



## GR 351 GERMAN LANGUAGE IN CONTEXT: INDEPENDENT ABROAD I

IES Abroad Vienna

### DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed for students who have reached an early intermediate level in German and are ready to consolidate and extend their skills toward fuller communicative independence. It supports students in gaining greater control over the language and in using it effectively across a broader range of topics, registers, and contexts.

Students who enter this course have mastered most of the outcomes of the Emerging Independent Abroad level as defined by the IES Abroad MAP for Language and Intercultural Communication. They begin to understand people's opinions and emotional expressions according to different contexts and can respond appropriately. At this stage, students are able to make informed comparisons with confidence and are beginning to use language for more complex and reflective purposes, adapting their communication to situational demands. Students at this point in their learning may also experience a developmental plateau and benefit from targeted practice and strategic effort to progress further.

Building on previously acquired skills, the course emphasizes refining grammatical accuracy, expanding vocabulary, and improving fluency in both spoken and written expression. Students engage with increasingly complex texts - such as articles, interviews, podcasts, and short literary or opinion pieces - and participate in discussions that require critical thinking, negotiation of meaning, and the expression of nuanced perspectives. In addition to exploring everyday and academic topics, the course encourages students to engage with a variety of cultural, societal, and historical issues in Austria and the German-speaking world. Students are expected to interact more confidently and critically with their environment, making informed connections between linguistic forms, cultural content, and their own perspectives and experiences abroad.

By the end of the course, students will be able to communicate with a greater degree of independence and flexibility in familiar and some unfamiliar situations. They will understand the main ideas and relevant details of more complex spoken and written German, participate actively in sustained conversations, and produce well-organized, detailed texts for various communicative purposes.

This course aligns with the B1+ (B1.2) level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and supports students in achieving the outcomes described at the Independent Abroad level of the IES Abroad Language MAP, laying the foundation for progression into upper-intermediate language study.

**CREDITS:** 4 credits

**CONTACT HOURS:** 60 hours

**LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION:** German

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## **INSTRUCTOR:**

**PREREQUISITES:** Students entering this course have mastered the outcomes of the Emerging Independent Abroad level of the IES Abroad MAP and most of the CEFR B1 level. They are typically expected to have completed at least three semesters of college-level German or the equivalent. These students can handle everyday interactions, manage most practical situations, express opinions and preferences, and engage in more sustained exchanges. They are beginning to express emotions appropriately in context and ask for advice or explanations with confidence, though they may require continued practice to move beyond plateaued patterns of communication.

**ADDITIONAL COST:** € 30 for books and copies

## **METHOD OF PRESENTATION:**

This course uses a communicative, student-centered approach that emphasizes active engagement with the language and culture. Learning is facilitated through a variety of interactive and immersive methods, including:

- Integrated skill-building exercises in reading, writing, listening, and speaking
- Oral and written assignments, including short in-class presentations and creative writing tasks
- Collaborative classroom activities, such as role plays, dialogues, interviews, and games
- Course-related excursions that connect language learning to authentic cultural experiences, including visits to a Viennese coffee house, a local food market, or a guided museum tour

This blended approach allows students to apply language in real-world contexts, deepen their intercultural understanding, and develop communicative competence in a meaningful and enjoyable way.

## **REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:**

- 10 % Active Participation in Class
- 20 % Skill-Focused and Culturally Reflective Learning
- 10 % Homework
- 25 % Regular Quizzes & Tests
- 10 % Oral Exams (3 total)
- 25 % Written Exams (3 total)

### **Active Participation in Class**

Participation is more than mere attendance; it means coming to class well-prepared, engaging actively in discussions, and supporting one another as collaborative members of our learning community. Students should listen attentively, ask and answer thoughtful questions, and offer constructive feedback to peers. They are encouraged to take initiative in pair and group work - sharing ideas, volunteering for tasks, and taking detailed notes. At the same time, each student is responsible for monitoring their own understanding and seeking additional assistance or tutoring whenever challenges arise. Throughout all activities, learners should strive to use German as much as possible, fostering both their own progress and a positive, encouraging classroom environment.

