

ERASMUS FOR STUDIES FAQ

WHO DOES WHAT

Department/Office: Responsibilities

Division of International Relations, Outgoing Mobility Sector: administrative management of mobility (financial agreement, Erasmus certificate, travel documents/tickets, financial contributions/grants)

Students Office: management of the academic component (learning agreement, transcript of records, credit recognition)

University Language Centre (CLA): management of linguistic knowledge, language certifications

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

APPLICATION:

Who is the call for applications intended for?

The call for applications is intended for all regularly enrolled students.

When does the application open?

January

I want to go on Erasmus for my PhD. Are there different procedures?

No, the procedures are the same.

Can students enrolled in the third year of a Bachelor's degree apply to leave during their first year of enrolment in a Master's degree course?

Yes, students enrolled in the third year of a first-level degree course (Bachelor's) who would undertake mobility during the first year of the Master's degree can apply. Obviously, in order to actually leave, they must be up to date with the enrolment for the academic year in which the mobility will take place or complete the enrolment as soon as the university system allows it.

Students who graduate after the academic year has already started (September-December), can only leave in the second semester.

I plan to graduate by April next year. Can I still apply for the Erasmus for Studies mobility during the current academic year?

Yes, those who graduate by April of the following year, and therefore suspend their enrolment and university fee payments, can submit their application. This represents the only exception to the general rule.

I am a part-time student. Can I participate in Erasmus mobility?

No, the status of a part-time student is incompatible with Erasmus mobility.

What is the minimum and maximum duration of Erasmus mobility?

The minimum duration for the mobility period to be considered valid is 2 months, while the maximum duration is 12 months, to be completed entirely within the period indicated in the call for selection. It is

possible to participate in Erasmus mobility multiple times up to a maximum of 12 months for each study cycle (1st, 2nd, and 3rd cycle) and 24 months for single-cycle degrees (integrated master's degrees).

How can I choose the destinations?

As indicated in the call for selection, the destinations have been divided into three macro-areas. The destinations have been published in an Excel file available on the "Erasmus for Studies" webpage. Specific filters can be applied to the various columns in the file to choose destinations based on the required criteria and the qualifications of the applicant: cycle of study, subject area, and language proficiency. The Notes column may also contain very important information for making the choice. Always check the web pages of the host universities you are interested in ("international," "exchange students," "erasmus") for the most updaed information regarding the requirements they have, as well as the courses they offer, and look for the fact sheets on the Erasmus for Studies webpage.

How many destinations can I list?

You can list a maximum of 4 destinations during the application phase. The application must be submitted via *segreteria online* (student portal). Each destination has a unique identification number (the same you find in the Excel file). The application can be submitted from the opening of the call up to the deadline. It is advisable not to submit the application close to the deadline to avoid technical problems that might prevent it from being sent by the indicated date.

Why are there one or more columns in the destination Excel file indicating the language?

This information has a twofold purpose:

- 1) To inform in which language the courses are taught at the host university.
- 2) To assign a score for language proficiency for the allocation of mobility places.

Regarding point 2), the score is given only if you have a language proficiency registered in your academic record (libretto) or at the University Language Centre (CLA) in at least one of the two indicated languages. If you know both languages, during the application evaluation phase, the system will assign the score corresponding to the highest level possessed.

What language proficiency is required by the host country?

In the destination file, there is another important column relating to language proficiency which indicates the language knowledge requirements requested by the host university. N.B. You can apply for a destination for which you do not have the required language level, provided that you possess it when and if the host university requests a language proficiency certificate (generally requested during the application procedure). If you do not possess this requirement, the host university may decide not to allow the mobility.

The language proficiency column indicates multiple languages. What do I need to indicate?

During the application phase, you do not need to choose the language. The languages indicated are those in which the courses are taught at the host university and the required level of proficiency.

If I choose destinations where only the language of the host country is indicated, and I don't have all the language certifications, will my application not be evaluated?

The application will still be evaluated, but if the level of your language proficiency cannot be verified by the CLA, the score assigned by the system for language proficiency will be 0, which could have the following consequences:

- 1) The total score for that destination (merit + language + possible additional score from the professor) will cause your position in the ranking to drop significantly.
- 2) Even if the system assigns you that destination (the factors can vary), it is possible that you will not immediately be a grant beneficiary, but only eligible.
- 3) If the host university requires a certification and you are unable to produce it, it is highly likely that you will not be accepted.

