VRIJE
UNIVERSITEIT
BRUSSEL

EXCHANGE MANUAL

INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES



Department of Educational Sciences

Table of Contents

1. Destinations for Erasmus+ study exchange 3

1.1 Destinations in Europe 3

1.2 Destinations in Belgium 4

1.3 Destinations outside Europe 4

2. Application procedure and important dates 6

2.1 Study exchange outside the EU 7

2.2 Study exchange within the EU 8

2.3 Internship abroad 8

3. Who to contact for what? 11

4. Other funding options 12

5. Learning agreement (LA) 13

6. Other practical questions 16

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

1.1 Destinations in Europe

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
- **Universitat Autonoma 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
- **Universita degli Studi di Firenze, Florence, Italy:**
  BA: 2 spots, Language: Italian, B1, English B2 if applicable (some programmes and courses)
- **Università degli Studi del Molise, Campobasso, Italy:**
  MA: 4 spots, Language: Italian, B1 (English B2, if applicable)
- **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
- **Université Paris Nanterre, Nanterre, France:**
  BA & MA: 4 spots, Language: French, B1 (certification required); English B1, if applicable.
  Remark: High level! The 2nd semester starts on January 17 — VUB exams during that period may need to be rescheduled (request via dean).
- **Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Venice, Italy:**
  BA: 2 spots + MA: 2 spots, Language: Italian, B1 (English B2, if applicable)
- **Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania:**
  BA: 2 spots + MA: 2 spots (5 months each), Language: English, B2

EUTOPIA

- **TU Dresden, Dresden, Germany:**
  MA: 2 spots (1 semester each)

- **University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden:**
  BA or MA: 1 spot (1 semester)
- **University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia:**
  BA: 2 spots + MA: 2 spots (1 semester each)
- **Universitatea Babes-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, Romania:**
  BA: 2 spots + MA: 2 spots (1 semester each)
- **Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Venice, Italy:**
  BA: 2 spots + MA: 2 spots (1 semester each)

1.2 Destinations in Belgium

- Possibility for exchange with **Université Libre de Bruxelles**
- For all PE students
- Non-mandatory courses (elective courses):https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/studentenadministratie/keuzevakken-en-formulieren
- More information: https://www.ulb-vub.be/nl/faq-uitwisseling-vakken-en-modules

1.3 Destinations outside Europe

Contact the OS Mobility Unit (formerly IRMO, see Section 3) for an updated list of VUB agreements with NON-EU universities (exchange.outgoing@vub.be).

For (Adult) Educational Sciences there are partner universities in 9 countries (20 universities). Interesting destinations for programmes within our faculty are:

- Brazil: Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp), Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (UFSM)
- Chile: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC)
- China: Northwest University (NWU), Fudan University, Tongji University
- Japan: Kobe University
- Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Universidad Iberoamericana, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), Universidad de Guadalajara
- Morocco: Université Internationale de Rabat
- Peru: Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia
- South Africa: University of the Western Cape
- South Korea: Seoul National University, Hanyang University, Korea University, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

Please note: non-EU destinations differ from EU destinations. There is more competition for

grants, the application procedure is more complicated, you apply for your scholarship only after your nomination, and the host institution may apply its own selection procedure as well.

Full list of non-EU destinations, deadlines and financial support: VUB Go Abroad – non-EU destinations

2. Application procedure and important dates

Please note: The dates in this manual apply to exchanges in academic year 2027-2028. Dates change from year to year, so always check the most recent information. Please keep an eye on your personal channels! (Canvas Communities, We Are Student VUB, Faculty web page)

Please note: Nomination by the exchange coordinator does not yet mean a final exchange! The OS Mobility Unit will contact you about the next steps.

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

The faculty info session for exchanges in 2027-2028 took place on 13 October 2026.

Who can apply?

- Bachelor students: you must have passed all courses of Bachelor year 1.
- Students in a bridging or preparatory programme can also apply (the rule above does not apply to them).
- Master students can apply.
- A study exchange must include at least 21 ECTS per semester (exceptions need to be approved by the faculty FACIR).
- Internships abroad: the same criteria apply as for regular internships at the VUB. Check the conditions with your internship coordinator before you apply.

Good to know before you apply

- An exchange takes a lot of preparation and administration. Be flexible and take responsibility for your own file: reactions from the host university can be slow, and it is not always easy to find courses that perfectly match your VUB programme.
- By default, a study exchange lasts 1 semester. The Erasmus+ grant covers at most 4 months. A generic scholarship for non-EU destinations covers at most 3 months (5 months for students with fewer opportunities).
- If you go for a full academic year, you only receive funding for the first 4 months (120 days), unless you are a student with fewer opportunities.
- There is no guarantee that you will obtain a grant: scholarship places are limited.

