

A person with a red backpack and a hat looking at a train at a station.

# EUROPE AND NORDIC COUNTRIES

Departure Orientation  
International Exchange Services and Education Cooperation  
7.11.2023



# TOPICS OF THE SESSION

- Before exchange

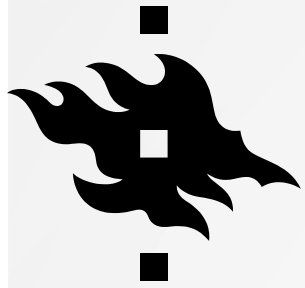
- Applying to your host university
- Online Learning Agreement
- Insurance
- Funding
- Accommodation

- Abroad

- Culture shock
- Changes to your LA
- Different way of studying
- Health and safety

## Returning home

- Important documents and credit transfer
- Making use of your exchange experience



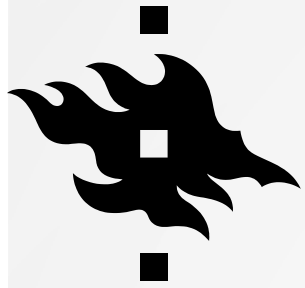
# DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

The meaning of this departure orientation is that you stop for a moment to think about your expectations for the exchange and orient yourself into the everyday life in your exchange country with other students and with the help of your tutor. You also get to know what the University of Helsinki expects from your exchange.

Schedule:

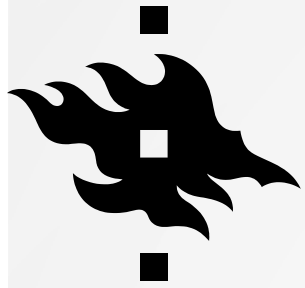
- Before the exchange
- During the exchange
- After the exchange





# FEELINGS AND EXPECTATIONS

- Do you expect to experience a change in your life during your stay abroad?
- Does change stress you out, excite you or something else?
- Expectations are necessary, they can motivate and excite you
- You may also feel anxious – it's normal

