



Bern University  
of Applied Sciences



# Study Abroad Guide

Outgoing Exchange Students

► Business School



# Content

- 4 **Studying Abroad**
- 6 **Your Opportunity**
- 10 **Information & Support**
- 12 **The Process**
- 15 **Frequently Asked Questions – FAQ**
- 18 **Your Exchange – Step by Step**

# Studying Abroad

- 4 Are you looking for a challenge? Studying abroad will definitely be enriching and offers you a unique experience.

Studying a semester abroad during your Bachelor or Master studies is a fantastic opportunity to develop new skills, in and out of university, and to meet new people from all around the world.

There are many reasons and benefits to study abroad, such as:

Getting to know yourself better

Developing intercultural competencies

Getting insights into a different learning environment

Experiencing another life style

Connecting with people from different countries / cultures (networking)

Gaining points towards your Certificate of Global Competence

Improving your foreign language skills

Making your CV unique




---

Personally, I liked the opportunity to pause my life in Switzerland and spend six months abroad, mainly to travel and explore. I made great friends from all over the world, immersed myself in life in Western Canada, experienced the life of a full-time student on campus, went to lots of student parties and a fair amount of road trips, learned a lot, especially about myself, and I think I grew as a person. Looking back, I can only highly recommend a semester abroad to everyone, especially at MRU in Calgary!

Andrin, BSc Business Administration, Canada

---



My exchange semester in Rotterdam was so much more than just studying abroad – it was all about getting to know new cultures, a completely new city and leaving my comfort zone. Heading off for the unknown and diving right into the experience gave me a huge confidence boost. The things I learned in and outside of school still accompany me every day and the friends I made from all over the world are still like a second family to me.

**Bottom line: if you're thinking about it – do it! You won't regret a second of it!**

Amina, BSc International Business Administration, Netherlands

---



Exploring Southeast Asia completed my academic journey, providing me with unforgettable memories. Whether savoring local cuisine, immersing in the vibrant life of a local market, snorkeling with exotic fish, or witnessing breathtaking sunsets from the rooftops of abandoned hotels. Each moment added a unique dimension to my time abroad.

In retrospect, my study abroad venture in Malaysia was more than an academic pursuit; it was filled with cultural richness and unparalleled landscapes. I wholeheartedly recommend leaving your comfort zone to embark on an adventure in Southeast Asia.

Niels, BSc Business Information Technology, Malaysia

# Your Opportunity

- 6 The table below indicates in which semester students have to start planning their exchange semester and which semester they are eligible to study abroad.

## Bachelor full-time students

Study abroad	Start planning and collect information	Apply online	Prepare your stay
3 <sup>rd</sup> semester (Autumn semester)	1 <sup>st</sup> semester	CW 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester
4 <sup>th</sup> semester (Spring semester)	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	CW 32	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester
5 <sup>th</sup> semester (Autumn semester)	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	CW 2	4 <sup>th</sup> semester
6 <sup>th</sup> semester (Spring semester)	4 <sup>th</sup> semester	CW 32	5 <sup>th</sup> semester

## Bachelor part-time students

Study abroad	Start planning and collect information	Apply online	Prepare your stay
4 <sup>th</sup> semester (Spring semester)	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	CW 32	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester
5 <sup>th</sup> semester (Autumn semester)	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	CW 2	4 <sup>th</sup> semester
6 <sup>th</sup> semester (Spring semester)	4 <sup>th</sup> semester	CW 32	5 <sup>th</sup> semester
7 <sup>th</sup> semester (Autumn semester)	5 <sup>th</sup> semester	CW 2	6 <sup>th</sup> semester
8 <sup>th</sup> semester (Spring semester)	6 <sup>th</sup> semester	CW 32	7 <sup>th</sup> semester

Recommended semesters for outgoing semester:

- Full-time: 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semester
- Part-time: 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> semester

## Master students

Study abroad	Start planning and collect information	Apply online	Prepare your stay
3 <sup>rd</sup> semester (Autumn semester)	1 <sup>st</sup> semester	CW 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester
4 <sup>th</sup> semester (Spring semester)	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	CW 32	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester

**Important:** Please keep in mind that semester dates from partner universities can differ from the dates of BFH and therefore not every partner university is suitable for both spring and autumn semesters. Information about the semester dates are available in the “Partner List” on Moodle.

### Destination

The BFH Business School has numerous partner universities all over the world. Places at the partner institutions are limited. The “Partner List” can be found on Moodle (ESOS - GENERAL INFORMATION).

### Duration

Every student has the opportunity of studying either one or two semesters abroad (except Master students).

However, please note that if you are also planning to do a Double Degree, at least 50% of all modules in your study programme have to be completed at the BFH. In that case, only one exchange semester would be possible.

## 8 Exchange Programmes

Students can either study as

- Exchange students (SEMP or bilateral agreements) or as
- Freemover students (contracted universities or non-contracted universities)

The different conditions which apply are listed in the overview below.