If I don't have a certified language level, do I need to contact the CLA?

You should read the call for selection (avviso di selezione) where you will find an article dedicated to language proficiency and follow the instructions.

Can I apply without possessing the language certification and present it later?

Yes, it is possible, but you must consider that if the system does not register any score for language proficiency, your position in the ranking will be built only on merit and the coordinator's potential additional score, thus missing out on 1/3 of the total score. Furthermore, the score that contributes to assigning the financial grant will also be affected, as it is based on merit + language.

Which completed exams will be useful for determining the merit score?

Only exams that have been officially registered by the date indicated in the call for selection will be taken into consideration.

Can I apply if I am enrolled in a first-level degree (Bachelor's) but haven't passed any exams?

The same criteria apply as for the language proficiency score. You can submit the application even knowing that the system will not produce a score for that specific criterion (academic merit).

What activities are permitted during Erasmus for Studies mobility?

You can attend courses and consequently take exams. You can also conduct thesis research; however, in this case, it is advisable to contact the host university for confirmation.

How do I choose the exams at the host university for the purpose of the application?

You should consult the course catalogue and the course programs on the host university's webpages. You can also contact the designated reference persons in your department, if available, or the President of the Teaching Committee for your degree course.

Who can I contact if I have difficulties understanding which exams to take at the host university?

By downloading the exam syllabus, you can contact the President of the Teaching Committee of your study course.

Do I need to indicate the ECTS credits (CFU) I intend to earn at the host university in the online secretariat procedure?

No, at this stage, the applicant should instead check with and show the coordinator if and which exams to take at the host university, along with their strong motivation.

Is there a minimum number of credits I must obtain during the mobility?

For mobility aimed at passing exams, the Transcript of Records issued by the host university must show at least 1 successfully passed exam. For mobility aimed at thesis research, a positive opinion from your thesis Supervisor regarding the work carried out is required.

What is the maximum allowed difference in credits between the foreign exam and the one of Siena?

The difference cannot exceed 2 credits in deficit. Examples:

- Siena exam 9 credits, foreign exam 6 credits: In order to be recognised, it must be integrated with another foreign exam.
- Siena exam 6 credits, foreign exam 4 credits: It can be recognised.

Can I attend courses and take exams at Siena during the mobility period?

No.

Who can help me fill out the application?

A manual for completing the application is available on the "Erasmus for Studies" webpage. Furthermore, an information day is organised after the publication of the call for selection, where the application procedure is explained step-by-step.

On what basis is the ranking list for each destination created?

The criteria that constitute the score in the ranking are: academic merit, proficiency in the foreign language required for the destination you are applying for, and the consistency of the foreign study program with your own study course (evaluation carried out by the professor responsible for the destination). The formula for calculating academic merit, which the system applies based on your cycle of study, is published in the call for selection.

Will I have to have an interview with the lecturer/professor responsible for the destination?

The professor who coordinates the exchange may decide to conduct interviews, but they are NOT mandatory (not all lecturers organise these meetings). The schedule is published on the Erasmus for Studies webpage.

Where can I find the lecturer/professor responsible for the destination?

Inside the destination Excel file.

What financial contributions are available and how are they assigned?

In addition to the destination ranking, a ranking list for financial contributions is drawn up. These contributions are the European Contribution and the Ministerial Integration. The criteria that constitute the score in this ranking are academic merit and proficiency in the foreign language required for the destination you are applying for. In the ranking, you can be listed as a beneficiary (i.e., assigned monetary contribution) or eligible. In the latter case, you may become a beneficiary if funds are released due to any withdrawals or a decrease in the mobility period.

What is the monthly amount of the financial contributions?

The European Contribution changes depending on the destination country, while the Ministerial Integration changes depending on the income range recorded in the *Segreteria Online* at the time the ranking is published.

Is there incompatibility between Overseas mobility and Erasmus mobility?

No, there is no incompatibility; both can be undertaken and the months of mobility are not cumulative (unlike the two Erasmus mobilities: Studies and Traineeship). However, there is a maximum number of months you can spend at foreign universities, which is established by the Academic Regulations.

Can a student going on Erasmus for thesis research disregard the cycle indicated in the destination table?

