

Guidelines Outgoing Exchange Students

1. Programme, timing and period of exchange

The exchange is organised for the following students:

3 Ba, 1 Ma or 2 Ma Biology

3 Ba or 2 Ma Bio-engineering Sciences

3 Ba, 1 Ma or 2 Ma Chemistry

3 Ba, 1 Ma or 2 Ma Computer Science

3 Ba, 1 Ma or 2 Ma Physics and Astronomy

3 Ba, 1 Ma or 2 Ma Geography

3 Ba, 1 Ma or 2 Ma Mathematics

1 Ma or 2 Ma Marine and Lacustrine Science and Management

1 Ma or 2 Ma Stedenbouw en Ruimtelijke Planning

Students can go on exchange either for one semester or for one year.

2. Admission requirements:

In principle, passing all exams during the first period of the first session of the year of application.

The student submits a proposal to the exchange coordinator. At the start of the second semester of the year of application the admission is either accepted or refused and the destinations are assigned. This admission may be conditional, but allows the student to start the application procedure. Final admission is granted after the second session, once compliance with the conditions is verified.

3. Selection procedure for granting scholarships

In case the number of scholarships is insufficient, all complete proposals are assessed according to the criteria listed below in order of importance:

- Study results
- Motivation letter
- Proposed study plan

The department advises whether or not a student is accepted for an exchange programme, and delivers this advice to the Faculty Unit Internationalisation. The Faculty Unit Internationalisation ranks the different candidates according to the three selection criteria mentioned above. The ranking will be communicated internally and forwarded to International Relations and Mobility Office (IRMO). As soon as IRMO has awarded the

scholarships, the exchange coordinators will communicate the results to the respective students.

4. Drawing up a study or internship plan

There is no strict equivalence between courses at our university and courses at the host institution. Therefore the study or internship plans will be evaluated case by case. It is preferable to have a balance between the ECTS of external courses and the ECTS of VUB courses.

Students, who participate in an exchange, may want to take up specific courses at VUB in the same semester for practical reasons. This is allowed under the condition that the student is eligible to participate in the normal exam and that he or she takes up the equivalent of 21 to 36 ECTS abroad.

5. Conversion of grades and re-examinations

Upon return of the student, grades are converted to the VUB grading system on the basis of the official transcript of records received from the host institution. The exchange coordinator will inform the student already before departure regarding the conversion mechanism.

In case a student does not pass a course or courses at the host institution, an ad hoc arrangement will be applied by the exchange coordinator. This arrangement will be communicated to the Dean.

Guidelines for aspiring exchange students

First of all, we would like to refer you to the webpage of the “International Relations and Mobility Office” (IRMO): <http://www.vub.ac.be/infovoor/toekomstigestudenten/studereninhetbuitenland.html>.

On this webpage you can find more information on what steps to take when applying for an exchange. You will have to put together a file through a step-by-step process. An important part of this file is the “Learning Agreement”. This document describes the section of your annual programme (courses and credits) that you will replace at the host institution. It also includes a form on which you can indicate possible changes. Changes to your learning agreement for the 1st semester need to be made *before 15th of October* of the academic year in which the exchange takes place; changes for the 2nd semester need to be made *before 1st of March* of the academic year in which the exchange takes place. After these deadlines changes are no longer accepted. Annual programmes adapted without the permission of the exchange coordinator are considered non-existent.

For mandatory courses, the equivalent course at the VUB needs to be mentioned and needs to correspond in content and ECTS. Electives also need to fit within the annual programme, but the content can deviate more. Agreement of the exchange coordinator is however necessary.

Students within a two-year Master programme can follow a mandatory course during the subsequent year, if no equivalent course can be found at the host institution. In this case, students can select another course at the host institution as replacement for an elective in the subsequent year at VUB.

Meticulously filling in documents and changes prevents a potential loss of ECTS.

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