



**Amsterdam University College**

# **Study Abroad Guidelines**

## **2023-2024**

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<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.0	Guidelines update 2023-2024	20 March 2023
1.1	Approved final version	18 April 2023

These guidelines cover any study abroad programme that exceeds short-term mobility, i.e. the programme must deliver a minimum of 18 ECTS and should cover at least the duration of the 16-week period within the AUC semester.

## **1. Mobility Window**

- 1.1 Degree-seeking AUC students, who are enrolled as fulltime students in the BSc or BA in Liberal Arts and Sciences, are allowed to study abroad for one semester during one of their two potential mobility windows: the second semester of their second year or the first semester of their third year.
- 1.2 For students who have transferred prior academic coursework to AUC from another study programme, the mobility window is adjusted accordingly. Please contact the AUC International Office for a calculation of your mobility window.
- 1.3 Studying abroad for a semester can happen through a bilateral student exchange programme, or through a self-funded free mover study abroad programme (independent exchange).

## **2. Requirements for studying abroad**

Studying abroad is reserved for students who are in good academic standing, unfortunately it is not possible for every single student to study abroad. Not only do partner universities require from AUC that we only send students abroad who are well prepared for the level of their courses, it is also important that we make sure that studying abroad does not delay the progression of your AUC studies. In order to be permitted to study abroad, AUC students must therefore meet certain conditions at the time of application for study abroad, and at the time right before their semester abroad starts:

- 2.1 At the time of application, students who want to apply for a semester abroad must be able to demonstrate that they meet the following criteria<sup>1</sup>:
  - cumulative GPA of 3.0/7.0 or above, comprising all semesters taken at AUC, or at other institutions from which you have transferred ECTS to your AUC curriculum<sup>2</sup>
  - you must be studying at nominal pace, meaning that you are on track to graduate within three years of study. A maximum credit deficiency of 6 ECTS (one AUC course) is permitted, or 6 ECTS of deficiency currently in progress plus 6 ECTS remaining shortage<sup>3</sup> at the time of application.
  - Positive advice (i.e. support for the exchange semester) from your AUC tutor.

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<sup>1</sup> Applications of students who do not meet these conditions and who have not received BoE permission to be exempted from the study abroad requirements before the application deadline will be rejected.

<sup>2</sup> For University College London and Reed College the GPA requirement is 3.3/7.5

<sup>3</sup> It is only possible to catch up on 6EC per semester by overloading, therefore no more than 12 credits may be missing at the time of application.

- 2.2 Before the time of departure, or at the moment that all grades from the semester prior to the exchange have been processed, students must meet the following criteria<sup>4</sup>:
- successfully completed 90<sup>5</sup> or 120 ECTS, meaning no shortage of credits is allowed at the time of departure;
  - cumulative GPA of 3.0/7.0 <sup>6</sup> or above, comprising all semesters completed;
  - not on social probation;
  - positive advice from the tutor.
- 2.3 During the exchange programme students must stay fully enrolled in the AUC programme and continue to pay their tuition fees at the home university (i.e. UvA or VU).
- 2.4 Students who are studying abroad, must sublet their room to incoming exchange students if there is a shortage or need for rooms for AUC's incoming exchange student population.

### **3. Exchange destinations**

AUC offers its students a wide range of study abroad destinations. These can be part of bilateral exchange agreements between two universities, alternatively students may also wish to find their own free mover destination. You can choose study abroad destinations from the following partner networks and alternatives:

#### **3.1 *AUC's institutional partners***

- These are European and non-European bilateral exchange partners that are exclusively available for AUC students.
- AUC sets up the application procedure and decides on the nominations.
- An overview of AUC partners is available on the [Study abroad & exchange page](#) on student.auc.nl, as well as on the [UvA Worldmap](#).

