

Application Instructions for Exchange Programs Worldwide

Target group: Students of all courses of study, except for Business

Deadline: 15 October 2026

Possible Exchange Period: Fall semester 2027 and/or spring semester 2028

This document serves as a general guide for the completion of your application. It is applicable to all exchange programs in Europe and overseas which are coordinated by the International Office and which have 15 October 2026 as their deadline. You can find an overview of your exchange options in our [database of partner universities](#).

Application Documents

- ☐ Online Application Form
- ☐ Priority List
- ☐ CV
- ☐ Academic goals and motivation
- ☐ Transcript of Records
- ☐ Master Students: Bachelor's diploma (and Master's transcript, if available)
- ☐ Proof of Language Proficiency
- ☐ Additional Certificates (optional)
- ☐ Picture (optional)

Important

On the application deadline (15 October), your proof of language proficiency may **not be older than 2 years**.
The earliest acceptable date on your language certificate is thus 15 October 2024.

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Preparation

Where can I find more information?

Website of the International Office

The most important source of information for your exchange options is the [database of partner universities](#). There you will find a list of all universities abroad with an active exchange agreement as well as their individual requirements (e.g. GPA and language tests). Additionally, you can also find the reports of exchange alumni.

If you have questions about a specific report, the International Office can ask the author of a report to get in touch with you. Just send an email with the report's ID number to outgoings@uni-mannheim.de.

Contact with the partner institutions

Please do not contact our partner institutions until you have officially been nominated by the International Office! If you have any questions, contact your advisors in Mannheim (see below)!

Advice from the International Office

The International Office is happy to help you with your **administrative questions** concerning the application and the organization of your study abroad experience (e.g. language tests, visa, scholarships and housing). Here is a list of the available [study abroad advisors at the International Office](#):

Australia, Asia, Africa, South America, Mexico, Portugal, Spain	Louisa Tsouvallas	louisa.tsouvallas@uni-mannheim.de
USA, Canada, Israel	Lukas Dausend	lukas.dausend@uni-mannheim.de
France, Italy, Switzerland	Kerstin Bach	kerstin.bach@uni-mannheim.de
Northern and Eastern Europe, Turkey	Ann Mandel	ann.mandel@uni-mannheim.de
UK, Ireland, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg and Austria	Gela Wittenberg	wittenberg@uni-mannheim.de

Please contact us via email or book an appointment for a [digital consultation](#). For shorter questions, please feel free to stop by during our open **office hours, Tuesdays 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

Advice from your School / Department for academic questions

For **academic questions** (e.g. course selection and recognition), please contact your school's departmental exchange coordinator at the dean's office. An overview of these contacts is available on [our website](#). You can find information about available modules/courses on the partner institution's website or in the experience reports of your predecessors.

Study Abroad Information Sessions

The International Office holds information sessions on a regular basis which give you an introduction how to study abroad. **We strongly recommend you take part in these sessions.** There you will learn all about the different possibilities to go abroad, the various scholarship opportunities, as well as tips and general advice on how to submit a successful application. You can find the dates of the information sessions [on our website](#).

Study Abroad Fair at the University of Mannheim

The [Study Abroad Fair](#) will take place **from 14-17 September**. At this event, you can look forward to a lot of great presentations about studying abroad. On Tuesday, 15 September, you can also meet staff from the International Office and your school in person at info booths in the Ehrenhof and in front of the Mensa.

Which programs may I apply for?

In order to see which study abroad programs you may apply for, please visit the International Office's [database of partner universities](#). Please contact the International Office if you need help using the database. Your major is the defining factor; you cannot apply for an exchange in your minor.

On 15 October 2026 you may apply for an exchange at up to seven partner universities or state programs (*Landesprogramm*) both in Europe and overseas. These seven universities can be in different countries and regions as long as you have proof of the required language proficiencies.

Example:

First priority: State program North Carolina
Second priority: University of Exeter
Third priority: Charles University
Fourth priority: University of Sydney
Fifth priority: National University of Singapore
Sixth priority: Waseda University
Seventh priority: Pontificia Catolica de Argentina

The selection commission will always try to grant your first choice. If this is not possible, the commission will try to place you at one of your other choices.

