Study Abroad Guide

Outgoing Exchange Students

▶ Business School | International Office
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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
Exploring a new culture... meeting lovely people... making new friends... travel through amazing landscapes... reckless culinary adventure... unconventional learning methods... discovering a new way of life... to sum up; an experience we will never forget!
Anita, Jolanda and Melanie, China

The experience of studying a semester abroad gives you the opportunity to explore a new country, a new culture and a new way of living that will broaden your comprehension about foreign people as well as about your own people and culture. If you finally like it or not, it is up to you. But for sure it is an unforgettable, unbeatable and enriching experience that everyone should have!
Carmen, Taiwan

"Do it. There is no way that you could regret it. Studying abroad was by far one of the best decisions I made at the BFH. Meet new people, discover new places and enjoy foreign culinary culture!"
Jean-Pierre, Belgien
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**

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

**Bachelor part-time / work-study students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study abroad</th>
<th>Start planning and collect information</th>
<th>Apply online</th>
<th>Prepare your stay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5th semester (Autumn semester)</td>
<td>3rd semester</td>
<td>CW 2</td>
<td>4th semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th semester (Spring semester)</td>
<td>4th semester</td>
<td>CW 32</td>
<td>5th semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Master students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study abroad</th>
<th>Start planning and collect information</th>
<th>Apply online</th>
<th>Prepare your stay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th semester* (Spring semester)</td>
<td>2nd semester</td>
<td>CW 32</td>
<td>3rd semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Earlier semester upon agreement
**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 «List of Partner Universities» on Moodle.

**Destination**
The BFH Business School has numerous partner universities all over the world. Places at the partner institutions are limited. The «List of Partner Universities» can be found on Moodle.

**Duration**
Every student has the opportunity of studying either one or two semesters abroad.
**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 below overview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exchange students</th>
<th>Freemover students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swiss European Mobility Programme SEMP</td>
<td>Bilateral Agreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>EU/EFTA countries</th>
<th>non EU/EFTA countries</th>
<th>Upon students’ choice</th>
<th>Upon students’ choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>List of partner universities on Moodle.</td>
<td>List of partner universities on Moodle.</td>
<td>List of partner universities on Moodle.</td>
<td>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. Note: Some of the universities have a high level of requirements and / or charge high tuition fees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Transfer of credits | Partner universities offer modules within the business area. Transfer of credits, if the required modules are on offer, can be guaranteed. | Partner universities offer modules within the business area. Transfer of credits, if the required modules are on offer, can be guaranteed. | Partner universities offer modules within the business area. Transfer of credits, if the required modules are on offer, can be guaranteed. | Credits can be transferred if university is accepted and content of modules are approved by the BFH. Students must get approval of BFH Business School before applying at the host university. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nomination / Application</th>
<th>Nomination by BFH Business School.</th>
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<th>Students apply directly at host university. Acceptance depends on the host university.</th>
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<td>Tuition fee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants / Scholarship</td>
<td>Application for grants from the Swiss European Mobility Programme SEMP can be handed in for an exchange in EU/EFTA countries. Grants are limited to two semesters.</td>
<td>No scholarship paid by BFH.</td>
<td>No scholarship paid by BFH.</td>
<td>No scholarship paid by BFH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General tasks</td>
<td>The same tasks apply for all outgoing students, (e.g. counselling interview, online application etc.)</td>
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The Process

**Admission Requirements**
- Proof of one counselling appointment with the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator
- Studying on level 2 at the time you are abroad (Bachelor students only)
- Necessary language skills as required by the host university

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

2. **Counselling Interview**
Every student must apply for the mandatory counselling interview with the Outgoing Mobility Coordinator. It is highly recommended to be well prepared the counselling. It is expected that students know the process of studying abroad and that each student has consulted the list of partner universities.

3. **Selection of five destinations**
Decide on 5 preferred exchange 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 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:
  - Students have to briefly explain their motivation in general, doing an exchange semester
  - Applicants have to refer to their five preferred universities and explain, why they have decided on them.
- Copy of the latest Transcript of Records
5. Allocation and Nomination
After submitting the online application on MoveOn, the International Office 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:
– Evidence of motivation to study abroad (preparation for counselling interview etc.)
– Academic performance
– Extra-curricular engagement at BFH (e.g. International Family Mentor Programme etc.)

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

6. Moodle
After the allocation, students will have to register on the Moodle Platform 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.).