#### **3.2 *UvA partners within the UvA Global Exchange Programme (GEP).***

- These are non-European bilateral exchange partner universities the University of Amsterdam (UvA) has an agreement with.
- AUC students can apply for an exchange, but face competition from all other UvA students.
- The list of partners is maintained by 'Bureau Internationale Studentenzaken (BIS)' of the UvA.
- An overview of UvA partners is available on the [UvA Worldmap](#).

#### **3.3 *UvA Quota partners***

- These bilateral exchange partner universities have an agreement with the UvA.
- Within that particular agreement, some spots have been reserved exclusively for AUC students.
- An overview of UvA Quota partners is available on the [Study abroad & exchange page](#) on student.auc.nl and the [UvA Worldmap](#).

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<sup>4</sup> Students who do not meet these conditions and who have not received BoE permission to be exempted from the study abroad requirements at least one month before the start of their exchange semester will be withdrawn from the exchange programme.

<sup>5</sup> 84 ECTS applies as minimum requirement if the host university starts their semester during AUC's January 4-week period. Students must then take 36 credits while abroad.

<sup>6</sup> For University College London and Reed College the GPA requirement is 3.3/7.5

### 3.4 *VU partners*

- These are bilateral exchange partner universities the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU) has an agreement with on the faculty level and only the European destinations are open to AUC students.
- VU decides on the nominations.
- VU partners are only available for exchanges in the Autumn semester.
- An overview of VU partners is available on the [VU Worldmap](#).

### 3.5 *Free mover exchange*

- Self-organised and self-funded exchange to a university that is not an AUC, UvA or VU partner.
- You will have to stay enrolled in the AUC programme while you are abroad, meaning that you will pay tuition fees to both your home, as well as your host university.

## 4. **Application process**

Applications for UvA and AUC destinations are submitted through the UvA. Applications for VU destinations are submitted through VU.

### 4.1 **Application & Placement/Selection procedure**

AUC students have to choose between (and limit themselves to) applying to either the AUC/UvA or VU exchange programme. The programmes have different deadlines, and a different support structure behind them. It is not allowed to apply for destinations from both exchange programmes, this is to avoid confusion and also to avoid keeping spots occupied in two separate places. Students with (duplicate) applications at more than one institution will be disqualified from the selection process for both.

#### 4.1.1 *Application & placement procedures AUC Exchange Programme and UvA Global Exchange Programme (GEP) (including AUC Quota partners)* Autumn/semester 1

- There are two chances to get selected for a spot, through two consecutive application rounds.<sup>7</sup>
- Students may apply for up to five destinations in the first application round, via the UvA application form that is made available on the [Study abroad & exchange page](#) on [student.auc.nl](#).
- After the closing date of the application round, the AUC International Office checks if the student meets the entry requirements for studying abroad (see 2.1) and approves/declines the student's application per destination, based on possible additional requirements of the partner university. The GPA will be checked on the first day after the closing date of the application round.
- A draw is used to allocate destinations to students who meet the entry requirements.
- The student is allocated to a destination based on their draw number.
- Once the draw is completed, students are notified of their allocated destination and should accept or reject the offer.
- Students who are not allocated a destination in the first round or who have rejected their offer may apply again for a spot at one of the remaining destinations in round 2. In round 2, students may apply for up to five destinations.

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<sup>7</sup> Keep in mind that most UvA destinations are not available in application round 2, due to earlier nomination and application deadlines.

Spring/semester 2

- There is only one application round (called *round 3*)
- Students may apply for up to five destinations, via the UvA application form that is made available on the Study abroad & exchange page on student.auc.nl.
- After the closing date of the application round, the AUC International Office checks if the student meets the entry requirements for studying abroad (see 2.1) and approves/declines the student's application per destination, based on possible additional requirements of the partner university. The GPA will be checked on the first day after the closing date of the application round.
- A draw is used to allocate destinations to students who meet the entry requirements.
- The student is allocated to a destination based on their draw number.
- Once the draw is completed, students are notified of their allocated destination and should accept or reject the offer.