To increase your chances for an exchange spot, we recommend using all available choices, provided that there are enough universities that are of interest to you. **Please only apply for universities if you intend to study there!**

The international exchange partnerships of the University of Mannheim are subject to change. This means that new partner institutions might be added to the online database of study abroad opportunities, but also that certain exchange opportunities may no longer be offered. These changes usually occur up until one month before the application deadline. **We therefore strongly recommend that you check your chosen universities again one month before the application deadline.**

A Note on State Programs

Apart from bilateral exchanges with partner universities, there are also multilateral exchanges with North American state university systems (e.g. the California State University System). These [state programs](#) count as one exchange option.

In general, an application for a state program is twofold: first, you apply for general admission to the program. Once you have been accepted, it will then be decided in a second step at which university within this program you will be enrolled. Our coordinators will try to place you according to your preferences. For more information, please consult the respective passages in these guidelines.

Please note that state programs have several special requirements and exceptions due to early nomination deadlines. In particular, you need to submit the correct proof of language proficiency (often a TOEFL or an IELTS) immediately after acceptance! Therefore, please speak to your advisor in the International Office before applying for a state program.



Application Requirements

1. **Enrollment at the University of Mannheim:** you will need to stay enrolled during the time of your study abroad period and then return to the University of Mannheim to finish your degree.
2. **Language Proficiency:** you need to prove your advanced knowledge of the preferred host university's **language of instruction** through the required **language tests**. Some partner universities have strict requirements which tests are accepted and what score you need to achieve (see [database of partner universities](#)).
3. **Submission of a completed application on time:** if you miss the application deadline, forget essential application components or submit wrong documents (e.g. expired or unaccepted language tests), your application will be rejected on formal grounds.
4. **Good academic standing:** some partner universities have certain GPA requirements which you need to meet (see [database of partner universities](#)). Applications from students with a Mannheim GPA of 3.0 and below can only be considered in special circumstances. Please check back with your school's exchange coordinator if this applies to you.

Rule for second applications: Applicants who have already taken part in an exchange program organized by the University of Mannheim during their *current* course of study will be lower-ranked in the second application to allow as many people as possible to take part in an exchange program. A previous stay abroad during the Bachelor's degree, however, will *not* result in a lower rank if applying again to study abroad during the Master's degree.

Note on Data Protection

If you would like to apply for an exchange program in a **country outside the scope of the General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union (GDPR)**, you will be asked in the workflow in the Mobility Online Portal (application portal), depending on the destination countries of your priorities, to consent to the transfer of your personal data to that partner university for the initiation, implementation and processing of your mobility and to be further processed there in accordance with applicable laws and other regulations. Please find further information about the potential risks associated with the transfer of personal data [here](#). **Without this consent, further processing of your application to the respective partner university in the third country by the University of Mannheim is not possible.**

All countries outside the scope of the GDPR are affected. This scope currently includes all EU countries, EEA countries (Norway, Iceland) and all countries with an adequacy decision (currently: Argentina, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom).

If you do not wish to consent to the transfer of your data, you can alternatively apply exclusively to destinations at partner universities that are located in the above-mentioned countries within the scope of the GDPR.

Special Requirements for International Students

Depending on their nationality, international students need to be aware of [additional requirements](#).

Here are a few issues which you might encounter:

- **Extension residence permit?** If you have a residence permit for Germany you need to make sure it remains valid for the duration of your exchange abroad. Please remember to file for an extension at the foreigners' office in due time, if necessary.
- **Visa application?** Not only overseas exchanges require a visa. Exchange programs within Europe also require a visa if you are not a citizen of the EU, even though you have valid resident permit for Germany.
- **Special language requirements?** Depending on your nationality, you might have to submit a different language test.
- **Staying abroad in your home country?** It's not always possible to do an exchange in the country where you hold citizenship. Please check with the International Office before you apply.
- **Dual Citizenship?** Please note that there might be special entrance requirements.
- **The University of Mannheim's tuition fees for non-EU students while abroad?** In rare cases, you might be exempt from paying tuition in Mannheim during your time abroad.



