

# Guidelines for Study Exchanges

**Disclaimer: These Guidelines for Study Exchanges have been drawn up in Italian. A non-legally binding English translation has been provided for information purposes only. The Italian version shall prevail over the English translation.**

dated 25.11.2024 (as of 29.09.2025)

**The Rectorate, having consulted the Management Committee, adopts:**

## Chapter I – General principles

<b>Art. 1 Scope</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 These Guidelines are intended to regulate the admission, selection process, and management of exchanges for students enrolled at USI.</li><li>2 For matters not expressly regulated in these Guidelines, the legal bases of the Faculties concerning student mobility shall apply.</li><li>3 In these Guidelines, terms referring to persons of the male gender are intended to refer to persons of all genders.</li></ol>
<b>Art. 2 Applicability</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 These Guidelines apply to students enrolled at USI who wish to undertake a study exchange.</li></ol>
<b>Art. 3 Exchange student and type of exchanges</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 An exchange student is a student who voluntarily decides to participate in an exchange program for study purposes.</li><li>2 The student may choose from various types of exchange programmes, in a manner that best suits their study path. The different types of exchange programme are outlined on the dedicated webpage of the USI International Relations and Study Abroad Service (hereinafter referred to as "the Service").</li></ol>
<b>Art. 4 Status of the exchange student</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 During the exchange period, the student remains enrolled at USI.</li><li>2 In particular, they remain subject to the conditions set forth in the Study Regulations of their home Faculty for obtaining their degree.</li><li>3 In the cases specified in art. 15 paragraph 5 of the General regulations for admissions and matriculation, the exchange student is subject to a 50% reduction in the semester fee.</li></ol>
<b>Art. 5 International Relations and Study Abroad Service</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 The International Relations and Study Abroad Service is the USI Service responsible for the administrative management of student exchange programmes.</li><li>2 The Service works closely with the directors of study programmes, the exam delegates, and the Student Administration for all academic matters.</li></ol>
<b>Art. 6 Registration for</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Participation in an exchange programme is subject to a call for applications.</li></ol>

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<b>exchange programmes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2 The student wishing to undertake an exchange period must submit their application in accordance with the specific call.</li><li>3 The Service publishes on its webpage on the USI website the dates, deadlines, list of required documents, and registration procedures for the call.</li><li>4 The student registers through the designated Mobility Online platform.</li><li>5 Incomplete applications or those submitted after the deadline will not be considered.</li></ol>
<b>Art. 7 Learning Agreement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 For the purpose of the exchange period, the student is required to provide the duly completed document titled "Learning Agreement". The Learning Agreement must be filled out digitally on the Mobility Online platform. It must also be updated during the exchange period.</li><li>2 The Learning Agreement is the document that lists the courses the student will undertake at the host university. It also enables the recognition of the credits earned by the student at the host university for the purpose of their academic path at USI.</li><li>3 The Learning Agreement has the following purposes:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. confirm the acceptance of the courses the student is planning to follow at the host university;</li><li>b. ensure the recognition of the credits earned at the host university.</li></ol></li><li>4 The Learning Agreement must be approved by the reference person for the USI study programme in which the student is enrolled as well as by the host university. The final version of the Learning Agreement must be submitted within one month from the beginning of the exchange.</li><li>5 In the event of non-approval of the Learning Agreement, the recognition of exams taken during the exchange and the transfer of the corresponding credits cannot be guaranteed.</li><li>6 It is the student's responsibility to complete all the necessary steps for the approval of the Learning Agreement and the recognition of the credits earned during the exchange.</li><li>7 For correct completion and management of the Learning Agreement, please refer to the documents "Learning Agreement User Manual" and "Fields for Learning Agreement."</li></ol>
<b>Art. 8 SEMP scholarships</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 The SEMP (Swiss-European Mobility Programme) of the National Agency Movetia provides financial support (SEMP scholarship) for all students who choose to undertake an exchange period at a university in a European or non-European country.</li><li>2 The total budget and the amount of the scholarship are determined by the National Agency Movetia and communicated to higher education institutions in June of the current year. The Università della Svizzera italiana then informs the students about the possible granting of the scholarship during the summer.</li><li>3 If the budget allows it, the scholarship is automatically awarded to all interested students, without the need for them to submit a specific application.</li></ol>