#### 4.1.2 *Application & selection procedures VU Exchange Programme*

Autumn/semester 1

- There are two chances to get selected for a spot, through two consecutive application rounds
- Students may apply for up to five destinations.
- After the application round, students will either be nominated for a spot, or rejected.

Spring/semester 2

- VU destinations are not available for the Spring round.

Students apply for the VU Exchange Programme through the VU Worldmap

- Application form
- Motivation form

For VU destinations, the following criteria contribute to the final assessment and selection:

- Motivation for exchange, universities and courses;
- Social engagement;
- Academic relevance;
- International experience;
- GPA;
- Language proficiency.

#### 4.1.3 *Free mover exchange*

AUC students interested in a free mover/independent exchange need to request permission with the AUC International Office first before they proceed with their application at the university abroad.

A complete application for a free mover destination consists of:

- AUC Study Abroad Application (to be downloaded from the Study abroad & exchange page on student.auc.nl)
- Motivation Letter (max. 1 A4)
- Curriculum Vitae (max. 2 A4)

## **4.2 Communication of application deadlines and procedures**

4.2.1 Students will be informed about (application) deadlines by the AUC International Office through Study abroad & exchange page on student.auc.nl, the AUC bi-weekly student newsletter, and AUC Study Abroad information sessions.

- 4.2.2 During information sessions, students are informed about the application requirements and criteria, the various exchange partners and application procedures.

### **4.3 Nomination to the host university**

Once a student has been placed/selected for an exchange, the International Office of AUC, UvA or VU will nominate the student with the exchange university (the host university). The host institution will require the student to complete their own application form(s) and will decide whether or not a student will be admitted for an exchange semester.

- 4.3.1 The UvA, VU or AUC study abroad office will ensure timely nomination, the student must then make sure that they follow the instructions of the host university that follow the nomination.
- 4.3.2 The international office of the home university may decide to withdraw the nomination of a student if the student fails to deliver the necessary documentation needed for the nomination.
- 4.3.3 The international office of the home university may decide to not nominate a student for any reason related to a potential harm of AUC's reputation, after consulting and agreeing with AUC's Director of Education, or Dean.

## **5. Communication to nominated students**

- 5.1 AUC organises an information meeting for placed/selected AUC students, during which students will be informed about the following topics:
- Application procedures at the host university;
  - Course Approval Procedures (course pre-approval and course recognition);
  - Credit conversion;
  - Subletting;
  - Financial support;
  - Insurance

Students placed at a UvA partner or selected for a VU partner will also be invited to information sessions of the UvA and VU International Office.

- 5.2 The AUC International Office holds weekly office hours to help students answer any questions they may have.
- 5.3 All relevant information and forms can be found on the [Guide for going abroad page](#) on student.auc.nl, which is the page for placed/selected students.

## **6. Course approval procedures**

To ensure that the courses students take during their semester abroad can be counted towards their AUC degree, there are two procedures that need to be completed before and during the exchange semester, the course pre-approval procedure and course recognition procedure. Instructions and deadlines for the course approval procedures are available on [Guide for going abroad page](#) on student.auc.nl.

## **6.1 Course pre-approval procedure**

The course pre-approval forms the basis for course selection at the host university and takes place approximately four months before the start of the exchange semester.

- 6.1.1 All students are required to submit a course pre-approval form, which should be downloaded from the [Guide for going abroad page](#) on student.auc.nl, with up to fifteen preferred courses. The student signs this pre-approval form, which also needs to be signed by the student's tutor.

The pre-approval form should be handed in with the AUC International Office, through AUC's Digital Service Desk. Students are required to submit the following documents, along with their course pre-approval form:

- Course descriptions
- Planning grid

- 6.1.2 On behalf of the Board of Examiners, the relevant Heads of Studies review the courses listed on the pre-approval form and approve (or deny) the proposed courses. Feedback is provided via email by AUC's International Office.

- 6.1.3 During the course registration period at the host institution, students should only register for the courses that have been pre-approved by the Heads of Studies.