	Exchange students		Freemover students	
	Swiss European Mobility Programme SEMP	Bilateral Agreement	BFH agreement, but fee-paying study place.	Non-contracted university
<b>Countries</b>	EU/EFTA countries	Non EU/EFTA countries	Non EU/EFTA countries	Upon students' choice
<b>Universities</b>	List of partner universities on Moodle.	List of partner universities on Moodle.	List of partner universities on Moodle.	Upon students' choice; depends if the host university accepts them as a Freemover and whether the BFH Business School accepts the modules students want to get credits transferred for.
<b>Transfer of credits</b>	Partner universities offer modules within the business area, which can be transferred to the BFH.	Partner universities offer modules within the business area, which can be transferred to the BFH.	Partner universities offer modules within the business area, which can be transferred to the BFH.	Credits can be transferred if the university and their modules are approved by the BFH. Getting approval is required before applying.
<b>Nomination/ Application</b>	Nomination by BFH Business School.	Nomination by BFH Business School.	Nomination by BFH Business School.	Students apply directly at the host university. Acceptance depends on the host university.



	Exchange students		Freemover students	
	Swiss European Mobility Programme SEMP	Bilateral Agreement	BFH agreement, but fee-paying study place.	Non-contracted university
<b>Tuition fee</b>	Students pay the regular tuition fee of the BFH.	Students pay the regular tuition fee of the BFH.	Students pay the tuition fee of the host university. At the BFH, they will pay a leave of absence fee of CHF 100.	Students pay the tuition fee of the host university. At the BFH, they will pay a leave of absence fee of CHF 100.
<b>Grants/ Scholarship</b>	Application for grants from the Swiss European Mobility Programme SEMP can be handed in. Grants are limited to two semesters.	No scholarship paid by BFH.	No scholarship paid by BFH.	No scholarship paid by BFH.
<b>General tasks</b>	The same tasks apply for all outgoing students, (e.g. counselling session, online application etc.)	The same tasks apply for all outgoing students, (e.g. counselling session, online application etc.)	The same tasks apply for all outgoing students, (e.g. counselling session, online application etc.)	The same tasks apply for all outgoing students, (e.g. counselling session, online application etc.)

# Information & Support

## 10 Information Material

There is a lot of information material available, take a look at:

### Moodle

Students will find all the important information and documents about their semester abroad on our Moodle page:

<https://moodle.bfh.ch/course/view.php?id=13242>



### Websites

The websites of our partner universities contain detailed information such as module offers, location of the university, etc. Students will find direct links to the websites of all our partner universities on Moodle.

### First-hand Experiences

The Student Services highly recommend reading the Experience Cards from former outgoing exchange students. The documents and contacts are available on Moodle. Another possibility is to get in touch with current outgoing as well as incoming students directly; their contact details are also available on Moodle.

### Study Abroad Fair

The Student Services organise the Study Abroad Fair once every semester. The fair offers students the opportunity to ask questions and to get in contact with former outgoing students as well as current incoming students. Since organising a semester abroad takes some time, we recommend students to attend the fair at the beginning of their study programme in order to have enough time for research.

## Support From the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator

The Outgoing Mobility Coordinator supports outgoing students in the following areas:

- Informing students about options to study abroad
- Providing information and procedures in terms of planning a semester abroad
- Nominating applicants to our partner institutions
- Counselling students in academic issues such as module selection, repetition of modules etc.
- Supporting outgoing students with special issues during their planning and exchange abroad



BFH students during their exchange semester in Finland, South Africa and Canada.

# The Process

12

## Admission Requirements

- Counselling appointment with the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator
- Recommended: Completion of the foundation level
- Necessary language skills as required by the host university
- Bachelor students may not have more than 12 open ECTS in the foundation level after the respective disclosure of grades.



### 1. Information

Students have to collect as much information as possible about their preferred destinations.

### 2. Counselling Session

Every student must conduct the mandatory counselling session with the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator. It is expected that students know the process of studying abroad and have consulted the list of partner universities.

### 3. Selection of Five Destinations

Decide on up to 5 preferred host universities in order of priority.

### 4. Online Application (MoveOn)

Every student must submit the online application on MoveOn within the deadline and has to indicate up to 5 universities in order of priority. The link for MoveOn is indicated on Moodle (ESOS-GINF).

Mandatory documents:

- 1 A4 page motivation letter in English (except students applying for a German or French speaking programme):
  - Students have to briefly explain their general motivation for doing an exchange semester
  - Applicants have to refer to their preferred universities and explain why they have decided on them

### **Deadline for Online Application**

For Autumn Semester: CW 2

For Spring Semester: CW 32



### **5. Allocation and Nomination**

After the application deadline and the disclosure of grades, the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator will allocate the applicants to the available study places. Should there be more applicants than places available, the following selection criteria will guide our decision making:

- Academic performance
- Evidence of motivation to study abroad (preparation for counselling interview etc.)

Students have to confirm the study place before they will be nominated at the partner university.

