



VRIJE  
UNIVERSITEIT  
BRUSSEL

# EXCHANGE MANUAL

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## INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES



**Department of Educational Sciences**

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## 1. Destinations for Erasmus+ study exchange

See also: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/all-study-programmes-vub/personal-development-during-your-studies/studying-abroad/eu-destinations-erasmus-exchange-for-vub-students#paragraph-83022>

**Please note\*:** students doing the **MSc. Educational Sciences** cannot do a study exchange, but only an internship abroad. See the deadlines for this in section 2.3.

### EU:

#### Erasmus+:

- **Tallinn University, Tallinn, Estonia:**  
BA/MA: 3 spots, Language: English, Estonian, B2
- **Tampere University, Tampere, Finland:**  
BA: 2 spots + MA: 2 spots, Language: English
- **Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden:**  
MA: 2 spots, Language: English, B1
- **Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain:**  
BA: 2 spots, MA: 1 spot, Language: Catalan, Spanish, English, B1
- **Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain:**  
BA/MA: 2 spots, Language: Catalan, Spanish, English, B1
- **Università degli Studi di Firenze, Florence, Italy:**  
BA: 2 spots, Language: Italian, B1
- **Università degli Studi del Molise, Campobasso, Italy:**  
MA: 4 spots, Language: Italian, B1
- **Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey:**  
BA: 3 spots, Language: English, B2
- **Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey:**  
BA: 3 spots + MA: 2 spots, Language: English, B2

#### Eutopia:

- **TU Dresden, Dresden, Germany:**  
MA, 2x 5 months
- **University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden:**  
BA & MA, 14 university wide spots
- **University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia:**  
BA, 2x 5 months + MA, 2x 5 months
- **Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, Romania:**  
BA, 2x 5 months + MA, 2x 5 months

### **Non-EU:**

Contact IRMO (International Relations and Mobility Office, see [Section 3](#)) for an updated list of VUB agreements with NON-EU universities ([exchange.outgoing@vub.be](mailto:exchange.outgoing@vub.be)).

## **2. Important dates for going abroad**

**Note\*:** Specific dates vary from year to year. Please keep an eye on your personal channels! (Canvas Communities, We Are Student VUB, Faculty web page)

**Note\*\*:** Nomination by the exchange coordinator does not yet mean a final exchange! IRMO will eventually contact you further about this.

For contact information for your exchange coordinator, internship coordinator or IRMO (International Relations and Mobility Office), see **Section 3**.

Faculty info sessions take place in October.

### **2.1 Study exchange outside the EU**

**Submission deadline:** mid-December (See info session for the specific deadline day).

Complete the form provided by the faculty.

Ask the exchange coordinator for more info.

You must have your Learning Agreement (LA, see **Section 5** for more info) ready and have already decided on a destination. In fact, students who select a non-EU destination will be nominated early to IRMO to expedite the process.

**Your nomination will be sent to IRMO by the exchange coordinator:** Late December

IRMO will then confirm during January/February whether you are selected for the exchange.

### **2.2 Study exchange within the EU**

**Submission deadline:** mid-December (See info session for the specific deadline day).

Complete the form provided by the faculty.

Ask the exchange coordinator for more info. Include a motivation letter.

Exchange coordinators select students for destinations based on their cover letter + grades (if available) + student status (student with/without fewer opportunities). All applicants are ranked based on these criteria and assigned to destinations.

**The exchange coordinator will contact you and confirm your nomination:** January.

**Deadline first proposal LA to exchange coordinator:** January/February (See info session for the specific deadline day).

Use the “Document Proposal Learning Agreement” template on Canvas. Attach course descriptions of selected courses.

The exchange coordinator will provide feedback on your LA.

For more info on Learning Agreements, see **Section 5**.

**Deadline reworked LA for exchange coordinator:** mid-March (See info session for the specific deadline day).

The exchange coordinator decides if your final LA can be approved.

**Your official nomination will be sent to IRMO:** end of March.

If your LA is approved, the exchange coordinator will officially nominate you for an exchange. IRMO will contact you to guide you through the rest of the process.

## **2.3 Internship abroad**

### **Outside of Europe:**

**Submission deadline:** beginning of December (See info session for the specific deadline day).

To apply for financial aid for your internship abroad, email your exchange coordinator before the deadline with the following information:

- First and last name
- VUB student number
- Internship country:
  - You can suggest your own destination. It is important to already have an idea of your destination abroad so that IRMO can prepare the funding. However, a confirmed host internship placement is not required at this stage.