## **6.2 Course recognition**

The course recognition procedure takes places during the student's semester abroad. The form for course recognition is similar to the pre-approval form, but the course recognition form provides the Heads of Studies with additional information on the courses students are taking, which allows them to approve courses for a level (100, 200 or 300).

- 6.2.1 All students are required to submit a course recognition form, which should be downloaded from [Guide for going abroad page](#) on student.auc.nl. In the course recognition form, students list the courses that they are taking abroad.

The course recognition form should be handed in to the AUC International Office through the AUC Digital Service Desk. Students are required to submit the following documents, along with their course recognition form:

- Separate course manuals for each of the courses;
- Planning grid

- 6.2.2 The relevant Heads of Studies review the courses listed on the course recognition form and approve the course for a major and level. Feedback is provided via email by AUC's Internationalisation Officer.

- 6.2.3 Failure to send in the course recognitions forms may result in a denial of the course recognition request.

## **6.3 Transcript**

Upon return, students need to hand in their (verified) transcript from the host university with the AUC International Office. It is essential that students hand in a transcript. Without a transcript, the student cannot graduate from AUC as part of the study results are missing. The original transcript of the



host university will be attached to the AUC student's diploma upon graduation.

## **7. Credit conversion**

Credits obtained abroad will be converted to EC, considering only European Credits (according to the ECTS) can be uploaded into SIS.

- If EC are mentioned on the student's transcript or on the transcript supplement of the host institution, AUC will use these European Credits for the SIS entries.
- If EC are not mentioned on the student's transcript or on the transcript supplement of the host institution, local credits are converted based on the information provided by the host university<sup>8</sup>. A full semester load abroad is equal to 30 EC at AUC.

The AUC Internationalisation Officer ensures a conversion. The converted credits are passed on to the Registrar's office who will enter the credits into SIS.

## **8. Hardship clause**

In individual cases involving matters not regulated by the AUC Academic Standards and Procedures or AUC Study Abroad Guidelines in the event of demonstrable extreme unreasonableness and unfairness, the Internationalisation Committee (Study Abroad Coordinator & Director of Education and a HoS) will decide, unless the matter concerned is the responsibility of the Dean. The Dean seeks advice from at least two staff members with relevant expertise or experience.

## **9. Cancellation policy**

The student's exchange will be cancelled if:

- 9.1 A negative (orange or red) travel advice<sup>9</sup> is in place for the exchange destination at the time of departure for the exchange.
- 9.2 The student does not meet the criteria indicated in section 2.2.
- 9.3 The student does not meet the (additional) requirements of the partner university.

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<sup>8</sup> Inquire with AUC's International Office for conversion standards if the conversion is not straightforward.

<sup>9</sup> According to the [Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)

## Appendix 1: TIMELINE FOR STUDY ABROAD

Process	Time	Forms/Communication
Orientation	2-3 months prior to deadline.	Information session, student.auc.nl, office hours.
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Autumn semester exchange: 6 months prior to exchange - January and March deadline</li> <li>Spring semester exchange: 6 months prior to exchange - June deadline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UvA online application for AUC, UvA and UvA quota partners.</li> <li>AUC application form for free mover applications.</li> <li>VU online application for VU partners.</li> </ul>
Results	Within three weeks after the application deadline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For AUC/UvA destinations: via the Application App.</li> <li>For VU: via email.</li> </ul>
Nominated Student information session	Within 2 months after receiving the offer for an exchange destination	Invitation via email.
Course pre-approval	Deadline approximately 4 months prior to departure.	Course pre-approval forms available on the <a href="#">Guide for going abroad page</a> on student.auc.nl.
Course recognition	Deadline 4 weeks after the start of AUC's semester.	Forms available on the <a href="#">Guide for going abroad page</a> on student.auc.nl.
Transcript	Students are required to hand in their (verified) transcript upon return, as soon as they have received it.	Submit transcript to AUC's Internationalisation Officer.
Grade conversion	After all the students' transcripts of the passed semester have been received, the courses and credits will be added to SIS.	Results are entered into SIS.