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## Chapter II – Specific principles for each Faculty

### Chapter I – Academy of Architecture

#### Art. 9 Exchange possibility and duration of the exchange

- <sup>1</sup> The possibility of undertaking an exchange period, as well as its maximum duration, may vary depending on the study programme in which the student is enrolled.
- <sup>2</sup> Specifically:

Bachelor in Architecture	3 <sup>o</sup> year bachelor, maximum 2 semesters
Master in Architettura	Exchanges not allowed
Master in History and Theory of Art and Architecture	For the exchange of these students, the same criteria apply as those for the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society. Therefore, reference is made to Art. 18 and following of these Guidelines.

#### Art. 10 Applications

- <sup>1</sup> The Academy of Architecture sets minimum requirements for its students to apply for an exchange period. These requirements are outlined in the *Direttiva per la mobilità universitaria* of the Academy of Architecture.
- <sup>2</sup> Students who do not meet all the requirements set by the Faculty, as well as the requirements outlined in the *Direttiva*, cannot be admitted to the exchange programme.

#### Art. 11 Choice of destinations and selection

- <sup>1</sup> On the exchange registration form, each candidate may indicate a maximum of 5 preferred choices for the exchange destination.
- <sup>2</sup> After the registration deadline, all received applications are reviewed, and a ranking is created. Based on this ranking, a maximum of 30 exchange places are allocated at the partner universities of the Academy of Architecture.
- <sup>3</sup> Further details regarding the ranking referred to in paragraph 2 are provided in the *Direttiva per la mobilità universitaria* of the Academy of Architecture.
- <sup>4</sup> The selection process described above takes place only once a year, during the month of February.

#### Art. 12 Allocation of destination

- <sup>1</sup> The allocation of an exchange place at one of the partner universities of the Academy of Architecture is made according to the ranking referred to in art. 11, taking into account the available places and the preferences expressed by the candidate.
- <sup>2</sup> If the candidate indicates only one destination on the registration form and is not selected for that destination, another destination with available places will be offered to them.
- <sup>3</sup> If more than 30 applications are received, students ranked 31<sup>st</sup> and onwards will be placed on a waiting list.
- <sup>4</sup> Each of the 30 selected students will be individually notified in writing of the assigned destination.

#### Art. 13 Failure to confirm, withdrawal from the exchange

- <sup>1</sup> The students selected for the exchange period must confirm their acceptance of the place in Mobility Online by the date indicated in the notification of the exchange destination assignment.

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	<p><sup>2</sup> By this date, places that have not been confirmed or have been vacated following withdrawal will be reallocated in accordance with the updated ranking list.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> After this date, the reallocation of vacant places is not guaranteed and the ranking list will not be repeated.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> Students on the waiting list who do not obtain a place will be informed in writing that they have not been allocated a place.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> Students who withdraw or cancel after confirmation must promptly notify the Service in writing. In the event of non-departure, the full enrolment fee shall apply (see Art. 15 of the General Regulations for Admissions and Enrolment).</p> <p><sup>6</sup> In the event of early return from the mobility period, the enrolment fee shall be determined on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the principle of proportionality.</p> <p><sup>7</sup> Students are required to reimburse the SEMP scholarship in accordance with the terms and conditions established by the Movetia National Agency.</p>
<b>Art. 14 Exams for exchange students in the Spring Semester</b>	<p><sup>1</sup> Students of the Academy of Architecture who intend to undertake an exchange period during the Spring Semester must take the exams of the winter session during the extraordinary recovery session (September) if the start of the exchange semester overlaps with the winter exam session at USI.</p>
<b>Art. 15 Master in History and Theory of Art and Architecture</b>	<p><sup>1</sup> Although this study programme belongs to the Academy of Architecture, the Master in History and Theory of Art and Architecture benefits from the agreements of the Faculty of Communication, Culture, and Society, due to its humanistic nature.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Therefore, the same criteria applicable to the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society apply. Students of this study programme should refer to artt. 16 and following of these Guidelines.</p>
<b>Chapter II – Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Informatics</b>	
<b>Art. 16 Exchange possibility and duration of the exchange</b>	<p><sup>1</sup> The possibility of undertaking an exchange period, as well as its maximum duration, may vary depending on the study programme in which the student is enrolled.</p>