### **Within Europe:**

**Submission deadline:** beginning of March (See info session for the specific deadline day).

To apply for financial aid for your internship abroad, email your exchange coordinator before the deadline with the following information:

- First and last name
- VUB student number
- Internship period
- Internship country:
  - You can suggest your own destination. It is important to already have an idea of your destination abroad so that IRMO can prepare the funding. However, a confirmed host internship placement is not required at this stage.

After submission, your exchange coordinator will nominate you towards IRMO. Following the nomination, IRMO and your internship coach will guide you through the next steps.

Contact your internship coach on time to get approval for the destination and internship plan.

If you miss the deadline, you may still do an internship abroad, but you won't be eligible for financial aid.

For any questions, reach out to your exchange coordinator.

**Your nomination will be sent to IRMO by the exchange coordinator:** mid-March.

### 3. Who to contact for what?

#### **International Relation and Mobility office (IRMO)**

[exchange.outgoing@vub.be](mailto:exchange.outgoing@vub.be)

For all your questions regarding your scholarship, housing at your destination, international mobility.

#### **Exchange coordinator Educational Sciences**

Bas Dikmans: [bas.dikmans@vub.be](mailto:bas.dikmans@vub.be)

For all your questions regarding the content of your Learning Agreement (LA) and the nomination procedure for the Erasmus+ exchange.

#### **Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences**

[facpe@vub.be](mailto:facpe@vub.be) / [pe.mobility@vub.be](mailto:pe.mobility@vub.be)

For all your questions regarding your grades, the mobility online, or (re-)examinations.

#### **Internship coach Agogische wetenschappen (BA)**

Gert de Coorde: [gert.de.coorde@vub.be](mailto:gert.de.coorde@vub.be)

For all your questions regarding your internship in BA Agogische wetenschappen.

#### **Internship coach Educational sciences (MA)**

Sarah Goetry: [sarah.goetry@vub.be](mailto:sarah.goetry@vub.be)

For all your questions regarding your internship in MSc. Onderwijskunde and MSc. Educational Sciences.

#### **4. Other funding options**

Check VLIRUOS' website for current scholarship options for students enrolled at a Flemish university or university of applied sciences and arts. This grant provides limited financial support for an internship, or a research stay, in one of the proposed scholarship countries.

[https://www.vliruos.be/en/scholarships/travel\\_grants/2667](https://www.vliruos.be/en/scholarships/travel_grants/2667)

## **5. Learning agreement (LA)**

### **What is it?**

The Learning Agreement is the official document with the courses you will follow at the host institution and the VUB courses you will exchange. It is a mandatory document for all exchanges. The responsibility for this lies with the student.

3 parties must approve the LA: the student, the exchange coordinator and the coordinator at the host institution.

You upload your LA in the electronic platform Mobility Online (for which you will get access)

### **How do you start?**

First look at your trajectory and which subjects you still need to include.

Go to the exchange offer of the host institution and look at the study component sheets (so don't just read the titles).

Look at which external subjects correspond in content to the subjects you still need to take at the VUB.

Solve the puzzle. Which subject at the host institution are you exchanging for those at the VUB? Put together a package of subjects that you will exchange.

You must exchange a minimum of 21 ECTS per semester. We recommend taking a maximum of 30 ECTS (per semester).

Attention: Check carefully which subjects you still have to take (especially the compulsory ones!)

The exchange coordinator only checks your LA in terms of content and checks whether everything is in accordance with the information above. The exchange coordinator has no insight into which subjects you still have to take in your trajectory. Contact the study trajectory supervisors if you have any questions/doubts about your trajectory!

If you cannot exchange a subject due to too few substantive similarities, it may be an option to follow this subject remotely (contact the lecturer in question for this).

### **Can I exchange subjects from both my BA and MA?**

Yes, that is possible. Don't forget to register for both trajectories at the start of the academic year!



**Can I exchange a BA subject for an MA subject at the host institution and vice versa?**

Yes, the exchange coordinator decides on the content of this.

**Can I put 1 VUB subject against 2 external subjects and vice versa?**

Yes. Then you have to pass both external subjects to get the credits of that VUB subject.

**Can I exchange my Master's thesis?**

No, that is not possible. For example, you cannot include the VUB courses Master's thesis I and Master's thesis II in your LA. You can collect data for your Master's thesis during your exchange.

**Can I exchange electives?**

Yes. First check how many ECTS of electives you still have to take. So do not take 12 ECTS of electives while you only have to do 6 ECTS of electives.

**Can I also include a language course?**

Yes, if the language course is taught at the host institution itself, and you effectively receive ECTS for it at the host institution. You then exchange a language course with ECTS of electives here.

**How do I include electives in my LA?**

On the VUB side, simply note "Elective" and the number of ECTS. You do not have to specify the VUB elective. On the external side, you of course note the title of the external course with the corresponding ECTS.

