

GALE XCHANGE

Frequently Asked Questions



Frequently Asked Questions

Here is an overview of the frequently asked questions (and their answers) if you are planning to apply for a Global Exchange Programme. Below you will find a list of frequently asked questions, for the appropriate answer please scroll down.

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Orientation

Where can I find information about student exchanges?

Information can be found on www.buitenland.uva.nl (Dutch) or www.studyabroad.uva.nl (English).

What is the difference between an Erasmus Exchange and a Global Exchange?

Erasmus is a programme for student exchanges within Europe. These are organised at the faculty level. For more information, you should therefore approach the contact person at your own faculty (more information: <http://buitenland.uva.nl/uitwisseling/erasmus-programma/erasmus-programma.html>). Global Exchanges are agreements with universities outside of Europe. In principle they are open to all UvA students. They are coordinated by the Office of International Student Affairs (BIS), which is part of Student Services.

Are there special information meetings?

Yes. BIS organises a number of meetings about opportunities for study abroad and practical matters of the exchange in December and January. Individual faculties international offices also host their own meetings. These meetings mainly cover student exchanges within Europe under the Erasmus programme. For the meetings of BIS please visit <http://buitenland.uva.nl/nieuws--agenda> (Dutch) or <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/news--events> (English)

What if I have questions?

First stop for questions is the Student Service Desk. You can reach them by telephone, mail or in person at Information Desk, Monday to Friday from 9.00 till 17.00. <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/contact/international-student-affairs-bis/international-student-affairs-bis.html>. The advisers of the faculty international office are also available to answer your questions at certain times.

Destinations

Do UvA partner universities accept students from all subjects?

In principle, yes. However, some partners do impose their own programme restrictions. To check these, consult the Digital World Map on <http://www.wereldkaart-uva.nl/>

What are the most popular destinations outside of Europe?

This is difficult to say, since the answer changes from year to year. The popularity of many destinations seems to fluctuate. New York, San Francisco, Vancouver and Sydney always tend to be high on the list, though. That is not to say that you have no chance of being accepted if you do want to choose one of these cities, but it does mean that you may be up against a lot of competition. You can have a look at the deadlines list to learn more about the changes of placement, <http://buitenland.uva.nl/uitwisseling/global-exchange-programme/aanmelden/aanmelden.html>

(Dutch) or <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/exchange/global-exchange-programme/application/application.html> (English)

What are the chances of placement?

Applicants with the highest scores (total amount of points from the Selection Committee) will be granted a spot as exchange student, depending on the number of available slots that the partner university has allocated to the UvA.

The application round overview also indicates the chance of placement and if there are slots reserved for students from a specific faculty/department. The chances of being selected vary per destination. It all depends upon available spots and the popularity of the universities in question.

Please download the deadline list with the overview of chances of placement at www.uva.nl/global > application (aanmelden)

Application and selection

What are my chances of being accepted?

This is difficult to predict, since it depends upon so many different factors: how good your application is, how many other students apply for the same destination, the number of places available and so on and so forth. The most important factor though is the quality of your application. For the best chance of success, you need to show that you are highly motivated and have good average marks.

For how many destinations can I apply?

A maximum of one destination per application round. If your application is rejected, you may choose to apply again for one destination in round 2.

Language requirements

What language skills do I need?

For a number of destinations, you must pass an English, Spanish or Portuguese language proficiency test if you are not a native speaker. In the case of English, the requirement is usually a TOEFL or IELTS test. You do not need to take this until after the selection procedure has been completed. BIS will provide you with more information at that stage.

To study in Latin America, you require an adequate command of Spanish or Portuguese. The selection procedure includes consideration of your past efforts to learn the language. You are also expected to submit a plan detailing how you intend to further improve your proficiency prior to

departure. Most Latin American partner universities will require you to take a language test after selection and before the start of the exchange.

Courses

What kind of courses can I choose?

You can decide yourself which courses you would like to follow during your exchange. In the Global Exchange Programme you do not need to choose courses within your own field of study. However, it is your responsibility to choose courses that fit into your curriculum. It is also important that there is a correlation between the chosen courses, and that you are able to motivate your choice of courses. Why did you choose these courses? Why do you want to follow them at the designated partner university? How do these courses fit into your present and future curriculum? Generally it is best to choose courses that can be used either as electives or as minor.

Can I still change the courses?

Yes. In general, the listed courses in your online application will only be used during the selection process at the UvA. When BIS decides to nominate you for the exchange programme, you will again be asked to fill in a new list of courses in the application forms of the partner university. These will be used for the assessment process at the partner university (do you have the academic background to enrol in these courses?). Once you are accepted for the exchange programme at the university, you will be given the information to actually enrol in courses at the partner university. And in most cases, you can still change your courses in the first few one or two weeks of the semester.

At what level can I choose my subjects?