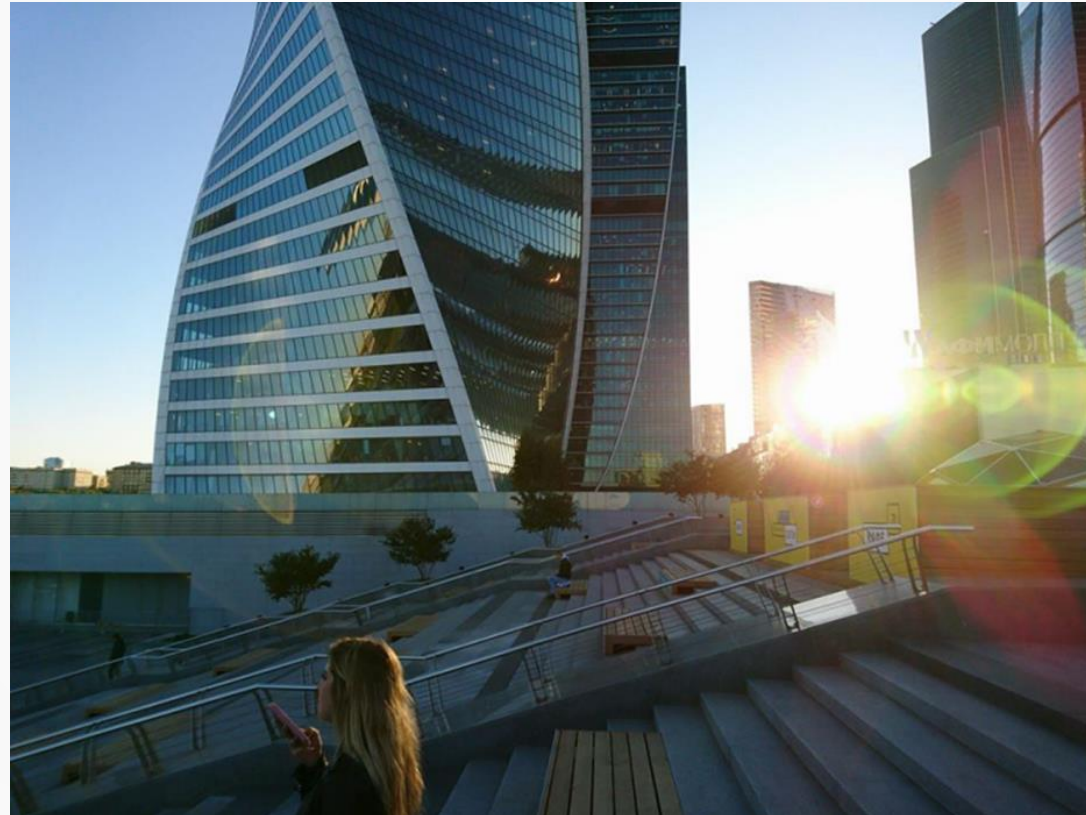


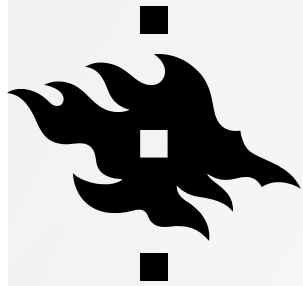
# SET LEARNING GOALS FOR THE EXCHANGE

- Goals help you track your own learning and analyze what skills you have acquired, and how your attitude towards the world around you may have changed.
- Examples of goals
  - Improving academic expertise
  - New interactions and networks with experts in your study field
  - Development of language, interaction and cooperation skills: you know how to work in a multilingual and cultural environment
  - Increased self-awareness, confidence and flexibility
  - You have developed critical thinking and problem-solving skills
  - You can follow your progress, for example, by keeping a learning diary. Be sure to start the process before leaving for the exchange and continue after returning!



# PART 1: BEFORE EXCHANGE






# INSTRUCTIONS – STUDY ABROAD

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI | FLAMMA

SUOMI SVENSKA LOG IN

 STUDIES SERVICE  
STUDIES.HEL.SINKI.FI

SEARCH

FRONTPAGE MY STUDIES INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS COURSES SISU ↗ SERVICES AND TOOLS ▾

🏠 / Instructions for students /

## STUDY ABROAD

Select degree programme

By selecting a degree programme you are able to see the general content as well as the possible degree programme-specific content. You do not have to select a degree programme to see the Open University's instructions.

Bachelor's Programme in Cultural Studies ▾

### INSTRUCTIONS

**Corona: information for outgoing exchange students** →  
The International Exchange Services has created this page for outgoing exchange students on COVID-19 virus and its influence on student exchanges.

**Do you want to study abroad?** →  
You should begin to consider your destination and timetable as early in your studies as possible.

Submit your request

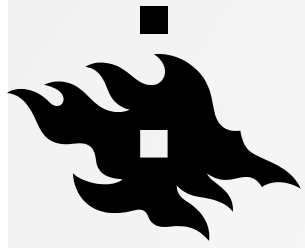
Feedback



# QUESTIONS?

FEELINGS AND EXPECTATIONS ABOUT EXCHANGE  
LEARNING GOALS FOR EXCHANGE

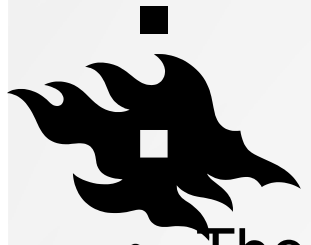




# APPLYING TO YOUR HOST UNIVERSITY

- Have you started making your application?
  - Application information has been emailed to you or can be found on the exchange university's website (be also sure to check your spam folder)
  - If you do not yet know the application deadline or instructions – find out as soon as possible
  - If you need international exchange service signatures on the application papers, make the request in good time before deadlines
  - Transcript of records: you can print it yourself from Sisu, or ask for an official one from the student services

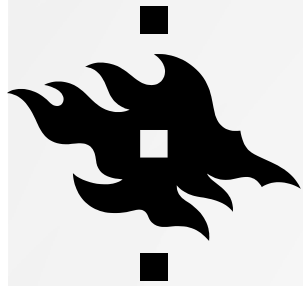




# ACCEPTANCE LETTER

- The letter of acceptance usually comes via email → Remember to check the spam folder!
- If you have applied correctly and on time, it is very likely that you will be accepted
- Sometimes approval information may be delayed if course choices are still being negotiated
- If you have not received a letter of acceptance about a month before your exchange starts, please contact the international unit of your exchange university. An exchange specialist can also contact the exchange university (studentexchange@helsinki.fi)
- Host universities usually don't give information about the progress during the application period





# MOBILITY ONLINE BEFORE EXCHANGE

## After selection, before mobility

Application allocated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17.03.2022	Anna-Maria Sillantaka	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Stay from : 01.09.2022</li><li>Stay to : 28.02.2023</li><li>Duration in months : 5</li><li>Duration in days : 178</li></ul>				
Decision about the allocated exchange placement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17.03.2022	████████████████████	<a href="#">Accept/Decline</a>
Application nominated to partner institution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12.04.2022	Maria Takalainen	
Personal data completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	14.02.2022	████████████████████	<a href="#">Complete personal data</a>
Student exchange terms and conditions read (and saved/printed as pdf)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17.03.2022	████████████████████	<a href="#">Read student exchange terms and conditions</a>
Student exchange terms and conditions accepted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17.03.2022	████████████████████	<a href="#">Accept student exchange terms and conditions</a>
Learning Agreement created and signed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	23.09.2022	████████████████████	

In order for the Learning Agreement to be signed, please click on "Final check before signing" and in the Learning Agreement preview scroll down and click on "Sign and transfer".