In principle, a student undertaking thesis research should be released from the cycle requirement. However, there are universities that might not accept students enrolled in a cycle different from the one they indicated. The advice is to write to the host university.

In the event that I am not selected for my chosen destination, is it possible to be selected for another destination in the same country?

The 2025/2026 call for selection introduced a waiting list, so you can be assigned a destination following withdrawals. In any case, a student who is not selected for Erasmus for Studies mobility might consider opting for Overseas mobility (if the call is open), or for Erasmus for Traineeship mobility, whose call remains open for about 1 year with 4 deadlines.

BEFORE DEPARTURE:

Can I request a reduction of the mobility period for the destination I have been assigned?

Yes, it is possible to request a reduction of the mobility period. For example, if the mobility is for one year, it can be reduced to just one semester, subject to the approval of the host university, which must be requested by the student undertaking the mobility.

Will I have to pay tuition fees to the host university?

No. Tuition fees are only paid to the University of Siena before the start of the mobility or immediately after the procedure opens.

Is it possible to be assigned multiple destinations?

It is not possible to be assigned multiple destinations, and the rankings do not change. The system cross-references your position (not the score, but the position) in the rankings of your chosen destinations and assigns one destination.

Can I change my destination?

It is not possible. There are only two exceptions:

- The host university closes the mobility (i.e., cancels the exchange).
- A geo-political danger situation arises in the host country.

What is the Learning Agreement?

The Learning Agreement is the document that lists the exams you intend to take during mobility with their corresponding courses at Siena.

Can the exams listed in the Learning Agreement be changed?

Yes, the list of exams can be modified (for this point, please refer to the questions in the "During the Stay - During the mobility" section).

Can I only take the exams indicated in the list provided by the host university, or also other exams that are part of the host university's course catalogue?

This depends on the host university, which may opt for either a specific course offering aimed at Erasmus students or allow you to choose from the general course catalogue.

Can I take courses in a department different from the one I was assigned to at the host university?

This is at the discretion of the host university, which sets its own criteria in this regard.

What are the Nomination and the Application?

The Nomination is a procedure carried out by the Division of International Relations (Outgoing) which involves communicating the names and contacts of the selected students to the host university. The host university itself will contact each student, inviting them to complete the Application. This is a procedure that varies from university to university and is essentially a second application to be accepted by the host university.

When does the application procedure start?

Do I have to wait for the host university to send me the form? The student must wait for the host university to contact them. If the application deadline is approaching and the student has not been contacted, they should write to outgoing@unisi.it.

I am eligible for a European and/or Ministerial grant. When will I know if I have become a beneficiary?

The change in status will be communicated via email when funds are released due to withdrawals or reductions in the mobility period. This may happen at any time.

After assignment, I chose the first semester and have already been contacted by the host university, but I would like to start my Erasmus in the second semester. Is this change possible?

The student assigned the mobility must request approval from the host university. This applies even if the application procedure has already been completed.

Does the Learning Agreement correspond to the Application Form?

No. The Learning Agreement is a mandatory document for the validity of the mobility. It may be part of the application procedure, but not all universities require it at this stage.

Is the precise start date of the mobility agreed upon with the host university when filling out the financial agreement?

The mobility start date should correspond to the start date of the semester or the Welcome Week, which is the orientation week organised by the host university. For this reason, the financial agreement must be submitted 15 days before departure, because by that time the student will have already been informed by the host university of the mobility start date.

Regarding the reduction of the period of stay, should I arrange this with the host university after they contact me?

Yes, the student can ask the host university if they can reduce the period and also inform the Division of International Relations at outgoing@unisi.it.

I tried to contact the university I was assigned to, but they never responded. Is it possible to contact them through you?

You can send an email to outgoing@unisi.it.

I need to look for accommodation. Should this search be done independently, or are there facilities that can host Erasmus students?

During the application procedure, the host university will provide information on accommodation. The student can, however, search independently or ask for support from the host university's Erasmus Student Network (ESN) group.

Regarding the Learning Agreement, I only found one compatible exam; is that acceptable? Or is there a minimum number of ECTS/exams to take?

There is no minimum number of ECTS. However, it may be possible to integrate it with free credits for thesis research. It is advisable to speak with the reference persons on the committees, who can share their experience. If there are courses of interest whose exams you wish to take, nothing prevents them from being included as extra courses. The important thing is that the extra course is not a reiteration of an exam already taken, with an identical syllabus to one already in your study plan.