We strongly advise any students who do not hold German citizenship to consult with the International Office before applying, so that we can identify any difficulties early on and find solutions together. This especially applies to you if you are studying in Germany on a residence permit or if you need a visa to go abroad.

Costs and Financial Aid

Please research the [costs and financial aid opportunities](#) of your preferred exchange destination before you apply. Talk to an advisor from the International Office for more information! You should plan very carefully which exchange destinations are within your financial means and which are not, especially if you are on a tight budget.

If your application is successful, you will receive **tuition-free admission** to one of our partner universities, i.e. you can take courses abroad for free. However, other administrative fees similar to the University of Mannheim's semester fee may apply. If we learn that a partner university charges an unusually high fee (over 200 Euro), we will communicate this through our [partner university database](#).

In addition, you will need to budget for housing, cost of living, and travel expenses. Please note that overseas destinations, in particular, can incur higher expenses for visa, insurance and other miscellaneous fees as well as higher flight costs.

Please don't hesitate to discuss this with an advisor at the International Office. We are happy to talk to you about possible scholarship opportunities and your budget expectations.

At our **Erasmus** partner universities, [Mobility Funding supported by the EU](#) is usually **"automatically" included**. This funding varies from country to country. The monthly rates may change every year. Students meeting specific requirements may receive higher funding. The International Office will inform you about this funding once you receive a study abroad spot.

Application

Application Procedure

The application for an exchange is completely digital. You need to upload the application documents individually onto the **online application portal “Mobility Online”**. At the end, you need to upload all documents again **in one merged PDF file**, then your application is officially submitted. Please make sure to merge your documents in the correct order (see checklist).

The application portal will open one month before the deadline. Until then, you can prepare the necessary documents (everything except for the actual application form). **Please prepare the necessary digital copies/scans in advance**, so you can upload them when the portal opens. Please upload all application documents **either in German or English**.

At the time of application, academic references / letters of recommendation are generally not required. Therefore, please do not submit any academic references – they do not play a role in the selection process.

Checklist

Below you will find a description of the individual application components. Please start preparing these documents now, so you can upload them once the application portal opens, which will be one month before the deadline.

Checklist for your personal use	
Application Component	Uploaded onto Mobility Online?
Please upload your application documents in a single copy on the Mobility Online-portal and then merge them in one consolidated PDF file in the following order.	
Online Application Form (generated in the application portal, uploaded with signature)	☐
Priority List	☐
CV	☐
Academic goals and motivation	☐
Transcript of Records	☐
Master Students: Bachelor’s diploma (and final bachelor’s transcript, if needed) and, if available, Master’s transcript and average grade from Portal ²	☐
Proof of Language Proficiency	☐
Additional Certificates (optional)	☐
Picture (optional)	(☐)
All documents uploaded as one merged PDF file in the correct order	☐

Accepted formats for uploads include PDF (preferred), WORD und picture files (e.g. for your picture).

Application Components

Online Application Form

The online application form is a PDF that is generated in the application portal after you entered all your data and it serves as a **cover sheet** of your application. The International Office will open the [application portal "Mobility Online"](#) one month before the application deadline. You can log in using your regular student username and password.

For a successful application you need to take the following steps:

1. First, you enter your personal data in the online application form as well as your preferred exchange universities (maximum of 7) and the preferred time period of your exchange. Once you have made your selection, please click "Send". (If you want to change your selection afterwards, you can do so later in the application portal.)
2. You will then receive a confirmation by email which includes the link to access your personal profile in the application portal. Save this email because you will need to access your profile later to receive information about the result of your application.

The application portal will guide you through the application process and explain the individual steps in detail via help texts. These steps are called "application workflow". Please follow the steps in the application workflow and upload the application components which you prepared in advance. At the end of this process, the portal will generate the application form which you need to (digitally) sign and then upload as a final step.

A Word of Advice:

Do not wait until the last minute to upload your documents! Ideally, you should upload them a few days before the deadline in case you have technical difficulties or other questions. This way you are less likely to miss the deadline.