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<sup>2</sup> Students enrolled in the Spring Semester whose study plan differs from the traditional one must contact the International Relations and Study Abroad Service to determine which semester is most suitable for undertaking an exchange period.

<sup>3</sup> Specifically:

Study programme	Allowed exchange period
Bachelor in Communication	3 <sup>rd</sup> year, maximum 1 semester
Bachelor in Data Science	3 <sup>rd</sup> year, maximum 2 semesters
Bachelor in Economics	3 <sup>rd</sup> year, maximum 2 semesters
Bachelor in Philosophy	Students with specialization "Philosophy": 3 <sup>rd</sup> year, maximum 1 academic year; Students with other specializations: no exchange possible
Bachelor in Informatics	3 <sup>rd</sup> year, maximum 1 semester
Bachelor in Lingua, letteratura e civiltà italiana	3 <sup>rd</sup> year, maximum 1 semester
Master in Artificial Intelligence	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Cognitive Psychology in Health Communication	Exchange not permitted as it is a joint degree with the Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele.
Master in Communication, Management and Health	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Computational Science	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Corporate Communication	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Digital Fashion Communication	Exchange not permitted as it is a double degree with Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne.
Master in Economia e politiche internazionali	Exchange not permitted as it is a double degree with ASERI, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
Master in Economics	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in European Studies in Investor Relations and Financial Communication	Exchange not permitted as it is a joint degree with Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
Master in Finance	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Spring Semester
Master in Financial Technology & Computing	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Spring Semester
Master in Informatics	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in International Tourism	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Lingua, letteratura e civiltà italiana	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Management	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Management and Informatics	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Spring Semester
Master in Marketing and Transformative Economy	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Media Management	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester or Spring Semester
Master in Medicine	Please consult the legal bases of the Faculty.
Master in Philosophy	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn or Spring semester
Master in Public Management and Policy	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in Software and Data Engineering	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester
Master in History and Theory of Art and Architecture	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Autumn Semester

#### Art. 17 Exchange students in the Spring Semester

<sup>1</sup> Students whose study programme allows for exchange during the Spring Semester must carefully check the start dates of the semester at the host university.

	<p><sup>2</sup> They may choose to take the winter session exams during the extraordinary recovery session (September) if the start of the exchange semester overlaps with the winter exam session at USI.</p>
<p><b>Art. 18</b> <b>Minimum requirements for applying for the exchange period</b></p>	<p><sup>1</sup> Students in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Bachelor and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Master, regularly enrolled in a study programme at the Università della Svizzera italiana, may apply for an exchange period, provided they meet, cumulatively, the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Their average exam results are above 6.0, and the number of credits (ECTS) earned is in line with the exams outlined in their study plan. Additional minimum requirements may apply for specific destinations.</li> <li>b. They comply with the minimum language requirements of the partner university, in the language in which they intend to study and for both chosen destinations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Art. 19</b> <b>Eligibility of candidates</b></p>	<p><sup>1</sup> The applications received are evaluated to determine the eligibility of candidates for undertaking an exchange period. To this end, the following elements are assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The correct submission of the application, complete with all required documentation;</li> <li>b. The consistency of the study programme with the duration of the exchange as outlined in the application, and the appropriate integration of the exchange period into the student's academic journey;</li> <li>c. The evaluation of the weighted average grade of the credits earned;</li> <li>d. Language skills for the study language of the host institution;</li> <li>e. Compliance with the admission requirements set by the partner university, including the minimum language requirements.</li> </ul> <p><sup>2</sup> The formal review of applications is carried out by the International Relations and Study Abroad Service.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Applications deemed ineligible based on the above criteria will not be considered. The decision will be communicated to the candidate in writing.</p>
<p><b>Art. 20</b> <b>Choice of destinations</b></p>	<p><sup>1</sup> The candidate may complete only one application form per exchange semester and express up to a maximum of 2 preferred choices regarding the destination.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Different types of exchange programmes can be chosen.</p>
<p><b>Art. 21</b> <b>Selection and ranking</b></p>	<p><sup>1</sup> To ensure a fair allocation of exchange places, a ranking of the applications received is created. This ranking is determined by the sum of the numerical values assigned to each of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. points assigned to the percentage of credits obtained in relation to the maximum number of credits achievable up to the time of the ranking (see Art. 22);</li> <li>b. overall weighted average multiplied by the relative weighting (see Art. 23);</li> </ul> <p><sup>2</sup> The selection process takes place twice a year: in February and in September. Students submitting their application in September will be able to choose from the remaining available places.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> In the event of a tie, the following criteria shall apply in order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Evaluation of the language certificate where required by the destination (see Art. 24);</li> <li>b. Drawing of lots using dedicated software without the candidates being present but in the presence of an USI staff member from outside the Service;</li> </ul>