### **Skill-Focused and Culturally Reflective Learning**

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Students will engage in tasks designed to develop the IES MAP's five skill areas - Intercultural Communication, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Creative assignments, such as journaling, field-based projects, analysis of authentic materials, and peer collaborations, are graded under this category; however, ongoing language learning progress also plays a central role. Assessment considers both the quality of each submission and the consistency with which new vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural insights are integrated across all work, thereby reflecting overall growth as language learners.

### **Homework:**

After each class, students will complete assigned exercises in the "Grammatik aktiv B1+" (book) along with supplementary worksheets or digital practice on Moodle. Homework reinforces grammar and vocabulary introduced in class. Students are expected to correct their work independently; only areas of difficulty or misunderstanding will be reviewed in class.

### **Quizzes & Tests**

To promote steady progress, students will take regular written quizzes and one test to assess their grasp of grammar and vocabulary. These quizzes will be administered daily or weekly, focusing on vocabulary, grammar, and structures recently introduced in class. The goal is to encourage students to study new content regularly and in manageable portions.

### **Oral Exams**

Students' speaking skills will be assessed through three oral exams during the semester: one after the Intensive Period, and two at the end of each main semester phase. Assessment follows CEFR B1-aligned criteria, adapted from the ÖSD exam model: 1. Task Fulfillment and Communicative Effectiveness, 2. Vocabulary and Expression, 3. Intonation, Pronunciation, Fluency, and Intelligibility 4. Grammatical Accuracy.

### **Written Exams**

Three comprehensive written exams will take place during the course: at the end of the Intensive Period, mid-semester, and at the end of the semester. Exams assess listening and reading comprehension, writing ability, and the ability to apply key grammar and vocabulary.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

By the end of the course, students will meet the outcomes of the Independent Abroad level and CEFR B1+.

#### **Intercultural Communication**

- Students interact appropriately in a range of social and cultural situations.
- They begin to reflect on cultural perspectives and compare them with their own.

#### **Listening**

- Students understand both the gist and key details in authentic audio or video materials.
- They can follow conversations, instructions, and news on familiar topics.

#### **Speaking**

- Students take part in longer, more spontaneous conversations.
- They give short presentations and express opinions with justification and examples.

#### **Reading**

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- Students understand moderately complex texts related to familiar and societal topics.
- They interpret arguments and distinguish between facts and opinions.

#### **Writing**

- Students write connected, detailed texts (e.g., argumentative paragraphs, summaries, descriptions).
- They show control of common grammatical structures and adjust tone for the audience.

#### **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

IES Abroad Vienna requires attendance at all class sessions. Attendance will be taken every class. Students must attend at least 60% of their class sessions to qualify for a passing grade, regardless of whether their absences have been excused or not. Attendance is required in-person unless otherwise noted in the syllabus. Excused absences due to the reasons outlined in the IES Abroad Vienna Attendance Policy can only be approved by the academic department.

Unexcused absences may carry a penalty to the final grade and only excused absences entitle students to make up assignments, tests, quizzes, and exams. Students are highly encouraged to communicate absences as soon as possible to their professors. Please refer to the IES Abroad Vienna Attendance Policy for a more precise overview of all attendance policies at IES Abroad Vienna and of grade penalties.

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

At IES Abroad Vienna, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty undermines the principles of trust and fairness essential to a thriving learning community. As such, plagiarism and cheating are considered serious violations of our code of conduct, and students found engaging in such activities will face swift and severe consequences, ranging from a failing grade on an assignment, to an academic review and possible expulsion from the program.

#### **USE OF AI:**

The instructor will clarify if and how AI tools may be used, which may vary by assignment. In all cases, use of AI must be clearly acknowledged, and students remain fully responsible for the content they submit under their name.