A Note on State Programs:

If you would like to apply for a spot in a state program ("*Landesprogramm*"), please select the state program of your choice and then the university which you would prefer within that state program (e.g. "LP North Carolina"/"University of North Carolina at Greensboro"). In general, an application for a state program is twofold: First you apply to take part in the state program – and if successful, you will be accepted into the program, but not yet placed at a specific university. In a second step, you will be assigned a spot at a university within the program – this could be a different university than the one you selected in the online document.

Priority List

The priority list is an automatically generated Word document which you can download in the workflow. This form has three columns which you need to fill out.



In the first two columns please indicate if you are flexible regarding the time period that you want to go abroad (e.g. if you could also study abroad in the spring semester instead of the fall) and if there are specific details about your priorities which would be important for the selection process (e.g. which campus, which trimester, which language track etc.).

A Note on State Programs:

If you apply for a state program, please indicate in your list of priorities which other campuses of said state program would be an option for you. The last column is for you to double-check if you have the correct language test. After you completed the priority list, please upload it to the portal and add it to your merged PDF.

CV

Your CV should contain all the relevant aspects of your academic and professional development. You can find plenty of information on the internet about general conventions regarding the design and content of a CV. You can also visit the [Career Network](#) for more information and sign up for a CV check.

DO

- ☑ Please list all relevant work experience, internships and extra-curricular activities (e.g. [VISUM Buddy](#)) and give details about your individual tasks and accomplishments!
The selection process for the vast majority of exchange programs will be based exclusively on the application documents. So please make sure your CV answers all the relevant questions about your qualifications for an academic exchange.
- ☑ Pay attention to format and chronology.
Please always list your most recent position first. Other than that, you are free to use any design or format of your choice.

DON'T

- ☒ Do not list any irrelevant information!
Your parents' professions, your religious beliefs, your marital status etc. are not pertinent to your application.
- ☒ Avoid acronyms, jargon or other unclear word choices.
Usually it is not possible to ask any follow-up questions about your CV. Therefore, it should answer all questions related to your application.

Academic goals and motivation

For your application, write a letter titled “academic goals and motivation.” In this document, present your academic motivation for the semester abroad in a convincing manner and with a personal touch. Feel free to focus on individual topics, but make sure to address the following points:

- The added academic value of the stay abroad for your course of study (e.g. courses, research focus, methodological deepening, teaching formats)
- Connection between your previous profile and/or future plans and what the host university has to offer – feel free to be creative, but with a clear academic focus

The selection committee reads and evaluates each individual letter. The format is up to you, but it must not exceed two pages.

Since you can **choose up to seven different partner universities ('priorities')** in your application to study abroad, in your letter you must refer to all the universities listed.

For your letter on academic goals and motivation, we have the following suggestions:

DO

- ☑ Use consistent formatting!
You are free to play around with font sizes or types, but please keep it legible, avoid major gaps and try to have a clear format.
- ☑ Explain your personal motivation!
Do you have any ties to your host country? Which aspect of your host country is of interest to you?

DON'T

- ☒ Your letter should not be too generic!
There should be a clear reason why you chose your selected host universities out of all available programs.
- ☒ Make sure that your arguments are not too touristy!
Proximity to the beach, nightlife and sightseeing spots should not be the main reason why you chose your host universities.
- ☒ Avoid typos, grammatical errors, and awkward word choices!

Note on State Programs:

If you apply for a state program, focus your letter on academic goals and motivation on the university that you prefer within the state program.

Bachelor's Students: Transcript of Records and average grade from Portal²

Applicants need to submit a **current transcript of records with an average grade**. You can download your transcript (ToR external) as a PDF in [Portal²](#) under *My Studies > Student Service > Requested Reports/Reports*.

Entering the average grade in the online application portal using the reference number from Portal²

In addition to the transcript of records, we need your individual reference number (your account number) from Portal² in order to automatically transfer your current average grade to the Mobility Online portal. The best way to find this is via the browser view of Portal² using the following path: **Home > My studies > My academic records**.

You will find further instructions on this in the workflow of the Mobility Online application portal. Your average grade will automatically be added to your file after the application deadline.

