



Guide to Erasmus + and Bilateral Exchanges

Choosing locations, correctly submitting applications, and much more.

Choice of locations

With so many locations to choose from, it is not surprising that one of the questions that students ask us most often is how to find the most suitable locations for the exchange.

The first criterion to be considered is that of the **academic offering**. A good starting point for this is the [Partner Universities](#) portal [on the Luiss Intranet](#).

Once you have logged in with your credentials you can view the **information pages** of all Luiss partner universities.

On the page dedicated to each university there is a dedicated **Courses** section, through which you can find direct links to the catalog of courses offered at the host university, the syllabi, and the history of course recognitions for the previous year of mobility. That history **does not constitute a binding precedent** and neither can it be guaranteed that courses offered in a given year will also be available the following year. However, if among the courses offered, there are many suitable for recognition, this is a great start!

For compulsory courses, the compatibility of the syllabi is an essential requirement. The academic coordinators' task is to ensure that the period of study abroad meets the educational objectives established for each candidate's own degree program. There is more flexibility for elective courses. For **electives** you do not need to find a **corresponding Luiss course**: all that is required is that they be **consistent** with your **degree program**. The overall workload must in any case be balanced.

It is also advisable to read the reports in the dedicated **Reports** section, offering feedback on a study experience abroad from the perspective of an exchange student.

Finally, being able to estimate one's own chances of success is another aspect not to be underestimated. You can get an idea of which locations are most in demand by viewing the **Applications by Location** document, as always on the [Partner Universities](#) portal [on the Luiss Intranet](#), at the top of the list of countries.



Obtaining a place in the most popular locations is difficult if you do not have a very high score. Of course, you should also bear in mind how many places are available and whether they are also open to students from other degree program cycles.

Score

The score is the **primary indicator of merit**, and is based on the following parameters:

- weighted average;
- credits obtained;
- language skills;
- number of exams passed in English (**solely for Law**).

The higher your score, the better your chances of achieving a good position in the ranking are. So what can you do to increase your score and improve your chances of winning a place? Obviously the most immediate answer is: "to pass all the exams with excellent marks", but many candidates overlook the advantage of applying for a place using their skills in languages other than English.

In fact, every year some **places remain unallocated** because they are for locations that require other languages. The question that begs itself in those cases would be: "Is it better to leave for a place where English is not spoken or not leave at all?"

Moreover, it is advisable to certify your skills in the various languages envisaged in the call for applications even **in the absence of a preference associated with all of them**. This is because such certification opens up the possibility of a repechage for locations that have remained unassigned but for which you meet the requirements, in particular as regards language.

Diversifying the choice of universities of interest by associating them with more than one language also entitles you to additional bonuses in decreasing amounts on the second and third languages. Of course, it is not enough to prove your knowledge of the language in order to obtain the bonus: you also need to apply for locations associated with these languages.

Languages

The language tests organized for the selection typically take place in mid-February. The exact dates and times are specified in the call for applications and it is important not to forget them.

Watch out for the **language tests**, though! If a language test is required by a candidate's degree program and the candidate does not take it, he or she will not be able to take the tests organized by the Student Exchange Office, which are reserved solely for those who have no other way of certifying their skills at Luiss. It is therefore strongly recommended not to miss the tests in December, if envisaged by your degree program.

Submission of application

The deadline for submitting your application is a few days before the end of the examination session. What if a candidate passes an exam **after having already submitted the application**? Does this mean that the credits and the change in average grade will not be taken into account?

No problem! All exams and credits valid for the degree program recorded by 24 February 2020 will be taken into account for selection purposes.

For this reason, unless you are waiting for an external language certificate, **there is no reason to delay** submitting your application. In addition, in the event of unforeseen events or problems of any kind (for example, the uploading of attachments), it is always preferable to have time to contact the office to receive the necessary assistance.

In particular, uploaded documents must be perfectly clear and legible. Photos taken in a hurry with your smartphone may not be suitable. It would be a pity if your application were not accepted just because the supporting documents proved to be illegible, after spending time, effort and money, for example, to obtain external certification.

Once the application has been definitively sent, it **can no longer be changed**. For this reason, we always recommend that you check your choice of locations, your language test preferences and whether the required documents have been uploaded. On the other hand, the opposite may well happen, i.e. you forget to confirm the application in its final form: **be careful because applications that remain in draft form are not taken into account!**

After the application

You are advised to check your Luiss mailbox constantly, especially from mid-March onwards. All official communications relating to your application will be sent there. In the above mentioned period, once the places on offer have been allocated on the basis of the rankings, an e-mail will be sent to all candidates to communicate the outcome of the selection process, positive or negative as the case may be.

