

# Before the exchange

[Suomeksi](#) | [På svenska](#)

## Applications to exchange universities

After Aalto University has selected a student as a candidate to an exchange university, the student's information will be sent to the host university (=nomination).

The host university will then send the student information regarding their own application process, usually by e-mail. For those applying for exchange in the spring term the application instructions are typically sent in the autumn term. Please check your Aalto email regularly, including the junk mail. **Note that you are responsible for filling in the application on time.**

The host institution makes the final decision on acceptance. Exchange universities normally send an acceptance letter or acceptance package to all selected students, either directly to the student or through the Learning Services.

## Documents to be returned

You will receive instructions by email on what documents you will need to return to Aalto University prior to your exchange, before the first part of your scholarship can be paid. The documents and other requirements vary depending on your exchange programme (bilateral, Erasmus).

Before your exchange period starts you have to submit the following documents

- ARTS online student exchange scholarship form in the [ARTS Study Abroad Portal](#), after you have been accepted by the host institution.
  - Attach the official acceptance letter (e.g. email) which you have received from the host institution to the online scholarship form.
  - Erasmus+ participants have to attach a signed [Erasmus+ Grant agreement](#) to the scholarship form.
  - The form will be opened in the portal in May/November. Applicants who have been selected for student exchange abroad will be notified by email when the form is available.
- If your original study plan has changed, update it on a [Bilateral / Erasmus+ learning agreement](#) form and get it approved and signed by your Academic Advisor/ Study Coordinator.
  - If your study plan is not confirmed until in the beginning of your exchange, you can get it approved and signed then.
  - If your study plan's changes have not been approved in writing, there is no guarantee that the studies will be included in your degree at ARTS!

**Erasmus+ participants** have to return also the following documents:

- Fill in the first part of the online [OLS language test](#) (the link will be emailed to you automatically after you have submitted the online Erasmus+ Scholarship Application and indicated in which language you wish to complete the test)
- After completing the OLS test you can also complete an online OLS language course. For students who get B1 or a lower result from the OSL test, the course is mandatory.

[See also Erasmus students rights and obligations.](#)

To find out what you can include in your study plan, please consult the page [Planning the exchange](#). Other guides to consult are [Guide for outgoing exchange students](#) (EN, updated 5/2019) or [Opas vaihtoon lähtijöille](#) (FI, päivitetty 5/2019).

## Erasmus+ exchange

Erasmus+ is a European Union student exchange programme offering financial support for university level exchanges between European countries.

- Before the exchange, the student prepares a study plan ([Erasmus+ Learning Agreement](#)) stating the courses he/she plans to take at the host university complete with course codes, names (with English translation when needed), level and number of credits.
- The student submits the study plan to Student Exchange Services for approval (outgoing-biz (at) [aalto.fi](mailto:outgoing-biz@aalto.fi)).
- Student Exchange Services sends approval of the study plan to the student by email. Once approved, the study plan becomes a Learning Agreement.
- If changes are made to the approved Learning Agreement either during host university course enrollment or later on during the semester, the student must notify Student Exchange Services immediately by email outgoing-biz (at) [aalto.fi](mailto:outgoing-biz@aalto.fi).
- If there are more changes to the Learning Agreement, the student should update the changes to the fourth page of the Learning Agreement document and get the original Learning Agreement together with the changes signed by the exchange coordinator of the host university. If the student does not make any changes, the exchange coordinator signs only the original Learning Agreement. In both cases, the approved final Learning Agreement must be returned to the Student Exchange Services at outgoing-biz (at) [aalto.fi](mailto:outgoing-biz@aalto.fi).
- If the student does not complete the required number of credits during the exchange period, there may be financial consequences (i.e. losing a part of the scholarship).

The Erasmus+ programme requires certain additional documents from students, e.g. the Erasmus grant agreement and OLS language test. These requirements are mandatory to all Erasmus+ exchange students. More information will be sent to selected students via email. [See Erasmus students rights and obligations.](#)

## Bilateral exchange

- Student fills out an electronic study plan / learning agreement. Students will receive instructions for this by email from the Student Exchange Services before the exchange.
- Student lists the courses that she/he is planning to take.
- The Student Exchange Services checks the study plan and sends approval or possibly a request for additional information to the student by email.
- If there are changes to the approved learning agreement either during host university course enrollment or later on during the semester, the student must notify the Student Exchange Services immediately by email at outgoing-biz(at) [aalto.fi](mailto:outgoing-biz@aalto.fi).
- If the student does not complete the required number of credits during the exchange period, there may be financial consequences (i.e. losing a part of the scholarship).