Master's Students: Bachelor's Diploma and, if available, Master's Transcript and Average Grade from Portal²

Bachelor's Diploma

Master's students need to upload a copy of their completed bachelor's degree certificate or of your transcript if the bachelor's degree is not yet available. The certificate should include your overall grade as well as your individual course grades (if this is not the case, please also include a bachelor's transcript).

The selection committee reserves the right to ask for the original copies.

Master's Transcript

If you already have credits in your graduate degree program in Mannheim, please upload a current transcript of regards with your average grade. You can download the document "**ToR extern en**" as a PDF in [Portal²](#) under *My Studies > Student Service > Requested Reports/Reports*.

Students of the degree programs M.Ed. Extension Subject German and M.Ed. Extension Subject Spanish still need to request a transcript from the Express Service.

Entry of average grade in the online application portal

Master's students are also required to submit their average grade. Depending on your personal situation, you can use one of three different options to submit it. While completing your application in the Mobility Online portal, you will be automatically guided to the appropriate option via a survey. Please check the help text in your workflow for more information.

Proof of Language Proficiency

Expired or not accepted language tests are the main reason why applications get formally rejected. Therefore, please read the following information carefully and contact the International Office if you have questions:

- On the [Proof of Language Proficiency](#) page, you will find all accepted language tests and alternatives as well as information on where to take these tests.
- Please note that in the interest of comparability, we will not accept any other proof of language skills besides the ones mentioned on the website above. **Native speakers** should also check the [information for native speakers](#) on tests and potential alternatives.
- Usually, a minimum level of B2 is expected (according to the *European Framework of Reference for Languages*), although some partner universities require a higher level or specific tests like TOEFL, IELTS or others. You will find this information in the International Office's [database of partner universities](#). Please feel free to ask for advice in the International Office!
- **International degree-seeking students** whose nationality is not German should inquire with the International Office if any [special requirements](#) for their preferred host universities apply.
- **REMINDER:** the proof of language skills **must not be older than exactly two years** on the application deadline (15 October).



Applicants who do not hand in valid proof of language skills do not meet the application requirements and will not be considered.

If some of your preferred universities require proof of **additional languages**, please also upload proof for these languages.

Example:

First priority USA → proof of English language skills

Second priority Spain → additional proof of Spanish language skills (if Spanish is the language of instruction)

If you intend to take courses at your host university that are taught in several languages (e.g. lectures or seminars in English and Spanish), you will need to [show proof for each of these languages](#).

Note about programs that require a TOEFL or IELTS:

- If you take a new TOEFL test, please always use our **Institutional Code 7261**, so your test results can be verified by the International Office (please read the [information provided about the TOEFL](#)).
- Applicants for partner universities **that require a TOEFL or IELTS** can alternatively submit a preliminary English test (e.g. the university's language certificate or Duolingo) if their test results are not in by the application deadline. In this case, the TOEFL or IELTS has to be handed in later.
- Our partner universities usually accept both IELTS and TOEFL, so both tests are equal for our application procedure. Please check out database of partner universities for exceptions.

You applied with a preliminary English test, you need to upload the results of your TOEFL/IELTS on Mobility Online without being asked to do so. If you get selected for an **exchange in overseas**, you need to submit your test by **31 January 2027**. If selected for an **exchange in Europe**, you need to submit it by **28 February 2027**.

If you fail to submit your test by these deadlines, you cannot be nominated at your host institution and you will lose your exchange spot. **Please be aware that it is your responsibility to obtain a valid test in time to prevent this from happening.**

Additional (relevant) Certificates (optional)

If you mention internships, work experience, or other similar topics in your CV, you should upload the corresponding certificates (if relevant).

Picture (optional)

You can upload a picture in the online application portal (picture file, e.g. JPEG). However, this is entirely voluntary. We will also accept applications without a photo.

Submitting the Application

You have to upload all requested application documents as single copies and afterwards as one merged PDF file on the Mobility Online portal by the application deadline: **15 October 2026**. Please make sure that the documents in the PDF appear in the order of the checklist above.

You alone are responsible for the completeness of your application. If your application is incomplete, it might be excluded from or receive a lower rank for the selection process. Please use the table above to check completeness. Due to the high number of applicants, we are not able to request missing documents.