The mobility period is normally the first semester of the academic year following the application. There are only rare exceptions to this rule, and law students can make the choice within three days after notification of the allocation of places. The choice of semester for these students must be made, above all, taking into account the availability of the courses at the host university!

It is not only the choice of the semester that must always be made on the **basis of the academic offer**. The same applies to universities that have a number of campuses (e.g. EDHEC in Lille or Paris, or KU

Leuven in Leuven, Brussels and Antwerp). Academic offerings may differ from campus to campus: it is necessary to pay close attention!

The academic calendar is almost always published on the websites of the host universities. Alternatively, the calendar is often included in the fact sheets or as a separate attachment in the General Information Sheet of each partner university in the [Partner Universities](#) portal [on the Luiss Intranet](#).

Application for the host university

The names of the students selected for mobility are sent to the host universities together with the other details required (**nomination**). In most cases, the host university will contact the students directly and provide information on the documentation to be submitted to formally complete the application for the period of study abroad (**application**).

Although in substance the process is similar, each university has its own deadlines and procedures and requires a particular type of document. The relevant information is published in the **Methods of Admission** section of the [Partner Universities](#) portal [on the Luiss Intranet](#), but is typically communicated to each candidate after nomination. At this stage, you should also pay close attention to the deadlines set for sending the application, upon the expiry of which you run the risk of **not being accepted**.

More and more universities are now asking for documentation to be sent electronically. For non-European locations that require the sending of paper documents, it is possible to deliver the documentation to the Student Exchange Office, which will handle its sending by express courier.

Finding accommodation in many of the host countries is becoming increasingly difficult. Every year the number of exchange students increases and acting quickly and promptly is essential to improving your chances of securing ideal accommodation. Moreover, not all universities offer an accommodation service, although at the very least information is generally offered. Luiss has also signed an agreement with Housing Anywhere to provide additional support. The information will be sent to all the students who have been allocated a place.

Once the application process has been completed, the host universities examine the documentation and, if it is correct and complete, send the **letter of acceptance**. In some cases this document is produced immediately whereas in others cases the length of time involved may be much longer and even after the deadline for the application. Spending the exchange period in countries outside Europe or ones not party to the Schengen Treaty also involves the issue of a visa valid for the duration of the stay abroad. Although the documentation required to issue a visa varies from country to country, the letter of acceptance will always be required. The most reliable source for finding out what other documents are required is the competent consular authorities, i.e. the host country's embassy or consulate in Italy.



Study abroad plan

You have probably heard of a Learning Agreement before. This document sets out the courses that students take at the host university in Table A, and which of them will be recognized back at the home university upon passing the relevant exams.

The preparation of the study abroad plan and hence the Learning Agreement is undertaken for the first time immediately after the allocation of the places abroad to the selected candidates. These plans are provisional and may be amended at a later date, but further to EU law they must be drawn up before departure.

It is important to bear in mind that from the moment the plan is first drawn up to the actual start of the exchange period abroad, the availability of courses may vary. This happens in almost every location and, if necessary, changes to the plan can be made within 2 weeks after the start of lessons.

We realize that there is a certain amount of bureaucracy and procedures to be followed but at the same time we make every effort to simplify it as much as possible and to provide assistance to all those who need it. If there is something that you do not understand, ask us!

Psychological stress

Leaving for a stay lasting several months in another country, changing one's routine, adapting to a different educational system, speaking one or more (!) different languages on a daily basis and having to deal with an unusual diet, culture shock and new knowledge are just some of the adjustments that are often taken for granted in participating in this type of program.

To our great regret, we are increasingly and helplessly witnessing situations in which students selected for a mobility program find themselves overwhelmed by problems such as panic attacks, anxiety and psychological stress in general, which often, unfortunately, ends with the early termination of the exchange.

We advise candidates who know that they suffer from anxiety or who struggle to adapt to change to carefully assess whether this may interfere with their participation in mobility programs abroad. Luiss also provides students with a psychological support service called Luiss ti ascolta. There is no reason to hesitate when it comes to talking about your difficulties: this is the best way to start dealing with them.