How to apply?

Apply via the Exchange Application Form before **5 December 2026 (23:59)**:
https://vub.fra1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b7ahdog90mDOTlk

- The same form and deadline apply to study exchanges and internships, within and outside the EU.
- Choose a top 3 of destinations (EU: 3 universities; non-EU: up to 3 universities). For an internship, you choose the destination yourself.

- Add a motivation letter (required for all applications: EU and non-EU, study exchange and internship).

How are students selected?

- Exchange coordinators allocate students to destinations according to the available spots and in the order of your preferences (1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice).
- All applicants are ranked based on: your motivation letter, your weighted GPA at the VUB, your official status as a student with fewer opportunities, and whether you already had a mobility at the VUB in the same study cycle.
- Students with fewer opportunities are put at the top of the priority list. This concerns students receiving a Flemish study allowance (beursstudenten), students in the 'almost study allowance' category (bijna-beursstudenten), students with a disability recognised by VAPH, and working students according to the official definition of the Flemish government (at least 80 hours per month or 50% of a full-time job subject to social security contributions; this is not the same as a student with a side job).
- Non-EU destinations are allocated at VUB level, depending on the available spots and your ranking.
- If spots are still available afterwards, a back-up selection is made according to the same rules.

Key dates at a glance

- **13 October 2026:** faculty info session
- **9 November 2026:** deadline to express your interest in an ASEM work placement in Asia (see Section 4)
- **5 December 2026 (23:59):** deadline application via the Exchange Application Form (study exchange and internship, EU and non-EU)
- **15 December 2026:** nomination of non-EU students to the OS Mobility Unit
- **5 February 2027:** deadline first Learning Agreement proposal (EU study exchange)
- **20 February 2027:** feedback from your exchange coordinator on your LA proposal (if corrections are needed)
- **28 February 2027:** deadline revised LA
- **15 March 2027:** nomination of EU exchanges (study exchange and internship) to the OS Mobility Unit

2.1 Study exchange outside the EU

Submission deadline: 5 December 2026 (23:59). Complete the Exchange Application Form (see above).

Ask the exchange coordinator for more info.

When choosing for your destinations, please check the course information of your intended destination(s) for the course exchange options for your learning agreement before you apply.

Your nomination will be sent to the OS Mobility Unit by the exchange coordinator: 15 December 2026. The OS Mobility Unit will then confirm during January/February whether you can be nominated for the exchange. After your nomination, the OS Mobility Unit will inform you regarding the scholarship application possibilities and how to apply yourself. Keep in mind that the host institution may also apply its own selection procedure.

2.2 Study exchange within the EU

Submission deadline: 5 December 2026 (23:59). Complete the Exchange Application Form (see above).

Ask the exchange coordinator for more info. Include your top 3 of destinations and a motivation letter.

Exchange coordinators select students for destinations based on their motivation letter + grades (weighted GPA) + student status (student with/without fewer opportunities) + previous participation in a mobility (see "How are students selected?" above). All applicants are ranked based on these criteria and assigned to destinations.

The exchange coordinator will contact you to inform you about your tentative nomination.

Deadline first proposal LA to exchange coordinator: 5 February 2027.

Use the "Template Learning agreement proposal (2027-28)" template on Canvas. Attach the course descriptions (in English) of the selected courses.

The exchange coordinator will provide feedback on your LA by 20 February 2027 if corrections are needed. For more info on Learning Agreements, see **Section 5.**

Deadline reworked LA for exchange coordinator: 28 February 2027.

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

Your official nomination will be sent to the OS Mobility Unit: 15 March 2027.

If your LA is approved, the exchange coordinator will officially nominate you for an exchange. The OS Mobility Unit will decide on the final nomination, and then invite you to apply in Mobility Online, where your official Learning Agreement is drawn up, and will communicate the further practical steps. Note that some students may be placed on the reserve list, so keep an eye on future emails from OS Mobility Unit.

2.3 Internship abroad

Step 1: contact your internship coordinator. You can suggest a destination of your own choice (this does not need to have a bilateral agreement with VUB). Your internship coordinator checks whether you meet the general conditions to do an internship and approves the destination.

Step 2: apply for an exchange grant for your internship abroad via the Exchange Application Form (the same form as for a study exchange) before 5 December 2026 (23:59). Only this application is relevant for the exchange coordinators.