## CONTENT:

| Week             | Topics & Vocabulary                                                                            | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Assignments and Readings                      |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>INTENSIVE</b> |                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                               |
| <b>Week 1</b>    | <b>Persönliches Kennenlernen der Gruppe anhand des Lebensrades</b>                             | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>das Lieblingswort auf Deutsch präsentieren</li> <li>wichtige Phrasen und Chunks für den Alltag in Wien sammeln und üben, Ausspracheübungen,</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wiederholung der Nebensätze: weil / dass / wenn / damit / obwohl</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meine ersten Eindrücke von Wien</li> <li>Erwartungen und Wünsche an die Zeit in Wien formulieren, Redemittel zur Bildbeschreibung</li> </ul>                                                                                     | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,        |
| <b>Week 2</b>    | <b>Träume</b><br><br><b>Wiener Kaffeehauskultur</b><br><br><b>Wien um die Jahrhundertwende</b> | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Texte und Videos über Lebensträume verschiedener Personen verstehen, über persönliche Lebensträume diskutieren,</li> <li>Hör-Seh-Verstehen: berühmte Persönlichkeiten Wiens um die Jahrhundertwende, eine besondere Person aus Wien präsentieren</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zeitenfolge, Tempusformen: Perfekt, Präteritum, Plusquamperfekt,</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wien um die Jahrhundertwende</li> <li>Gedicht von Peter Altenberg "Kaffeehaus", Verfassen eines eigenen Gedichts</li> </ul> | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,        |
| <b>Week 3</b>    | <b>Helden</b><br><br><b>Freundschaft</b>                                                       | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diskussion über Freundschaft, Arbeit mit Zitaten, einen Radiobeitrag über Freundschaft verstehen, den besten Freund/ die beste Freundin präsentieren</li> <li>Diskussion über persönliche Helden und Heldinnen</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verben + Ergänzungen (Dativ/Akkusativ), Verben + Präpositionen</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Oral Exam</b><br><b>Written Final Exam</b> |

|                          |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                         |
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|                          |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Einen deutschsprachigen Popsong zum Thema Freundschaft verstehen und darüber sprechen</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                         |
| <b>SEMESTER PART 1/2</b> |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                         |
| <b>Week 1</b>            | <b>Beruf und Karriere</b> | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arbeit mit dem Video von der Sterneköchin Sybille Milde, anschließende Diskussion zu den Themen: Berufsgruppen, Kinder, Karriere, Geld und Alter</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redewendungen /Konjunktiv 2 (Gegenwart und Vergangenheit)</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arbeit mit aktuellen Nachrichten (Zeitungsartikel/Hör-Seh-Verstehen), Recherchearbeit über Sybille Milde</li> </ul>                                                                   | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,                  |
| <b>Week 2</b>            | <b>Wohnwelten</b>         | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bildbeschreibungen, Definition eines persönlichen Wohntyps, verschiedene Wohnformen/Lebensformen diskutieren, eine Grafik zum Thema Wohnen beschreiben, vom letzten Umzug erzählen</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>trennbare und untrennbare Verben, Satzbau</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wohnen in Wien, Wien in Zahlen</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework, culture project, |
| <b>Week 3</b>            | <b>Reisen und Hotels</b>  | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>über persönliche Erwartungen beim Reisen sprechen, von eigenen, besonderen Reisen berichten, Texte über besondere Hotels lesen (Was für eine Nacht), eine E-Mail lesen und beantworten, Ratschläge erteilen, Rollenspiele zum Thema Umzug/das Elternhaus verlassen</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>n-Deklination, Kasus</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arbeit mit aktuellen Nachrichten über das Oktoberfest (Zeitungsartikel und Hör-Seh-Verstehen)</li> </ul> | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,                  |