On the Digital World Map (<http://www.wereldkaart-uva.nl/>) you will find the level of study (Bachelor or Master) open to exchange students. You can only follow Master (graduate) courses if you have met the Bachelor (undergraduate) requirements at the UvA (obtained your Bachelor's diploma). Admission to the graduate programme at the partner university always requires a special permission from their admission office. It is therefore more difficult to enrol in Master courses. In some cases, you are able to be registered as a Bachelor (undergraduate) student and still able to follow one or two Master (graduate) courses. Typically this will be arranged after arrival.

How do I fill in the course request list in the online application?

The course request list is actually a wish list of courses. You should list more courses than you will actually take as a full time student. This way BIS will get an impression on your academic interests and study plan.

The course catalogue for my period of exchange is not yet available? What should I do?

As this is just a wish list of courses, please find courses in the older course catalogues assuming the course offerings will not change dramatically. In general, most of the courses in the current year, will also be offered in the next academic year.

How to find courses?

It varies a great deal where you are able to find courses. Sometimes you can find courses by browsing through the general webpage and looking for 'Course overview', 'Course Catalogue', 'Subject List'. Sometimes you will first need to click on the Faculty or academic department, and then choose the desired study programme. Also check the link to the website of the international office and read the information for incoming students.

What is meant by course code?

The course code is usually listed in the Course Catalogue and consists of numbers or letters representing the code of the course, eg LAW310. In this case the letters stand for the programme and the numbers for the level of the course (3rd year). Usually courses are divided in figures of hundreds (100, 200, 300, 400) and thousands (1000, 2000, 3000, 4000). In general you can assume that 100 or 1000 stand for a first year's course, and so on. If in doubt, check the partner university website, go to the study programme website and search for an explanation of the academic programme. This will usually explain the build-up of the programme with the (mandatory) courses.

What is a full time course load?

A partner university may have a different semester system from the UvA and therefore a different understanding of a full time course load. On the Digital World Map you will find a brief description (<http://www.wereldkaart-uva.nl/>) about Credit & Grading per destination. By comparing their amount of credits for a full time course load to the UvA system (30 ECTS for a full time semester course load), you are able to calculate how many credits at the partner university you should obtain for a full time course load.

If I want to use my exchange courses for my UvA minor, should I only select courses from the minor programme of the partner university?

No. The minor programme of the partner university is meant for students from the partner universities interested in a minor programme. You are of course able to select courses from the minor programme abroad, but you will not receive a minor certificate from the partner university. If you are thinking about using the exchange courses for a minor programme at the UvA, please consult the study adviser of the minor programme for information on what type of courses you should select.

What about the recognition of credits?

After your exchange the partner university will send a transcript (cijferlijst) with your achievements to the Office of International Student Affairs (BIS). They will notify you that you are able to pick up the transcript and then you may start the credit recognition procedure. The procedure differs per UvA study programme but usually it is done by the Board of Examiners of your study programme. As this always happens afterwards (after your exchange), it is wise to contact your study adviser in advance (before you go on exchange) to be informed about the procedure. What documents are needed, what is the deadline, what should you do if you change any courses upon arrival? Sometimes your department will use a document called a 'learning agreement'.

The online application

What do I need to include in the application file?

For full details of how to apply and the documentation required, see:

<http://buitenland.uva.nl/uitwisseling/global-exchange-programme/aanmelden/aanmelden.html>

(Dutch) or <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/exchange/global-exchange-programme/application/application.html> (English)

How many study credits do I need to qualify for a Global Exchange?

You must hold at least 120 ECTS credits at the start of the exchange. For the summer programmes and international student conferences there are different requirements. When you submit your application, you may not yet hold the required number of credits. You need to provide a copy of your current course transcript showing how many credits you have obtained so far.

Which credits count?

All ECTS credits accrued in higher education (WO and HBO programmes) count towards the requirement described above. That includes those obtained on any past programmes you failed to complete.

How do I obtain an official course transcript?

You can obtain your current UvA course transcript (cijferlijst) – an official list of the modules you have taken and the study credits and marks awarded for them – from the Student Registry (Onderwijsbalie) of your study programme or at the Student Service Desk (SSD). See <http://buitenland.uva.nl/contact/nav> (Dutch) or <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/contact> (English). The online application requires an English version, sorted by date. Please also make sure that your GPA is listed on the transcript. If you have also accrued ECTS credits at another university or college, you will also need to obtain a transcript from that institution.

Does my application have to be in English?

Yes, the entire application and all documents that need to be uploaded should be in English. For this reason, the online application form is available in English only. Remember that this applies to your course transcript too, so ask for an English version of it.

What marks do I need to qualify for a Global Exchange?

As a general rule, you should keep in mind that an average mark of a 7.0 or higher across all your modules is best to secure a place in a Global Exchange Programme. If your average grade is lower you may still submit an application, unless the partner institution (such as Boston College, New York University and Melbourne University) have set a minimal grade requirement (of 7.0) to be eligible for exchange. Also, keep in mind that your average grade is one of the criteria in the selection process. If

your average grade is lower than 7, try to compensate your lower grade average with a good motivation and résumé.