Step 3: your exchange coordinator nominates you to the OS Mobility Unit (outside Europe: 15 December 2026; within Europe: 15 March 2027). The selection and nomination follow the same process as mentioned above for the study exchanges. If selected, you should then follow the administrative steps requested by the OS Mobility Unit.

Outside of Europe:
Submission deadline: 5 December 2026 (23:59).

To apply for financial aid for your internship abroad, complete the Exchange Application Form before the deadline. Make sure you have the following information at hand:

- 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 country abroad so that the OS Mobility Unit can inform you about possible funding application. However, a confirmed host internship placement is not required at this stage.

Your nomination will be sent to the OS Mobility Unit by the exchange coordinator: 15 December 2026.

Within Europe:
Submission deadline: 5 December 2026 (23:59).

To apply for financial aid for your internship abroad, complete the Exchange Application Form before the deadline. Make sure you have the following information at hand:

- 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 country abroad so that the OS Mobility Unit can inform you about possible funding application or allocate funding if you are placed on the effective selected list. However, a confirmed host internship placement is not required at this stage.

After submission, your exchange coordinator will nominate you to the OS Mobility Unit. Following the nomination, the OS Mobility Unit 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 exchanges.

For any questions, reach out to your exchange coordinator.

Your nomination will be sent to the OS Mobility Unit by the exchange coordinator: 15 March 2027.

3. Who to contact for what?

OS Mobility Unit (formerly International Relations and Mobility Office, IRMO)
exchange.outgoing@vub.be

For all your questions regarding grants and scholarships, your application in Mobility Online, practical questions about studying abroad (e.g. housing at your destination) and administrative issues.

Exchange coordinators Educational Sciences (MES/ONK)
Joke Vanbrabant: joke.vanbrabant@vub.be & Prof. Chang Zhu: chang.zhu@vub.be

For all your questions regarding destinations, the selection and nomination procedure (study exchange and internship abroad), and drawing up or changing your Learning Agreement (LA).

Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences
facpe@vub.be / pe.mobility@vub.be (Freya De Vroede)

For all your questions regarding your grades, Mobility Online, or (re-)examinations.

Internship supervisor Agogische wetenschappen (BA)
Prof. An-Sofie Smetcoren: an-sofie.smetcoren@vub.be

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

Exchange coordinators Agogische wetenschappen (AGOG)
Prof. Geert Vandermeersche: geert.vandermeersche@vub.be & Ana Laura Escalona Diaz: ana.escalona.diaz@vub.be For all your questions regarding destinations, the selection and nomination procedure (study exchange and internship abroad), and drawing up or changing your Learning Agreement (LA).

Internship coach Educational Sciences (MA)
Sarah Goetry: sarah.goetry@vub.be

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

4. Other funding options

Check the VLIR-UOS 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

ASEM Work Placement (Asia) – last opportunity
Grants for work placements/internships in Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand or Vietnam, during the 2nd semester of academic year 2026-2027. The grant covers a maximum of 2 months plus travel.

How to apply?

- Express your interest to your exchange coordinator before 9 November 2026.
- On 9 November 2026, the VUB enters the nominations in the online tool.
- By 23 November 2026, you complete the online application form yourself.
- Selection results: 27 November 2026.

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 (the OS Mobility Unit will invite you after your nomination).

You draw up your LA before you leave, but keep in mind that you can (and probably will) still make changes during the first weeks of your mobility.

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).

Contact the exchange coordinator at the host institution if you have questions about the courses on offer.

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.

Your LA must contain courses worth 21 to 30 ECTS per semester. Each course at the host institution is linked to a VUB course.

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. If the totals differ, the number of VUB ECTS counts.

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 ECTS at the VUB – 21 ECTS at the host institution = ok (note: only 18 ECTS will be recognized, but this may not meet the needs the total number of ECTS either for the exchange or for your semester study plan requirements)

What if I want to make changes to my LA after it has been officially approved?
Before your departure and during the first weeks of your exchange, there is always a period in which you can enter changes in Mobility Online, after the exchange coordinator has agreed to the revisions. 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, the OS Mobility Unit will contact students who are on exchange to ask whether they want to extend their stay by an additional semester (please note: the OS Mobility Unit 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. You cannot do both. 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, the OS Mobility Unit 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 official proclamation of the second exam period (beginning of September).

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. If that is not possible either, you retake the VUB course in the next academic year.

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 first try to retake the failed course at the host institution. If that is not possible, you retake the VUB course in the second examination period or, failing that, in the next academic year.

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?