Can a beneficiary of both the European and Ministerial grants apply for the DSU scholarship?

For this information, you must contact the DSU (Right to University Study Agency) directly.

If my income bracket decreases when filling out the financial agreement, will a higher Ministerial grant be assigned than the one initially assigned?

No, because the initial assignment cannot be varied as the funding provided by the Ministry does not change.

Is it mandatory to take the language level test (OLS) if I already have the suitability certification issued by the CLA?

The OLS (Online Language Support) test is currently not mandatory but strongly recommended. Registration instructions are on the "Before Departure" webpage.

Can I only conduct thesis research during the mobility period, without taking exams? And how should the Learning Agreement be filled out in these cases?

Yes, if the host university permits it. The Learning Agreement must still be filled out, and "Research for thesis" must be indicated in Table A. The thesis Supervisor can help the student find a corresponding lecturer at the host university, with whom they will discuss the modalities for conducting the thesis research. The Supervisor must inform the Student Office that the student is undertaking thesis research and that they are aware of it. In the end, the student must bring a declaration from the host university's tutor to the Supervisor. The Supervisor, based on the requested information, will communicate to the Student Office how many credits to assign to the thesis. A maximum of all but one of the thesis credits can be requested. The important thing is that this procedure is completed before departure.

How should the Learning Agreement be filled out and to whom should it be submitted?

Before departure, the document must be filled out on the OLA platform (link on the "Before Departure" webpage), followed by approval from the Teaching Committee.

Who should I contact for guidance on the validity and compatibility of exams and for filling out the Learning Agreement?

You should contact your Student Services Office, or the President of the Teaching Committee for your study course, or the reference persons who are part of the Teaching Committee.

If I include elective courses, how should they be indicated in the Learning Agreement?

They should be indicated as free credits, unless there is a need to match that course to a specific one, in which case it must be specified.

If the university requires proof of funds of €800 or more per month (generally for mobility to Germany and requested from students without European citizenship), and I am a beneficiary of both grants, do I need to open an account for the missing amount?

You must contact the host university to understand if you need to open an account and for what amount.

Is it possible to complete an internship period during Erasmus for Studies mobility?

Yes, it can be done. The internship must be listed in the Learning Agreement and must be carried out within the host university. For the internship, the Learning Agreement must include specific details on the activities performed and the number of hours. If the internship is carried out in a department, the professor supervising the student must write information on the actual internship activities before and after.

When should the Student Clearance Form (Liberatoria studenti in uscita) be sent?

The clearance form is a document requested when the financial agreement is submitted and is a requirement forwarded to all universities by CRUI (Conference of Italian University Rectors).

If I want to take an exam at the host university but cannot find a corresponding exam in my Italian study plan, is it possible to have it validated with the 12 ECTS of the student's choice?

Yes, it is possible to request recognition as free credits or alternatively as extra credits. However, it is advisable to ask the President of the Teaching Committee, who can help find a correspondence in your study plan for the exam taken abroad.

Can a Master's student include exams from the host university that are part of a Bachelor's degree course in the Learning Agreement? Would they still be validated?

The Teaching Committee is responsible for the evaluation, considering the course syllabus.

Regarding extra courses, is there a maximum ECTS limit?

The limit for extra credits is 24 ECTS for Master's degrees and 35 ECTS for Bachelor's degrees. These credits must be spread over the years in compliance with the university regulation that states the annual student workload cannot exceed 75 ECTS. Contact your Student Services Office for more information.

Regarding the English language level required for mobility to the UK, is the existing suitability certification sufficient, or is an official certification needed?

This depends on the host university, which may eventually require a specific certification.

If I have already attended classes for a certain subject in Siena, whose exam I would like to take on Erasmus, do I have to attend classes again at the host university or can I take the exam directly?

You must ask the host university if this opportunity is provided.

When is the destination assignment published?

Generally, the assignment is published in March. Before the final assignment, an email is sent to check if the language proficiency score has been correctly registered.

Does a student from a non-EU country need to apply for a visa for the country where the mobility will take place?

A student with this status must contact the consulate or embassy of the host university's country to apply for the visa.

Does a student who is a beneficiary of university accommodation in Siena also get accommodation in the host city?