How do I calculate my weighted average mark (gewogen gemiddelde)?

Your average mark is the weighted mean of the marks awarded for all the modules you have passed so far. This means that a module worth 10 study credits is weighted twice as heavily as one worth 5 credits. In order to calculate the weighted average mark, you will have to multiply your grades with the corresponding amount of ECTS per course, then add these numbers up and divide the total by the total number of ECTS.

Please make sure that when you request your transcript, the staff of the education desk print the transcript with your average mark listed on the transcript.

An example: *how to calculate your GPA*

A student has the following courses listed on the transcript.

Courses	Grade	ECTS
Statistics	7	5
Philosophy	8	10
Academic English	6.5	7.5
Math	AVV	10

The weighted average mark is calculated by multiplying the grade with the ECTS for the course. Please omit courses that do not list a specific grade (like AVV). Then calculate the total number of obtained ECTS (also omitting the courses without a specific grade) and total number of "Grade x ECTS".

Courses	Grade	ECTS	Grade x ECTS
Statistics	7	5	35
Philosophy	8	10	80
Academic English	6.5	7.5	48,75
Math	AVV	6	n/a
Total		22,5	163,75

Then divide the total number of "Grade x ECTS" by the total number of obtained ECTS, and you will have your weighted average.

$$\frac{163,75 \text{ (Grade x ECTS)}}{22,5 \text{ (ECTS)}} = \text{Weighted Average } 7,277 \approx 7,3$$

The weighted average mark is 7,277 which may be rounded up to 7,3

Do fails count?

No. A module only counts towards your average mark if you have passed it, either first time or on a retake. When collecting your current course transcript from the Student Registry, you should therefore ask for a copy omitting failed modules (onvoldoendes).

Academic progress

What are you looking for in terms of academic progress?

We are looking for steady study progress. In principle, you should have earned an average of at least 50 ECTS credits per academic year.

My studies have been slowed down by personal circumstances. How do I explain that?

Briefly describe the situation in the “Personal profile” section of your application form. If the delay in your studies has already been officially registered with the UvA, mention that as well. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence.

I have a disability or medical condition that affects my studies. How do I explain that?

Briefly describe your circumstances in the “Personal profile” section of your application form. If you have an official document explaining the situation, mention that as well – you may be asked to produce it at a later stage.

Letter of motivation

Why do I have to write a letter of motivation?

Yes, but instead of writing a letter, you will be asked to answer six questions in the online application. The combined answer will be your motivation for a certain destination. If you have indicated to apply for a first and second choice, you will be asked to answer the six questions per destination, resulting in two different motivations.

Resumé

Do I need to provide a Resumé?

Yes, but we require you to use our résumé format. The format can be found on <http://buitenland.uva.nl/uitwisseling/global-exchange-programme/aanmelden/aanmelden.html> (Dutch) or <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/exchange/global-exchange->

[programme/application/application.html](#) (English) Please do not use your own CV format but use our format to compose your résumé.

Academic approval form

How do I obtain Academic Approval?

The Academic Approval Form is an entry requirement to apply for the Global Exchange Programme. You can find this form on <http://buitenland.uva.nl/uitwisseling/global-exchange-programme/aanmelden/aanmelden.html> (Dutch) or <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/exchange/global-exchange-programme/application/application.html#anker-start-the-online-application> (English) Download the form and print the page belonging to your faculty / academic department and have it signed. The instructions of the form will explain who you need to contact for approval.

Selection

Who carries out the selection procedure?

The selection is carried out by a selection committee under the supervision of International Student Affairs and conducted by student advisors working in Student Services or the various faculties.

When will I hear if I have been selected?

For round one: 15 January – 10 January: 23 January 2017
 For round two: 1 February – 6 February: 23 February 2017

What happens if I am selected?

In case of a positive result, you will need to confirm the nomination through an online form as soon as possible. This form will list several information meetings to offer support in preparing your exchange. During these meetings you will also meet other nominated students of the Global Exchange Programme. You will also be added to a group on Blackboard that provides all the information needed to prepare you step-by-step for your exchange.

What if I am not selected?

In case you are rejected for an earmarked spot, you are still eligible to apply for this programme again during the second round. In case you are rejected and you decide to apply again for the next round, we advise you to attend the Feedback meeting for general tips on improving your application. The feedback meeting will be announced on the website:

Can I be put on a waiting list?

No, there is no waiting list.

Are there any further deadlines to consider?

If you want to apply for an Erasmus exchange through your faculty, this procedure has its own deadlines. You can also apply for a short term exchange, such as a Global Summer Programme or a Global Student Conference. For more information see: <http://buitenland.uva.nl/uitwisseling/global-exchange-programme/na-selectie/na-selectie.html> (Dutch) or <http://studyabroad.uva.nl/exchange/global-exchange-programme/after-selection/after-selection.html> (English)