**Akademisches Auslandsamt/ International Office**

##### Study abroad as a free-mover at the university of your choice

Do you want to study abroad in a country or at a specific faculty and don't get a hit when searching with [Mobility Online](https://www.service4mobility.com/europe/MobilitySearchServlet?org_id=212&sprache=de&kz_search=A&kz_partner_link_type=0&identifier=DRESDEN02&showOnlyKzSearch=0&checkExisting=true&showGoogleMapsLink=false&gMapURLParameters=&markerClicked=0&regionClicked=0&map_action_type=I&is_show_inst_on_click=0&submit_by_click=1&inputBewArt=0&inputBewPers=0&allowBewArtBoth=0&allowBewPersBoth=0&completeURL=https://www.service4mobility.com/europe/MobilitySearchServlet2?match=f95fe7f41ecaf1872fa8a18cbdc97eda22ecae9123237e373b778313504569758a48e3407bf8ffd2b6fb9d9564dd6d55e1b10e6c08769fb3bec137d5f1e697c87ef9f13884e62cf65d05c981e3084fad3b4d3e0a3fff6c18bbf3a854af7a83c0a00df315bc524e80081adefb3b00bbf650b4fc6ea481e6a14d73d41842c75a02&map_lcd_action_type=N&inst_id_heim=1567649&kz_bew_art=OUT&kz_bew_pers=S&aust_prog_id=0&studr_id=0&studj_id=6567&lcd_id=0&inst_id_partner=0)? Or do you have your eye on a particular institution abroad where you would like to study for one or more semesters, but it does not yet have a cooperation agreement with TUD?

This should not thwart your plans, because it is also possible to study at international universities as a so-called free-mover.

**Free-movers**, as the name implies, **organize** **their stay independently** and cannot rely on the same organizational help from the International Office that students who plan their semester abroad as part of of special programs ([Erasmus](https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/auslandsaufenthalt/erasmus), [TUDweltweit](https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/auslandsaufenthalt/koop_ww), [faculty cooperations](https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/auslandsaufenthalt/programme-und-foerdermoeglichkeiten/fakultaetskooperationen), double degree programs). If you are well organized this will not be a problem. Those who do want help can turn to **agencies** for most destinations: most agencies offer their services free of charge and often have a broad portfolio of universities where a collaboration exists. When working with agencies, you should keep in mind that usually you will need to pay tuition fees . Therefore, it makes sense to look for scholarships at a very early stage.

If you are organizing your stay as a free-mover autonomously, we have summarized a few **guidelines** to **help you get started**.

**Step 0**

**Quo vadis?**

There are a plethora of interesting countries, exciting cities and promising universities. It can be difficult to decide on a destination. Beyond the first impulse, you should consider several points and take enough time for the final decision.

Get an **overview** and familiarize yourself thoroughly with the countries that interest you. The [DAAD Country Info](https://www.daad.de/de/laenderinformationen/) provides valuable information on **studying**, the **education system** **and admission requirements** in the respective country, as well as relevant contacts. The [German Foreign Office](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender) is also an important address to inform you about **entry regulations,** **political situation** and possible local **conflicts** as well as **general data** about the country. Also relevant are the connectivity and infrastructure in the country or city shortlisted.

If you already have a rough plan for a destination that is perhaps outside of Europe and a bit more exotic, it is also worth visiting the [Center for Tropical and Travel Medicine](https://www.globetrotter.de/service/reisemedizin/) (e.g. at Globetrotter on Prager Straße). There, you can get free individual advice on **health risks** and **preventive measures** and receive the **appropriate vaccinations**.

Several factors play a role when **choosing a university.** First, of course, **academic possibilities** are important and whether the courses you are interested in are also offered in a **language** you are familiar with. In some cases, the language of the country and the language of instruction differ, so that you can often get quite far with English - especially in Asia and Africa. In order to assess the quality of teaching and the level of expertise, it is helpful to use international comparison portals (e.g. [QS University World Ranking](https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings/2022) or [Times Higher Education](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2020/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats)), where you can see the university's position in the international rankings.

**Step 1 Contacting the host university**

Once you have decided on a university abroad, it is time for more concrete planning: First contact the **International Office of the host university**: here, you should find out whether free-movers are accepted at all (e.g. Japanese universities usually do not accept them).

You should also ask about the **conditions and deadlines** that must be met in order to apply. What certificates/documents do you need to submit? What **language certificates** are valid (you may need to take a [TOEFL Test](https://www.ets.org/toefl) or an [IELTS Test](https://www.ielts.org/))? Do you have to prove your academic results by providing a transcript of records? You will receive an **overview of your grades** at your examination office, the [TU translator](https://tu-dresden.de/gsw/slk/lsk/die-einrichtung/uebersetzung) can do the certified translation for you - please allow at least 3 weeks for this). Does the host university request **proof of adequate insurance coverage** and **financial means**? Do you have to submit a **health certificate**?

Are there any **support programs for foreign students** to obtain financial relief, e.g. with regard to **tuition fees**? How is the **accommodation** of students organized: should/can you organize something on your own or are dormitory places offered (especially in Asian countries there is often no alternative to a dormitory).

**Step 2 Clarifying organizational and content-related issues with the home university**

Clarify any **questions regarding your subject** with the subject coordinator at your **faculty**. Familiarize yourself with the courses at the host university and discuss with your local coordinator if they are compatible with your study plan.

You should find out from your **examination office** which documents you have to submit so that it can be checked whether the work completed abroad can be recognized and credited to you (note the difference!).

Consider whether a **semester of leave** is appropriate for the period of study abroad. You can apply for one at the admissions office.

**Step 3 Funding**

**Long-term planning** is worth a mint here! You may have to apply for lucrative scholarships well before you apply for the actual program. If you want to go abroad for a whole year, the [DAAD one-year scholarship](https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/auslandsaufenthalt/daad-stipendien) is a good solution, but also [Auslands-BAföG](https://www.studentenwerke.de/de/content/bafög-im-ausland) is worthwhile: up to 4,600€ of tuition fees might be covered. You can also find more [funding opportunities](https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/auslandsaufenthalt/weitere_foerdermoeglichkeiten) on our website.

This guide should have given you an overview, which will hopefully help you to structure yourself well and to implement your project in a goal-oriented way. We wish you

**Good luck and success for your studies abroad!**