**Do the ECTS of the exchanged courses have to match?**

No, they may differ. For example, you can put a 4 ECTS course against a 6 ECTS course.

Please note: we do look at the total number of ECTS taken! The total number of ECTS may not differ by more than 2 ECTS. You may take more credits at the host institution, but these extra credits will not be recognized at the VUB.

For example:

19 ECTS at the VUB – 21 ECTS at the host institution = ok

21 ECTS at the VUB – 19 ECTS at the host institution = ok

21 ECTS at the VUB – 18 (or less) ECTS at the host institution = not ok

18 (or less) ECTS at the VUB – 21 ECTS at the host institution = ok

### **What if I want to make changes to my LA after it has been officially approved?**

During the first weeks of your exchange, there is always a period in which you can enter changes in Mobility Online. Changes outside this period are also possible in exceptional cases. The exchange coordinator must first give approval again. Send your new LA proposal to your exchange coordinator, and after approval you can make these changes in Mobility Online.

### **Can I follow a VUB course remotely?**

Yes, that is possible. It may happen that you do not find an equivalent for a VUB course at the host institution. You can then follow that course remotely, but it is important that you first ask permission from the lecturer in question (who can best assess whether this is possible for that course).

If you receive permission, you must also register that VUB course yourself in your self-service, and you do not add it to your LA. In that case, there is a good chance that you are still on exchange when the exam for this course takes place here at the VUB. Then you can submit a request to take your exam remotely. (More information can be found further in the question about “overlap”)

If it is not possible to follow a VUB course remotely and you have not found an equivalent course at the host institution, you can move that course to the next academic year.

## **6. Other practical questions**

### **Can I stay for an extra semester (if I go during the first semester)?**

Yes, provided that there are still open slots at the host institution. The host institution must therefore be prepared to receive you for the second semester as well. There must also be sufficient budget within the Erasmus programme to finance these grants. At the end of the first semester, IRMO will contact students who are on exchange to ask whether they want to extend their stay by an additional semester (please note: IRMO will not contact you if there is no budget for these additional grants in the Erasmus programme). In the event of an extension, a new LA must be drawn up.

**Do I have to register my exchange courses myself in my self-service?**

No, the faculty secretariat will register both the VUB courses that you exchange and your courses at the host institutions for you.

You register VUB courses that you follow here at the VUB as usual.

A VUB course is therefore either in your LA, or you follow the course here. Both are not possible. You enter a subject that you exchange in your LA. We will then register it for you, and then you will take the exam at the host institution. If you follow a VUB subject here, you will register it yourself and take the exam at the VUB.

**What if I change my mind and want to stop my exchange?**

Inform your exchange coordinator, IRMO and your host institution as soon as possible.

**What if I go on exchange, but first have to redo an exam at the VUB?**

Anyone who does not have to redo an exam and meets all the criteria will automatically receive an email with the green light to go on exchange after the proclamation in July.

If you do have to redo an exam, you will receive an email with the message that your exchange has been postponed until after the second exam.

Important: Do NOT go on exchange before you have received official approval from us! It is important to take your exams in the second exam and wait for the results. If you meet all the requirements and you have not received an INT' code, you will officially receive the green light and you can go on exchange.

It has happened in the past that a student had already left (without approval) and had to return after the proclamation of the second exam because of an INT' (Registration Not Admitted) and the exchange could not go ahead after all. In such cases, any costs incurred are charged to the student, since you will not receive a grant.

**I failed a course at the host institution. What now?**

If you failed a course at the host institution, first see whether you can take the course in the second examination period at the host institution itself, even if you have already returned to Belgium in the meantime.

Only if this is really not possible (due to overlap with exams here, for example), are you eligible to take the equivalent VUB course here in the second examination period.

Please note: if you have compared 1 VUB course with 2 external courses, you must pass both external courses in order to receive the credits for the VUB course. If this is not the case, you will take the course with a deficit in the second examination period.

**What if there is overlap between the lessons at the host institution and an exam here?**

The Education and Examination Regulations provide exchange students with the option to deviate from the examination schedule (or the examination format) if, due to their exchange, they cannot take the examination for a subject at the normal time/in the normal way.

You can then submit a request to the dean to take the examination at a different time or remotely (depending on what is possible for the lecturer). This examination must in any case take place within the same examination period. The request for this must be made in the correct manner, and within the given deadlines. All information about this can be found in the faculty Education and Examination Regulations in Articles 105 §3 and 106 §3.

These options are a favor to the student, but we are not obliged to do so. An alternative examination will therefore be organized if this is organizationally possible for the lecturer of that subject.

Check your VUB mailbox regularly during your exchange so that you do not miss any important information!



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WHERE WOULD YOU GO?