Learning Agreement signed by the International Exchange Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	08.08.2022	Anna-Maria Sillantaka	
Learning Agreement signed by the host institution	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Learning Agreement (before mobility) printed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	06.09.2022	████████████████████	
Questionnaire regarding Green Mobility answered	<input type="checkbox"/>			<a href="#">Click to answer</a>
Scholarship payment processed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	21.06.2022	Mari Lauri	

• Payment date : 31.08.2022

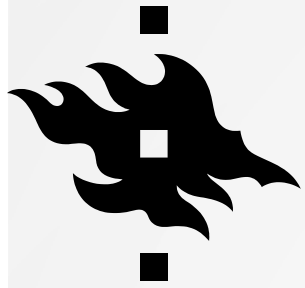


# BEFORE EXCHANGE 1/2

■  
■  
**Checklist:** [Before your exchange - instructions for those chosen for student exchange | Instructions for students \(helsinki.fi\)](#)

After receiving the letter of acceptance / e-mail from the host university, **remember to update the exchange time** (start and end date of the exchange) on Mobility Online (Erasmus +) or send the information by e-mail to studentexchange@helsinki.fi (Nordplus, SEMP or if not successful in Erasmus)

**Accept the terms of the grant at Mobility Online** no later than 2 months before the exchange. However, wait until you can specify the exchange dates first. Fill in your IBAN bank account information to receive the grant.



# BEFORE EXCHANGE 2/2

- **Student Exchange Certificate** = The exchange certificate is an official document that includes the name of your exchange program and the time of the exchange. It states that the exchange is part of the degree.
- → After updating the exchange dates and accepting the terms of the grant.  
→ Kela provides an exchange grant for the period specified in the exchange certificate.
- Erasmus students are recommended to take the OLS language test before exchange. Instructions will be emailed to you. → Possibility for an online language course



# ONLINE LEARNING AGREEMENT

## ■ Erasmus exchange

- 3 months before the exchange
- **Create and sign Learning Agreement** -link in Mobility Online
- Remember to fill in the section for University of Helsinki! For example: “*KEK-yht kandidutkinnon muut opinnot*” or “*elective studies of Master’s degree*”
- The Online Learning Agreement is a new feature in Mobility Online and error messages are possible.
- Send us a message if you want to change your OLA. We will move the Learning Agreement back to the editing step.
- You can also download a pdf version of the Learning Agreement if you need one.
- It is sufficient for the host university to sign the LA at the end of the exchange.



## ALSO REMEMBER

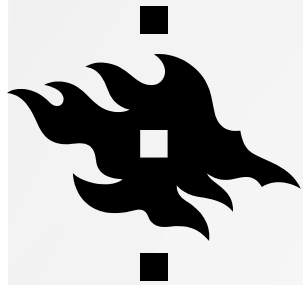
- Notification of temporary move abroad to Kela (social security) and the Digital and Population Data Services Agency
- Notification of change in study grant (Kela)
- Acquiring an apartment (varies depending on the destination country)  
Book (if necessary) temporary accommodation in advance and start looking for an apartment when you arrive.
- Register as an **attending student at the University of Helsinki** for the duration of your exchange
- Let us know if you are graduating with a bachelor's degree (Erasmus)



# INSURANCE

- Purchase a comprehensive insurance policy for the duration of your student exchange or international traineeship! The required insurance coverage depends on your destination.
- Acquire a comprehensive travel insurance already before purchasing airline tickets and other payments related to exchange costs. When you get insurance, also check the crisis coverage provided by the insurance.
- The University of Helsinki provides an accident insurance for outgoing exchange students – valid only at the university premises and on your ways to and from -> **own travel insurance necessary for free time!**
- We recommend asking for an offer from your own insurance company or from other Finnish insurance companies. You can also ask offers from International insurance companies - please find a list of international insurance companies that sell student insurance here: <https://migri.fi/en/insurance>

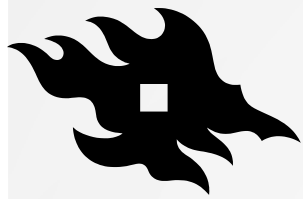




# INSURANCE

- If you are a European citizen, request a [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#) from Kela in good time
- The EHIC covers the costs of medically necessary treatment in the host country.
- The EHIC does not cover the costs of returning to Finland due to, for example, a serious illness or accident, so you should also purchase a comprehensive travel insurance policy.