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| Week 4            | Jugendstudie 2025                                                     | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eine aktuelle Jugendstudie verstehen und zentrale Ergebnisse reflektieren</li> <li>über Werte, Zukunftsziele und das Leben junger Menschen diskutieren</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Konjunktiv 2 (Wiederholung)</li> <li>Satzverbindungen (obwohl, trotzdem, deswegen)</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jugendliche in Österreich</li> </ul> | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,       |
| Week 5            | Dokumentation:<br>3 Wochen ohne Handy                                 | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eine Dokumentation über den Handyverzicht verstehen und eigene Mediengewohnheiten reflektieren</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verben mit Präpositionen</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medienverhalten und digitale Abhängigkeit bei Jugendlichen in Österreich</li> </ul>                                                                    | Oral Exam<br>Written Midterm Exam            |
| SEMESTER PART 2/2 |                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                              |
| Week 6            | Kunst und Kultur in Wien                                              | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Berühmte Gemälde in Wiener Museen beschreiben,</li> <li>das eigene Lieblingsgemälde präsentieren</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wechselpräpositionen, Lokale Präpositionen</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Museen und berühmte Künstler Wiens</li> </ul>                                                                                      | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,       |
| Week 7            | Wien vor dem 1. Weltkrieg<br><br>Stefan Zweig: "Die Welt von Gestern" | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eine historisch-literarische Erzählung in ihrem Kontext verstehen</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Präpositionaladverbien</li> <li>Präteritum</li> <li>Wechselpräpositionen</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Österreichische Gesellschaft und Literatur vor den Weltkriegen</li> </ul>                                                           | Vokabeltest<br>(Intensive + Semester Teil 1) |

|         |                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 8  | Werbung im deutschsprachigen Raum                                        | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Werbung im deutschsprachigen Raum verstehen und vergleichen,</li> <li>Hauptbotschaften in Werbungen identifizieren und die emotionale Wirkung der Texte erkennen</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjektivdeklinaton, Kasus</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Werbung im deutschsprachigen Raum - damals und heute (Merci),</li> <li>Erfolgreiche Firmen aus Österreich und ihr Image</li> </ul>                                                       | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,                         |
| Week 9  | Kulturprojekte                                                           | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>einen österreichischen Film, eine interessante Persönlichkeit, einen Bezirk, ein Kunstwerk oder ein literarisches Werk präsentieren</li> <li>einen Filmausschnitt vom Spielfilm „Single Bells“ zum Thema Weihnachten verstehen</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Präpositionaladverbien</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arbeit mit Dialekten/Varietäten</li> <li>Österreichische Gesellschaft und Kultur</li> </ul>                                   | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,                         |
| Week 10 | <b>Abschluss-reflexion</b><br><br><b>Vorbereitung auf das Final Exam</b> | <b>Functional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erfahrungen reflektieren, Verständnis &amp; Unverständnis ausdrücken</li> <li>über den Winter/Feste im Dezember sprechen,</li> <li>Texte zum Thema Winter/Weihnachten lesen und verstehen bzw. Videos darüber ansehen,</li> </ul> <b>Grammatical:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wiederholung der erworbenen Lerninhalte</li> </ul> <b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weihnachtsmärkte in Wien, Weihnachten (Traditionen), Werbespot der Wiener Linien zum Thema „Wiener Grant“</li> </ul> | Quizzes each week<br>regular homework,<br><br><b>Oral Exam</b> |
| Week 11 |                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Written Final Exam</b>                                      |

#### COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

During the semester, there will be two or three excursions to explore different aspects of Vienna. Students will be placed in authentic situations such as ordering pastries at a local bakery, choosing ice cream at a street stand, ordering



Sachertorte and coffee at a traditional Viennese coffee house, or selecting produce and conversing with vendors at the Naschmarkt. Alternatively, they may join a German-language guided museum tour or attend a German-language performance, complementing class material and providing further insight into Vienna's rich artistic and cultural heritage.

**REQUIRED READINGS:**

- Additional handouts and materials provided by the instructor
- Aspekte neu B1+ (Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch, Kapitel 1-3, Klett Verlag)
- Grammatik aktiv B1+, Cornelsen Verlag

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