from outside Europe.*

**Narrator:** About 10% of all students studying at the University of Augsburg are internationals, which equals about 1,600 foreign students. Also every year 600 German students of the University of Augsburg take part in study programs abroad. The range of offers by the International Office includes in addition to the well known Erasmus program a large number of collaborations in Latin America and Asia. Furthermore there are some study partnership programs in Australia and North America, but these are not free of tuition fees. All regular foreign students of the University of Augsburg may participate in exchange programs.

Anna has primarily concerns how to finance her stay abroad, and asks therefore about her possibilities to solve this question.

*Ms. Schneider: So the lucky winners are always the BAföG recipients, which is the most common German student loan, because they can also apply for the special BAföG for studies abroad. This is independent from your study performance, you can apply for this with bad grades, which means it's always a good option. The others must have fairly good grades, if they want to have a chance for a scholarship. There are several scholarships, but I don't want to sugarcoat anything - there are not many scholarships and only a small part of the applicants get one.*

**Narrator:** It is important for every student to apply early, which means usually one year before you want to go. Most students choose the fifth semester to go abroad. For both, German and foreign students, there exists also the opportunity to acquire through the International Office the Certificate of Intercultural Key Skills, the so-called CIS. The CIS confirms knowledge of foreign language and intercultural communication, international experience, voluntary commitment at the university and vocational training within an international context. Further information about this topic is provided for you on the web site of the International Office at [www.aaa.uni-augsburg.de](http://www.aaa.uni-augsburg.de)!

After the consultation Anna feels high-powered and full of energy. She would almost like to start at once with her application. In front of the bureau Magdalena is already waiting for her.

**Magdalena:** So, how was your meeting?

**Anna:** Good! Now I am really curious about what is coming up next. And how about your appointment?

**Magdalena:** Well, I only had a few questions, it didn't take much time! Hey, will we meet at the international Christmas party tonight?

**Anna:** Yeah, I plan to go there, too. It sure will be fun!

**Narrator:** The International Office not only advises the students but also organizes many interesting events:

*Ms. Schneider: So in terms of events for international students, we offer excursions, e.g. to Ulm and Rothenburg. We also organize an international Christmas party and an international summer festival. As for the Germans, we offer a lot of information events, but also workshops, about how to apply for an job etc.. We therefore provide information both on the homepage of the International Office and through printed flyers, or through newsletters, for which you can subscribe. And normally all this makes sure that you won't miss anything.*

**Narrator:** On the evening of the international Christmas party there is a cool mixture of students from Germany, Cameroon, Spain, Russia, China, England and many other countries ...  
... Doesn't this just make you curious to experience more?!

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