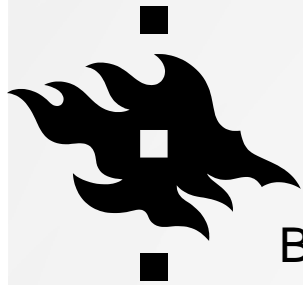
# FUNDING YOUR EXCHANGE STUDIES

- An exchange based on an agreement is tuition-free at the host university (does not exempt from tuition fee to UH).
- However, keep in mind other expenses such as: insurance, possible vaccinations, language certificates, etc.
- Read more about [funding for exchange](#)
  - Erasmus+-exchange: depending on which country you go to  
Approximately 490-540 € per month (16,33 € / 18 € per day)
  - Nordplus-exchange:  
250 € / per month + app 330 € one time travel-grant
    - The Nordplus grant is paid by the Nordplus Network. You will receive information on how to receive the Nordplus grant.
- If you are entitled to [KELA](#) student benefits, you can also receive them during your exchange abroad. Remember to inform Kela if you study abroad. See the [Kela site](#) for more information.
- You can also apply for other grants or travel grants from, for example, foundations or organisations.



# EXTRA ERASMUS+ SUPPORT POSSIBILITIES

- Green mobility travel grant in Erasmus+
  - 50 € + max 4 extra travel days
- Additional top-up grant to students with fewer opportunities
  - Extra 250 € / month to those who
    - have families,
    - are family carers,
    - have disabilities,
    - suffer from a severe or chronic health condition, or
    - have received international protection
- Special needs and Inclusion support in Erasmus+
  - Not for ongoing therapy

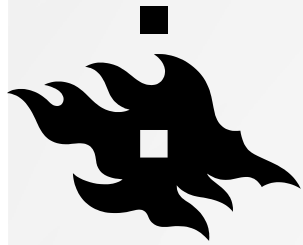


# STUDENT EXCHANGE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By accepting the Student Exchange Terms and Conditions you agree:

- To study full-time
  - You are required to complete academic studies for at least 5 ECTS credits per month
- To study within the agreed period of time
  - within the exchange period as stated in your student exchange certificate
  - Erasmus+ grant is paid per day
  - Nordplus grant is paid monthly (18 days)
  - If you shorten or cancel your exchange you will pay back a part of the grant accordingly.
    - The duration of exchange will be checked from your "Confirmation of Stay" form.
    - The exchange period includes the orientation, participation in courses and the first exams (does not include re-take exams)
  - A failure to complete the required amount of credits at your host university may lead to a claim for recovery of the grant.
    - The amount of credits will be checked from your exchange transcript
  - You will need to answer the EU Survey (Erasmus) or a student exchange feedback form in Mobility Online (other programmes than Erasmus)
  - It is recommended to take the OLS language test before your exchange (Erasmus)





# HOW DO I FIND ACCOMMODATION?

**Some universities offer help in finding an accommodation:**

- Fill in the "housing application" –form
- Follow deadlines and instructions
- Pay the deposit in time
- You may need to pay your rent in advance
- You may be asked to sign a fixed-term agreement.
- Don't sign any agreements before you receive an acceptance letter from your host university!

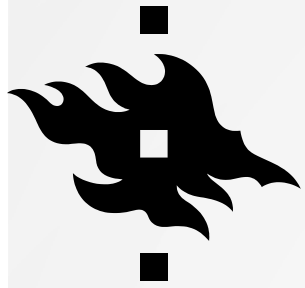
## **Make use of:**

- tips and advice from students who have already been on exchange at that university.
- different sources of information; family and friends, acquaintances, local advertisements, online platforms, Facebook groups, social media, etc.