We strongly recommend you upload your application documents by Thursday, 15 October 2026, at noon, in case you run into technical difficulties and need technical support.

Confirmation of Application Receipt

You will receive an email from the International Office confirming the **receipt** of your application documents by Wednesday, 28 October 2026 (6 p.m.) at the latest.

What's Next?

Check the Validity of your Passport/ID Card

We do not require a copy of your passport or ID card for your application. However, please check whether your documents are still valid and apply now for new documents if necessary:

For stays abroad outside Europe, you usually need a passport that is **still valid six months after your exchange has ended** (information on the actual minimum validity can be obtained at the respective embassy).

If you are selected for an **overseas exchange spot**, you will be asked to provide the ID number of your valid passport in the Mobility Online Portal **by 31 January 2027**.



You must provide your passport data by the dates mentioned above. Failure to do so will make it impossible to nominate you at your host university and you will lose your exchange spot. It is solely your responsibility to make sure to get a valid passport to avoid this situation!

For **stays in most European countries**, a valid national ID would suffice **for citizens of the European Union**. Please verify if your ID is valid for the **duration of your exchange**. For some exchange programs in Europe, you might get asked to submit your ID number **by 28 February 2027** for the nomination to the partner university. If needed, this step will automatically appear in the Mobility Online workflow. If you are a citizen outside of the European Union, please check with the respective embassy which documents you need to enter your host country.

Selection Process

You can find all the relevant information about the [selection procedure and selection criteria on our website](#).

Due to the high number of applications that need to be processed and evaluated, we ask you not to contact us by phone or email to enquire about the result of the selection process. This process will take several weeks. We plan to inform you **on 27 November** about the results via email to your university address.

What are my chances of getting selected for an exchange spot?

It is very difficult to predict the chances of success for your individual application since the number of applicants and the preference for certain partner universities differ significantly every year. Whether you are selected and for which program depends entirely on how many other students also apply for the same programs.

The university on the top of your list (i.e. your first priority) will yield the best chance of success for you; your other priorities will only be considered if other applicants who chose these partner universities as their first priority haven't already been selected.

In general, English-speaking exchange programs draw a higher number of applicants than non-English-speaking programs. Famous cities and countries are also generally more popular than lesser-known destinations.

Therefore, we recommend you also choose some universities which don't necessarily come to mind at first, but which could also be interesting for you and match your academic interests.

Please speak to an advisor at the International Office and take your time to research your target universities and to write your letter on academic goals and motivation.

You could possibly increase your chances if you have some flexibility regarding the time period to go abroad, since the numbers of people applying for the spring or fall term is not always the same. If you are flexible about the time you want to spend abroad, you should mention this **in the priority list**.

What happens if I don't receive a spot at one of my selected partner universities?

If there are vacant spots left after the first selection round, we will allocate these in a [second selection round](#).

What happens after I am selected?

Formal and binding acceptance of an exchange spot:

You will hear about the results of this application round by email **on 27 November**. If you are offered a spot in an exchange program, you will need to accept it on the application portal within three business days (including the day you received the email), i.e. you have to accept it **by 1 December**. The acceptance of this spot is binding.



If you do not accept the exchange spot within the three days, you will lose your spot and it will be offered to other applicants in a second selection round.

After you accepted an exchange spot, you can only withdraw from the exchange program in special circumstances (e.g. crises, medical emergencies, change of degree program etc.).

Unfortunately, every year there are applicants who initially accept a spot in a program and drop out later without going through the official cancellation process. As the selection process is finalized at this stage, the "vacant spot" cannot be given to another student. This is unfair to other applicants and will be penalized with the exclusion from all university-internal study abroad programs. In addition, the International Office and the schools will withhold support for alternative ways to go abroad.

Registration Process at the Partner University

In the previous months before the exchange begins, the International Office will nominate all selected students at their respective host university.

This process differs depending on your host university. For successful registration at the host university, you will usually need to submit various documents again. The host university will make the final decision whether our applicants are accepted or not. If you hand in a complete set of documents on time, there are usually not any issues. We will inform you in due time about the necessary steps. For more information on this process please head [to our website](#).

**The Study Abroad Team
Wishes you Good Luck for your Application!**