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**Art. 22**  
**Credits obtained**  
**until the time of**  
**selection**

<sup>1</sup> A score is assigned to the percentage ratio between the credits obtained and the maximum ECTS credits achievable for each study programme:

% di ECTS ottenuti	Punti (/20)
0–49.99%	0
50–59.99%	1
60–69.99%	2
70–74.99%	4
75–79.99%	6
80–83.99%	9
84–86.99%	11
87–89.99%	14
90–90.99%	17
91–93.99%	18
94–95.99%	19
96–100%	20

<sup>2</sup> Beyond 100%, 20 points will be assigned.

<sup>3</sup> Students who are exempt from examinations will still be awarded the relevant credits already acquired.

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**Art. 23**  
**Overall**  
**weighted**  
**average grade**

<sup>1</sup> A multiplier is assigned to the weighted average:

Average	Multiplier
< 6.00	Ineligible
6.00	1.000
6.01-6.29	1.010
6.30-6.59	1.020
6.60-6.99	1.030
7.00-7.29	1.050
7.30-7.59	1.060
7.60-7.99	1.070
8.00-8.19	1.090
8.20-8.29	1.100
8.30-8.39	1.200
8.40-8.49	1.300
8.50-8.59	1.500
8.60-8.69	1.600
8.70-8.79	1.700
8.80-8.89	1.800
8.90-8.99	1.900
9.00-9.19	2.000
9.20-9.29	2.010
9.30-9.39	2.020
9.40-9.49	2.030
9.50-9.59	2.050

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	9.60-9.69	2.060
	9.70-9.79	2.070
	9.80-9.89	2.080
	9.90-9.99	2.090
	10.00	3.000
<b>Art. 24 Language certificate</b>	1	Only internationally recognised language certificates and the USI internal examination are accepted.
	2	Language course attendance certificates are not accepted.
<b>Art. 25 Destination allocation</b>	1	Based on the given ranking, available places at USI partner universities are assigned, taking into account the preferences expressed by the candidate.
	2	If a candidate is not selected for their first-choice destination, they are automatically considered for their second-choice destination and will compete alongside candidates who have listed this destination as their first or second choice.
	3	All applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of the selection process.
	4	Unsuccessful applicants may choose from among the destinations with places still available within the specified time limit. Once this time limit has expired, the application will be cancelled. Places will be allocated on the basis of merit.
	5	In the event of a tie between two or more candidates, the criteria set out in Art. 21 paragraph 3 shall apply.
	6	The decision on the allocation of exchange destinations is not negotiable.
	7	The ranking list shall not be made public.
<b>Art. 26 Structured exchange programmes</b>	1	The exchange places for structured exchange programmes will be allocated giving priority to students enrolled in the study programme to which the structured exchange is dedicated.
<b>Art. 27 Summer Schools</b>	1	Students interested in attending a Summer School should note that only a limited number of credits can be earned through this type of mobility. For further details, please refer to the legal bases for mobility within each Faculty.
	2	For the Summer Schools organized by USI partner universities, where the places are deducted from the number of places for traditional mobility, priority for the assignment of these places will be given to students participating in traditional mobility programmes.
<b>Art. 28 Request for change of destination</b>	1	As a general rule, the assigned destination cannot be changed.
	2	In exceptional and well-documented situations, the International Relations and Study Abroad Service may consider a student's request for a change of destination. Any potential concessions will only be made if there is no direct impact on the ranking or on other students.
<b>Art. 32 Withdrawal from the exchange</b>	1	Students who intend to withdraw from the exchange period must promptly notify the International Relations and Study Abroad Service in writing.
	2	If time permits, the mobility place may be reassigned to a student who was not previously selected. Otherwise, the spot will remain unassigned.
	3	The ranking will not be repeated.
	4	In the event of failure to depart for the exchange destination, the student will be charged the full enrolment fee (see Art. 15 of the General Regulations for Admissions and Enrolment).