## **Private Market:**

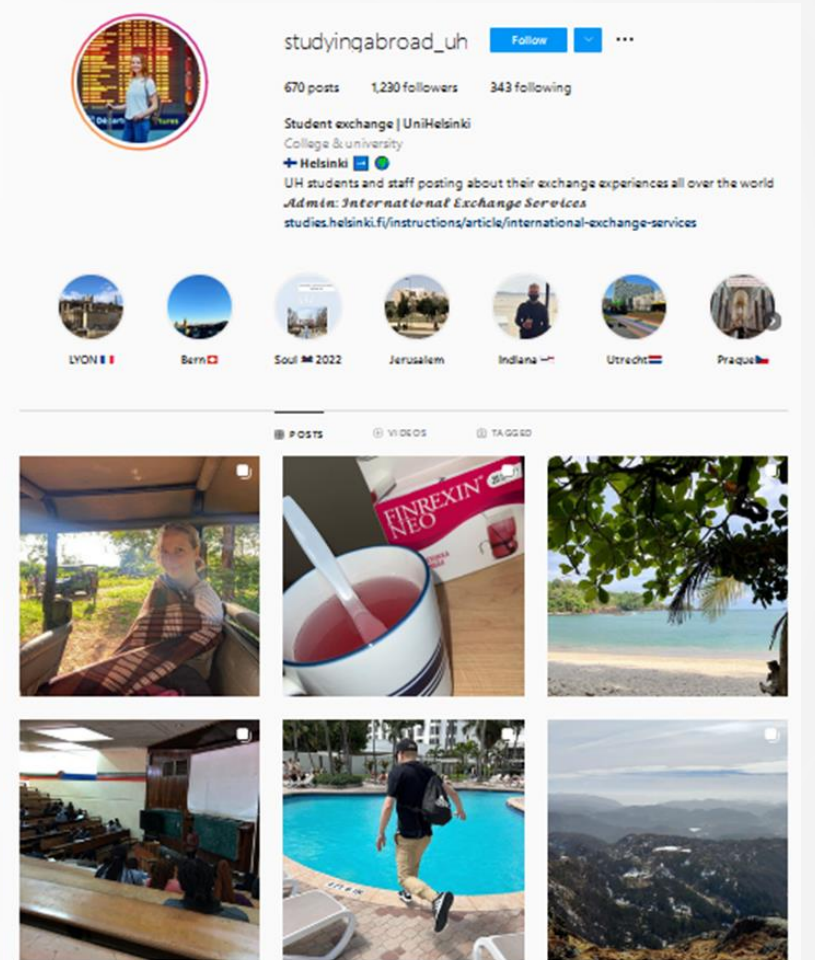
- Always ask for a written rental agreement.
- If you can, find someone local to go through the agreement with you.
- Find out what is included in the rental agreement.
- Find out your rights for terminating the agreement (when can you terminate it at the earliest and how?)
- Be aware of fraud!

It is advisable to take care of your accommodation before starting your studies so that you can focus on studying properly. If necessary, book temporary accommodation in advance.



# STUDENT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCES

You can read [blog posts and stories](#) by previous exchange students (some are in English) or read about the experiences of students who are on an exchange right now on [Instagram](#) to get inspiration.





# QUESTIONS ABOUT THESE TOPICS?

- Applying to your host university
- Before departure
- Mobility grant and funding your exchange studies
- Insurance



# PART 2: ABROAD







# ***"GEOGRAPHICAL PLACES BECOME HOMES THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS"***

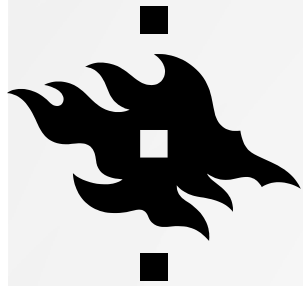




# EXPERIENCES DURING THE EXCHANGE

- 1. Honeymoon stage:** The excitement to experience everything from an outsider's perspective. A foreign culture is being viewed in a positive light, dismissing the negative parts.
- 2. Distress stage:** Small things start to annoy and the negative sides and practical problems surface. Tiredness, depression and feeling home sick is common during this stage.
- 3. Adjustment stage:** You will become better in getting through different situations and understanding differences between people. You will start to have less communication problems. Level of stress decreases.
- 4. Adaptation stage:** You are getting used to how things work and are starting to call this your new home.
- 5. Reverse culture shock:** While we often hear about culture shock when being in a new place, however, 'reverse culture shock' is also something that can occur when you return to your home after a period abroad. It can be worse than the culture shock in the beginning. Readjustment to your own culture can take time because of new experiences and possible changes in your self image.

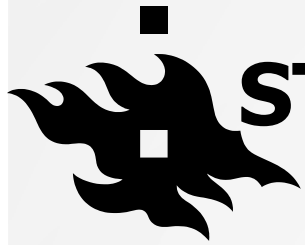
[You can read more about cultural shock on the Instruction for students pages](#)



# COMMUNICATION AND SELF-REFLECTION:

You will get to know your destination thoroughly, but what about where you come from and who you are?

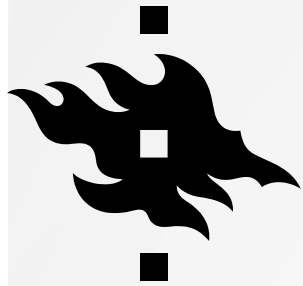
- Know your country - where are you coming from? What is your own cultural background? What types of thinking patterns do you have? What do you think of Finns?
- Know yourself – What are your hopes and dreams? What are you nervous about? How do you deal with changes? What would help when you are feeling homesick?