8. Application for Transfer of ECTS credits
Further, 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 credited at the BFH. The application will only be valid once the head of the degree programme has approved and signed it.
9. Pre-Departure Workshop
Before leaving Switzerland, all Outgoing Exchange Students will be invited for the mandatory Pre-Departure Workshop.

10. Study Abroad
During the exchange semester, students will act as an ambassador of the BFH. Students support in promoting the BFH is much appreciated.

11. Transfer of ECTS credits
After the termination of the exchange semester students will have to hand in their Transcript of Records (ToR) from abroad to the International Office. It will then be compared with the «Application for Transfer of ECTS credits». The credits achieved abroad and stipulated in the Agreement will be acknowledged and stated in the BFH ToR.

12. Feedback & Study Abroad Fair
Students are requested to fill out a short 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.
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 International Office 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 International Office highly recommends reading the experience cards from former outgoing exchange students. The documents and links are available on Moodle. Another possibility is to get in touch with current or former outgoing as well as incoming students directly; their contact details are available on Moodle.

Information Event
The International Office organises 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, the International Office recommends students to attend the fair at the beginning of their study programme in order to have enough time for research. Please consult Moodle for further information about the date and time of the event.
Support from the International Office
The International Office supports outgoing students in the following areas:

- Contracting study places abroad
- 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 during their planning time and during their time abroad with special issues

BFH students during their exchange semester in Rotterdam, Netherlands, in London (Ontario), Canada and in Catalonia, Spain.
Frequently Asked Questions – FAQ

Which questions should I answer before applying for a semester abroad?

– When do I have to start planning my semester abroad?
– In which semester can I go abroad?
– When is the application deadline?
– What is my current job situation and when should I talk to my supervisor?
– Which requirements do I have to fulfill?
– What language would I like to improve and what language requirements do occur?
– What monthly budget am I likely to need during a semester abroad?
– Which countries and cultures would interest me?
– Is the university available for the preferred semester (spring or autumn)?
– Is there currently (or was there in the past) a student from the BFH studying at a university I am interested in?
How can I contact former Outgoing Students?
You find their contact details on Moodle. Get in touch with current or former outgoing students, it offers you a very good way of getting firsthand information.

How much does an exchange semester cost?
All outgoing exchange students have to pay their 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:

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

Check the cost of living of the respective country e.g. www.expatistan.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 monthly allowance of CHF 320.–. The grants are limited to two semesters.

The grant application and organisation is done by the International Relations Office (Central IRO) at Falkenplatz and you will receive further information on what documents have to be submitted in a separate e-mail. This will be around December for the spring semester and around July for the autumn semester.

Alternatively, you may apply for government scholarships. However, these grants are not being coordinated by the BFH. More information is available at swissuniversities.ch/en/services/scholarships-for-study-abroad.
How many credits can or must I achieve abroad?
You must enrol for modules at the host university equivalent to at least 21 BFH ECTS credits.

Can I get ECTS credits transferred for language courses?
Studying abroad offers a great opportunity to learn the language of your chosen country. Most of the universities offer language courses. In some cases, 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.

What about the credit transfer for working hours (work-study Bachelor students)?
If you are studying abroad for one semester but you can prove you have been working for 6 months between 1.9. and 31.8. for at least 20 hours per week, you will get the working hours (3 ECTS credits) acknowledged.

I would like to take a language course prior to or during my stay abroad. Is there any financial support?
You can apply for fundings and might get a refund of 80% of the costs (max. CHF 1500.–). There is no guarantee for fundings.

During my semester abroad, I would have to take a re-examination. Can I postpone this exam?
Yes, you (Bachelor students) will automatically be deregistered for failed level 1 modules which you would have to repeat at the time of your exchange semester. You will be contacted by the Business School Administration regarding the new date of the repeat examination.
 Baxter students who want to repeat level 2 modules, and Master students who want to repeat modules, are self-responsible to register for the repeat exams.

How can I inspect my exams when I am studying abroad?
In case there is an inspection of your exams taking place while you are absent, you can look at your corrected exams by sending an e-mail to wirtschaft@bfh.ch and ask the Business School Administration to send you the respective exams.
How will my credits achieved abroad be indicated in the BFH Transcript of Records ToR?
The transcript of the BFH will not report the single modules from your semester abroad, but the whole amount of credits achieved and accepted according to the agreement. 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?
Failing an exam at the university abroad can happen, and 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 module agreement, therefore please contact the International Office 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 of BFH at our partner university and we expect you to be talking about our country and the opportunities to study with us!