No. Generally, during the application procedure, the host university also provides the form to apply for university accommodation. It is important that the application procedure is carried out promptly, correctly, and accurately in order to take advantage of this option. You can also ask for information from the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Siena group (siena@esn.it).

DURING THE STAY:

What is the minimum number of months to stay on Erasmus?

The minimum number is that indicated in the call, which is 2 months. For each destination, a maximum number of months is established, which can only be exceeded with prior approval from both universities (see the paragraph on extension on the "During the Stay" webpage).

I want to travel to the host university's country by car. Which travel document do I need to present?

You must send a signed self-declaration, containing personal details, reasons, and the date of entry at the border of the host university's foreign country.

Given the difficulty in finding compatible exams, is it possible to take an exam that is scheduled for the second semester in Italy but can be taken in the first semester at the host university?

Yes, because it is part of the academic year. The important thing is that there is correspondence with the syllabus of the Italian exams.

Regarding the exams to be taken abroad, is it possible to modify the Learning Agreement submitted during the application phase?

Yes, after the start of the mobility, you have 2 months to modify the study plan approved before departure.

If I am not a beneficiary of any grant, is it possible to benefit from the DSU scholarship?

You can be a beneficiary of the DSU scholarship regardless of the presence or absence of Erasmus grants.

Regarding exams during mobility, can we decide whether to take them in English or in the host country's language?

There is no limitation, as long as they are listed in the Learning Agreement.

Is it possible to benefit from the "green" travel grant if I first arrive by plane and then have to proceed by train to reach my destination?

No, the green travel is considered from Italy to the host country, and not within it. Furthermore, to be eligible for the green grant, both trips (round-trip) must be made using sustainable means.

Is it possible to extend the mobility? What is the procedure? Is there a specific form to send and how long in advance?

Yes, it is possible. The first step is to verify the host university's availability by having them sign the form found on the "During the Stay" webpage. Then, request the approval of the President of the Teaching Committee by sending the aforementioned form. Finally, send the form to outgoing@unisi.it 20 days before the end of the mobility declared in the financial agreement. The Division will return the form with the acceptance of the extension.

If I am a grant beneficiary, is the extension also funded?

It depends on the availability of funds. The Division will declare the financial coverage for the additional period in the extension form.

Can the possible reduction of the mobility period only be requested before departure or also during (always subject to the host university's approval)?

If requested and approved before departure, the financial agreement will be drawn up based on the new period, and any grants assigned will also be calculated based on what is indicated. The period can also be reduced during mobility. If the period is reduced in such a way that the advance payment turns out to be higher than what should have been paid, the student will be required to return the excess amount.

What should be done if, during Erasmus mobility, I miss attendance for courses that are mandatory in Siena?

You must contact the Student Services Office, which can provide useful guidance on this matter, or the President of the Teaching Committee.

AFTER THE MOBILITY:

How is a 9-month annual-cycle Erasmus period equated with the one academic year study program at the University of Siena? Will it be necessary to integrate exams at the return?

The entire academic year is considered. Upon return, if some exams have not been taken, it is possible to register for the exams in the summer session. Therefore, any period exceeding one semester is considered as a complete academic year.

If I decide to leave in the second semester of the second year, is it possible to then take exams in Siena by reducing the mobility period?

Yes, it is possible. The important thing is that they are taken after the end date of mobility which will be entered by the host university on the Erasmus Certificate.

For exams taken abroad, is it a problem to exceed the total allowed ECTS credits (CFU)?

The maximum is indicated by the University's Academic Regulations. A student's workload cannot exceed 75 credits. The additional 15 credits can be requested if the student is particularly meritorious. This can also be applied to the Erasmus program. However, the Committee must give its opinion.

In which section of the website can I find the conversion tables?

Generally, the host university provides the conversion table along with the Transcript of Records (document listing the passed exams). Furthermore, on the webpage for Recognition of academic activities carried out abroad (<https://www.unisi.it/internazionale/outgoing-students/riconoscimento-attivita-didattiche-svolte-allestero>), you can find the ECTS grading tables, which are the tool that facilitates the transfer of academic results.

Is it possible to include exams from the subsequent academic year in the Learning Agreement?

It depends on the evaluation of the Teaching Committee. If yes, these are exams that will be counted in the following year and will not be included in the calculation for the DSU scholarship request.

What happens if I cannot pass all the exams planned in the Learning Agreement?

Only the exams that have been successfully passed will be validated.