# STUDYING ABROAD: PART 1

- Be prepared to change your learning agreement, follow the instructions from the university closely.
- Notice that retaking exams may not be possible during your exchange.
  - If you have problems with your studies:
    - The language or difficulty of the course are not acceptable reasons to drop a class and fall behind on the 5cr/month goal.
    - Always contact your host & home university's coordinator if something unexpected happens.
    - Try to be prepared for problems and make arrangements ahead of time.
    - You can read more about [changes during the exchange](#) on the Instructions for students' pages
    - Students should complete exchange studies at their host university and only ECTS completed at the host university are counted as a part of the exchange. Some programmes at UH might require you to take courses from UH during the exchange.





# MOBILITY ONLINE DURING EXCHANGE

## During the mobility

0 / 2

Local contact phone number indicated

[Fill in local contact phone number \(optional\)](#)

(OPTIONAL) Changes to Original Learning Agreement

23.09.2022

[REDACTED]

Please fill in this step if there's been changes to your Learning agreement during the exchange. In order for the Learning Agreement to be signed, please click on "Final check before signing" and in the Learning Agreement preview scroll down and click on "Sign and transfer".

Changes to Learning Agreement accepted by the International Exchange Services

30.09.2022

Heidi Marianne Säävuori

Changes to Learning Agreement accepted by the host institution

Learning Agreement (changes) printed

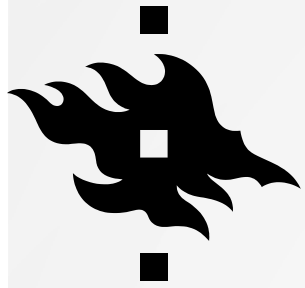
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Heidi Marianne Säävuori

[Print Learning Agreement \(changes\)](#)

Letter of Confirmation printed

[Print Letter of Confirmation](#)

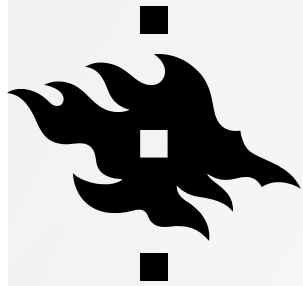


# STUDYING ABROAD PART 2

Be prepared that while studying abroad you will face different ways of learning/studying:

- In UK usually broad topics in courses, not a lot of flexibility, active participation
- Netherlands: Problem Based Learning – many group assignments
- Italy: oral exams where your peers are your audience
- Sweden: large course entities (for example 15cr)
- Spain: Siesta – morning and evening classes.
- All exams during the last two weeks of the semester or academic year (for example Ireland)





# EXCHANGE AND HEALTH

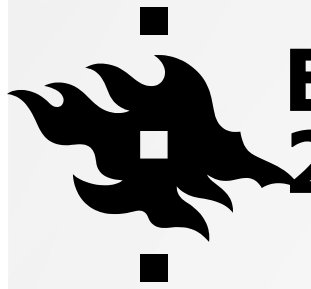
- If you use prescription medication, make sure to have an EU prescription with you, and that you have enough medication for your stay.
- If you are seeing a therapist or a psychologist on a regular basis, it is usually not best to discontinue your treatment entirely for the duration of your exchange. Contact your therapist or psychologist to discuss your treatment plan for the exchange.
- If you get sick during your exchange so that it affects your studies (also mentally)
  - visit a doctor immediately. Get a medical certificate and contact International exchange services.
- [Country-specific information about health services](#) you can find from the EU-healthcare pages



# EXCHANGE AND SAFETY 1/4

- Visit the [Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland](#) website for current travel information
- On the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' website you find information on location-specific travel bulletins.
- Make a [travel notification](#). It allows the Ministry or Embassy to get in contact with you in the case of crisis or emergency.
- Take care of your travel documents. Before you travel, check that your travel documents are in order. You can check the passport and visa regulations at the mission or consulate of the destination country.
- Get travel insurance. It is important to take it already before first travel payments.





# EXCHANGE AND SAFETY

## 2/4

Before you are familiar with your exchange city, please remember to be extra cautious.

- Take care of your things and ID -> remember insurance
- Do not carry more cash with you than you might need at the moment
- Get to know the traffic rules and laws of your exchange country. Find out how they deal with public intoxication, alcohol, drugs, etc.
- Follow the political situation. Stay away from unsafe areas.
- If you travel within your destination, make sure someone (for example another exchange student) knows where you are and when you are coming back.

Find out where is the nearest Embassy of Finland and follow them on social media.





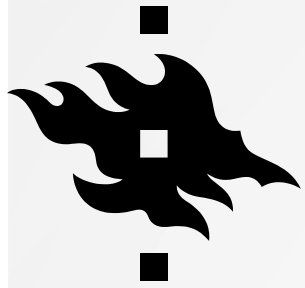
# EXCHANGE AND SAFETY 3/4



If something serious happens in your exchange destination:

- Follow the instructions of local officials and your host university.
- Contact the Finnish mission or consulate.
- Contact University of Helsinki exchange services as soon as possible. You can also ask your friend or family member to inform us: [studentexchange@helsinki.fi](mailto:studentexchange@helsinki.fi).
- International exchange services will contact you if there is a crisis in your exchange destination.
- Save your loved ones' phone number on your phone to your ICE information. A person assisting you in case of an emergency will have access to it even when your phone is locked.