### **6. Moodle**

After the allocation, students will have to register on the Moodle page of the respective semester, where all relevant information regarding the semester abroad will be available.

### **7. Application at Partner University**

Based on the nomination, students will be contacted directly by the host university and receive information about the further procedure (application, housing, course registration etc.).

Each applicant is required to submit the “Application for Transfer of ECTS Credits”, where students have to list the modules from the host university which they would like to have accredited at the BFH.

## 14 8. Study Abroad

During the exchange semester, students will act as an ambassador of the BFH. Students' support in promoting the BFH is much appreciated. Recognition of hours to the Certificate of Engagement is possible.

## 9. Transfer of ECTS Credits

After the exchange semester, students will have to hand in their Transcript of Records (ToR) from abroad to the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator. It will then be compared with the "Agreement for Transfer of ECTS Credits". The credits achieved abroad and stipulated in the Learning Agreement will be acknowledged and depicted in the BFH ToR.

## 10. Feedback & Study Abroad Fair

Students have to fill out a survey about their studies abroad. Additionally, some students will be invited to the Study Abroad Fair of the next semester in order to share experiences with interested future outgoing students.



Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, California

# Frequently Asked Questions – FAQ

## How much does an exchange semester cost?

All outgoing exchange students have to pay the regular tuition fee at the BFH (except Freemover students). Additional costs during a semester abroad depend mainly on the destination.

Keep in mind the following when calculating costs:

- Books
- Travel/transportation
- Housing/accommodation
- Living: food, leisure, travel...
- Visa (if required)
- Insurance
- Health checkup (if required)
- Tuition fee

Check the cost of living of the respective country e.g.

[www.expatisitan.com](http://www.expatisitan.com)

## How can I apply for grants?

If you are studying at a partner university in a EU/EFTA country which is a member of the Swiss European Mobility Programme (SEMP), you are eligible for a grant. The grants are limited to two semesters.

You will receive further information on what documents have to be submitted in a separate email. This will be around December for the spring semester and around July for the autumn semester.

## How many credits can or must I achieve abroad?

You must enrol for modules at the host university equivalent to at least 21 (for Bachelor) or 15 (for Master) BFH ECTS credits.

## Can I get ECTS credits transferred for language courses?

Credits achieved from language courses can be transferred; however, this needs to be approved in the “Application for Transfer of ECTS credits” and depends on (amongst other things) language, level, number of ECTS credits.

**16 What are my options if the host university requires proof of language proficiency, but I do not have a certificate?**

The Student Services can organise an English placement test or issue confirmation letters based on the language of your study programme or language courses taken at the BFH.

**I would like to take a language course prior to my stay abroad. Is there any financial support?**

The interdisciplinary "BFH diagonal" programme offers a range of language courses free of charge. For inquiries regarding other language courses, please get in touch with the Student Services.

**I have to repeat modules from a previous semester, how do I apply?**

You are responsible for the enrolment of the repeat examination, please inform yourself at the Student Services about the different possibilities.

**How can I inspect my exams when I am studying abroad?**

Please contact the Student Services, they will provide you with the information.

**How will my credits achieved abroad be indicated in the BFH Transcript of Records?**

The transcript of the BFH will not report the single modules from your semester abroad, but the whole amount of credits achieved according to the Learning Agreement. The name of the partner university where the exchange semester took place will be mentioned in the BFH transcript. For later use, you will have two transcripts – the one from

BFH and the other from your host university. Please note that your grades from your semester abroad will therefore not count into the average of the results achieved at the BFH.

**What do I do if I fail an exam at the university abroad?**

It is up to you to check the options available to you for re-examination. It might be a possibility to repeat the failed exam at the BFH if both universities agree. Additionally, a failed exam will have an effect on your Application for Transfer of ECTS, therefore please contact the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator immediately.



## What does the BFH expect from me in terms of representing the BFH abroad?

During your semester abroad you will act as an ambassador for the BFH and you will represent not only our university but also our country. You can help raise awareness about the BFH at our partner university and talk about our country and the opportunities to study with us! When you return from your semester abroad, you can support the Student Services in promoting an exchange semester to your fellow students, eg. at the Study Abroad Fair. Take the chance to apply for the Certificate of Engagement as well.



Excursions of our outgoing students during their exchange semester in Finland and Hong Kong.

# Your Exchange – Step by Step



## During



Attend the Welcome Week, meet fellow students and get all information for your stay



Act as a BFH ambassador and promote BFH abroad



Send us a picture of Bernie Bear abroad



Enjoy your adventure abroad

## End of stay



Upload your Experience Card on Moodle



Send us your Transcript of Records



Fill out our Feedback Survey to help us improve future exchange semesters



Share your experiences and keep those special memories forever

## **Bern University of Applied Sciences**

Business School  
Brückenstrasse 73  
CH-3005 Bern

Phone +41 31 848 34 00

[international.business@bfh.ch](mailto:international.business@bfh.ch)  
[bfh.ch/business/en](https://bfh.ch/business/en)

April 2024