## Erasmus+ exchange

- study plan for exchange studies
- signed Erasmus + Grant Agreement (from your coordinator)
- completed OLS language test both before and after exchange:
  - The invitation for the OLS test will be sent to you by email.
  - Erasmus+ Linguistic Support is a tool designed to develop and follow the development of your language skills during your exchange.
  - The language test is mandatory for all Erasmus exchange participants. The test is performed in two parts, before and after the exchange period.
  - The test is done electronically. After you have been pre-selected by Aalto University, you will receive an email link to the test. The test will not affect your chances to go on exchange and the results are not delivered to the host university.
  - An invitation to an online language course (free of charge) will be sent by email after the completion of the language test. The course is voluntary. Studies are performed in small groups and independently with the lead of a language teacher.
  - [See Erasmus students rights and obligations.](#)

## Bilateral exchange

- Admission letter from the host university

## Enrolling as an attending student to Aalto while on exchange

You have to have the “attending” status at Aalto University while on exchange. You are completing studies for your Aalto degree, even though you are not physically present.

## Take part in departure orientation

Aalto University organizes a departure orientation that is highly recommended for students. It is usually held in April-May.

**Orientation for exchange students for the academic year 2019-2020 was organized on Thursday 25 of April.** The event was held in Finnish. More information available [in Finnish](#).

- The pre-departure presentation of the School of Business
- [Study Abroad info - check-lists and information for students leaving for exchange](#) (especially for students in Mikkeli campus)

## Travel arrangements

We recommend that every student makes [a travel notification](#), either to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland or to a similar agency in your home country. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs can contact you if in case of emergency or crisis if you have done the travel notification.

In addition, please find out where the closest consulate /Embassy of your country is situated. Finnish citizens can also contact consulates /embassies of other Nordic Countries, if there is no Finnish Embassy / consulate in the country.

Add phone number(s) to your phone with ICE (In Case of Emergency) prefix. Setting an ICE number to show in your phone's lock screen is advisable.

Students themselves are responsible for arranging and paying their flights and accommodation. Students can apply for financial assistance for the travel expenses from International Exchange Fund of KY Foundation (application round in April-May). Receiving universities usually help students to arrange accommodation: in some of the universities accommodation is guaranteed for everybody whereas some universities only assist in finding accommodation. More information concerning the procedures of each university is found on travel reports and websites of each university.

Tip: [Finnair has youth fares for 18 to 25-year-olds.](#)

Arranging the insurances is the student's own responsibility. Student Exchange Services recommends to take a travel insurance which covers not only journeys, living in the exchange country and visits to other countries, but also medical transportation and escort to your home country.

Finland has made social security agreements with many countries. These agreements also cover the level of general practitioner treatment. KELA offers more information concerning these arrangements. In the Nordic countries a Finnish passport or a KELA card and a certification of residency in Finland is sufficient for the right for medical treatment.

## European health insurance

With the European Health Insurance Card students can get necessary medical treatment during a temporary residence in another EU/EEA country or in Switzerland. The European Health Insurance Card is available to everyone covered under the Finnish health insurance system. One should apply

for the card early enough. Cards can be ordered free of charge via KELA's online services. Registration for the service is done with an online bank user ID or by an electronic identity card. Cards can also be ordered by phone (020 692 203). [More information on KELA pages.](#)

The European health insurance card **does not cover** transportation back to Finland even in medical emergencies. Therefore Aalto University recommends students to acquire a private health insurance in addition to the European health insurance. In addition, in some countries the health care provided is quite limited.

If the student needs a visa or a residence permit to the exchange country, he/she will apply for it independently. Visas can be applied for after receiving the official acceptance letter from the exchange university. Often a certification of the financing of studies abroad is also required in the process. The best source of information is the embassy of the exchange country. The visa application process might be slow; therefore, enough time should be reserved for this stage. It is also good to keep in mind that visa matters concerning Australia and Singapore are dealt with outside of Finland.

Students going to EU-countries may have to acquire a permit of residence. This permit is acquired from the local authorities usually after arriving to the destination country.

Remember to make a notice of removal in Finland! You can do this in the post office or [electronically](#).

If you live in AYY or HOAS housing, you can sublet your apartment. More information on their webpages.