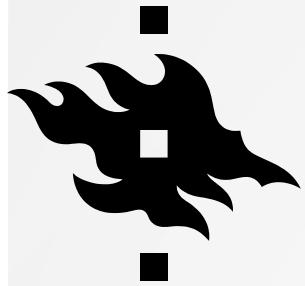
Emergency number in Europe is 112.



# EXCHANGE AND SAFETY 4/4

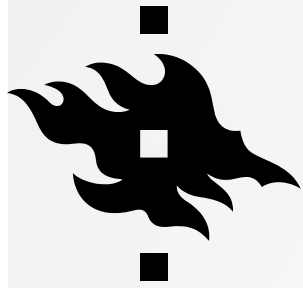
- Everyday safety: what places are safe during night-time?
- Witnessing a violent situation: what to do?
- Demonstrations on campus
- Changes in the start of the semester or breaks during your studies





# KEEP IN TOUCH DURING YOUR EXCHANGE

- During your exchange you can ask for help in exchange related questions from your host faculty and international exchange services.
- Read the newsletter we send to your helsinki.fi email.
- Follow us on Instagram: [studyingabroad\\_UH](#) and on Facebook: [Exchange studies for University of Helsinki students](#)
- Use #wearehelsinkiuni – hashtag when you post about your exchange
- Instructions for students will help you get started if you face problems during your exchange.



# SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES ON INSTAGRAM

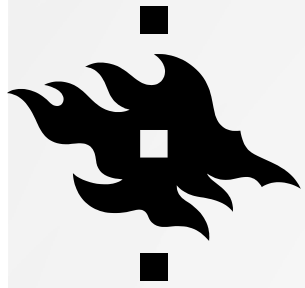
- Instagram (@studyingabroad\_uh) posts will be compensated (50e) after the exchange.
- You will receive an email about signing up for the possibility to update the Instagram account during your exchange
- You will be given your own story week and asked to post regularly during your exchange
- If you are asked to tell about UH during your exchange, there are plenty of information and images you can use available in Instructions.
- Note: after the exchange you may be contacted regarding a blog post. Compensation 50 €.





## QUESTIONS SO FAR?

- Experiences and emotions during the exchange
- Studying abroad
- Exchange and health
- Safety during the exchange



# PART 3: RETURNING HOME





# BEFORE RETURNING HOME

## Bring home from your host university:

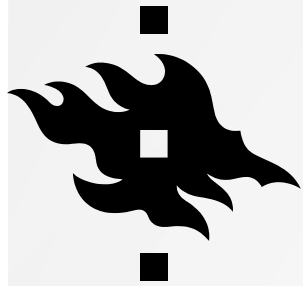
- Have your letter of confirmation (Erasmus) signed
- Make sure your Learning Agreement is signed (Erasmus)
- Your local official transcript of studies (it might also be sent later or directly to you or International exchange services)
- A copy of course descriptions and syllabus
- Information concerning your credit points and grading scale
- Copies of your written work
- Read the [returning home instructions](#).
- Give us feedback Mobility Online (Nordplus, SEMP) or with EU-Survey (Erasmus)
- All paperwork should be completed within two months after the end of your exchange





# CREDIT TRANSFER

- You are responsible for transferring your credits
- Transfer your credits in your study track/study program/faculty
- The progress of your studies will be checked from Sisu in mid-September.
- Instead of a grade you will receive a mark of approval
- Please make sure that the studies will be located in the right academic year in your transcript.
- Read the instructions on [credit transfer](#)



# MOBILITY ONLINE AFTER EXCHANGE

## After the mobility

0 / 8

Signed Learning Agreement uploaded

[Upload signed Learning Agreement](#)

If the Learning Agreement has been digitally signed by all three parties you do not need to upload a signed pdf version of the Learning Agreement.