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	<sup>5</sup> In the event of early return from the mobility period, the amount of the enrolment fee will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the principle of proportionality.
	<sup>6</sup> The student is also required to reimburse the SEMP scholarship, in accordance with the terms and conditions established by the National Agency Movetia.

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<b>Art. 30 Requirements for departure to the exchange destination</b>	Please refer to the legal bases regarding the mobility of the individual Faculties.
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<b>Art. 31 Freemover programme</b>	The student interested in spending a study exchange period at a university with which USI has not concluded a bilateral agreement must organize the stay independently. The student may receive limited support from the International Relations and Study Abroad Service.
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### Chapter III – Carry out of the exchange

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<b>Art. 32 The mobility stay</b>	<sup>1</sup> A student who decides to undertake a mobility period for study purposes is an ambassador of the Università della Svizzera italiana at the partner universities. Therefore, appropriate behavior is required, as well as adherence to the rules set by the host university. <sup>2</sup> In particular, USI emphasizes the following aspects: a. Arrival and departure: the student is required to arrive on time for any orientation sessions and to depart at the end of the academic activities. b. Course attendance: The student must follow the attendance rules set by the host university. If attendance is mandatory, the student must comply with this requirement. <sup>3</sup> Virtual course attendance: attendance in virtual courses (or other non-presence formats) is not accepted, except in cases of force majeure (e.g., medical reasons, pandemic). <sup>4</sup> Participation in mobility-related events: the exchange student is encouraged to participate in any mobility-related events organized by the Service. <sup>5</sup> Volunteer work, part-time jobs, or internships: volunteer work, part-time jobs, or internships (either curricular or non-curricular) in the destination country/city during the exchange are allowed only upon written request from the student and only if they are compatible with the academic activities, which remain the primary focus for the exchange student.
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<b>Art. 33 Extension of the exchange period</b>	<sup>1</sup> See Artt. 9 and 16 to determine the study programmes that allow for mobility extension to two semesters. <sup>2</sup> Students wishing to request an extension of their exchange must follow the following procedure: a. Request written authorization from the director of their study programme; b. Communicate this intention to the International Relations and Study Abroad Service, which will verify the feasibility with the host university. Please note that the extension counts as one semester spot; if all spots are already assigned, it will be up to the host university to accept or deny the request. <sup>3</sup> Once the extension is approved, the student must follow the administrative procedure communicated by the Service.
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<b>Art. 34</b> <b>Failure to pass</b> <b>one or more</b> <b>exams at the</b> <b>host university</b>	<sup>1</sup> If the exchange student fails one or more exams at the host university, they have two possible solutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Take the exam in a make-up session, if this opportunity is offered by the partner university; or</li><li>b. Retake the exam at USI in the following semester. For this option, please consult the Study Regulations of the relevant Faculty and, in case of doubt, contact the Student Administration.</li></ul>
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#### **Chapter IV – Final principles**

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<b>Art. 35</b>	These Guidelines take effect immediately.
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