Signed Letter of Confirmation uploaded

[Upload signed Letter of Confirmation](#)

Transcript of Records from the host university uploaded

All documents after the mobility have been uploaded

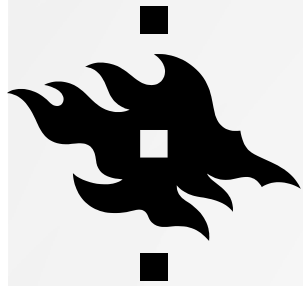
Letter of Confirmation checked

Number of completed credits at the host university

- Number of completed credits :

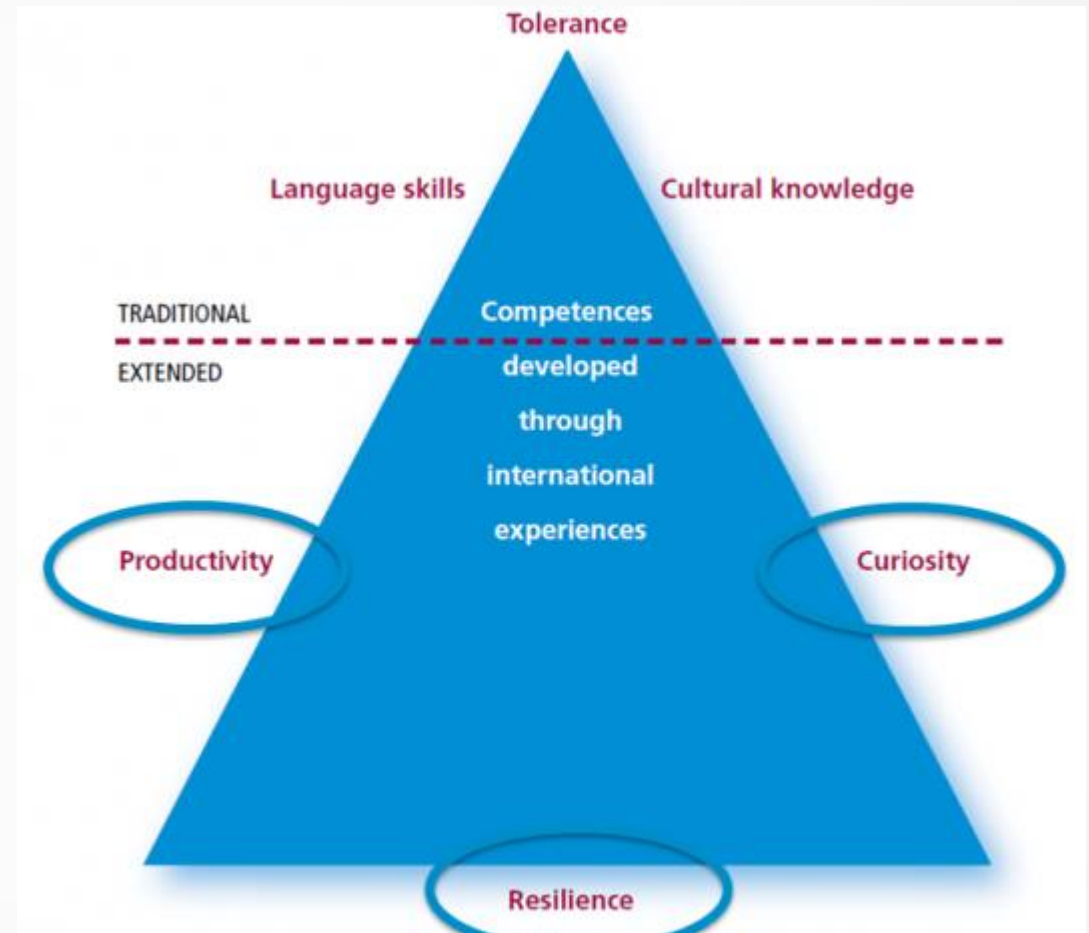
Learning Agreement checked

Student exchange is cancelled after scholarship has been processed

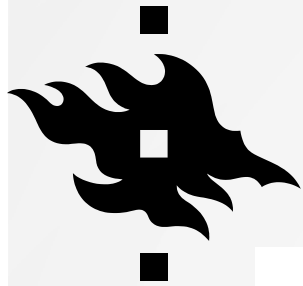


# MAKING USE OF THE EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

- Continue your international experience and become part of HYY & ESN
- Share your exchange experience, for example, by writing an exchange blog post and / or acting as a tutor
- Identify your hidden skills with the SkillMill application designed to assist students in utilizing the experience gained while studying abroad and applying it to their professional lives

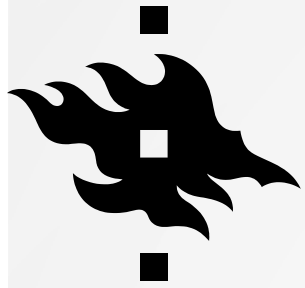


Lähde: Linkki: <https://www.oph.fi/en/development/hidden-competences>



# FEELINGS AFTER THE EXCHANGE





# QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!

International Exchange Services and  
Education Cooperation:

- E-mail:  
[studentexchange@helsinki.fi](mailto:studentexchange@helsinki.fi)
- Online individual appointments:  
[Booking Service Vihta](#)
- Tel: +358 2941 22401 (weekdays  
between 12:00-14:00)
- [Drop-in services](#) on different  
campuses

