

# Pre- departure orientation for exchange students

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Aalto-yliopisto  
Aalto-universitetet  
Aalto University

AY 2023-24



# Programme

**14.00 Exchange checklist: How to prepare for your exchange**

**Short break**

**~15.00 Health care (e.g. health certificate and vaccinations)**

**~15.15 Intercultural transition – how to become a master of intercultural communication through exchange**

**~15.45 Country groups**



# Practical matters

- **Before the exchange – part I**
  - Official matters
  - Travel documents
  - Insurances
  - Safety and crisis situations
  - Accommodation in Finland and in the destination
  - Student financial aid and scholarships
  - Taxation
- **During the exchange part II**
- **At the end of the exchange**



Let's make  
your  
exchange a  
success  
story!



**Before your exchange**

# What happens after you are selected for exchange by Aalto?

**Aalto  
application**

**Allocation of  
exchange places**

**Nomination**

**Selected  
students are  
nominated to  
the host  
university by  
Aalto**

**Host  
application**

**Application  
information is  
emailed to  
students /  
Available also  
on host  
institution's  
website**

**Selection**

**Host university  
informs  
student of  
selection**

**Departure  
preparations**

**Prepare for  
departure by  
arranging  
practical matters  
(flights, housing,  
insurance etc.)  
and paperwork to  
Aalto (study  
plans, Erasmus  
documents etc.)**



# Official matters I

Register as *attending (läsnäoleva)* student at Aalto for the duration of your exchange

Update your contact information in Sisu

- Address
- E-mail

Take your admission letter and your approved study plan/learning agreement with you to the destination.

Apply for the student financial aid from Kela!

- <https://www.kela.fi/opintotuki-ulkomaille#vaihto>

# Official matters II

Inform Digital and Population Data Services Agency (Digi-ja väestötietovirasto) about your move abroad <http://www.posti.fi/muuttoilmoitus/>

**Submit a travel notification! ([matkustusilmoitus.fi](http://matkustusilmoitus.fi))** (Finnish citizens)

Prepare an open mandate (valtakirja) e.g. for your parents, so that they contact authorities in Finland on your behalf, if needed.

Check that you have all documents required your host university & some extra passport-size photos.

Check well in advance that your passport is valid at least six months after the end of your exchange!

Scan & save important documents (copy of passport, visa, insurance certificate, admission letter etc.) e.g. in your e-mail.

# Visa / residence permit (1/2)

You cannot apply for visa/residence permit until you have received the official acceptance letter & other possible necessary documents from the host university

Usually you get good instructions about residence permits/visas from the host university, follow them carefully!



# Visa / residence permit (2/2)

## Check needed documents from the host country's embassy:

- Registering the EU citizenship in another EU country
- Visa (single entry / multiple entry, student visa)
- Residence permit

## It depends on the destination country which appendices you need for the visa application

- Admission letter
- Statement of funds: certificate of student financial aid from Kela + Aalto's scholarship letter + statement from the bank if needed
- Health certificate (the host university will let you know if this is needed)
- Passport-size photos

# Travel arrangements

**We recommend to wait for the host university's admission letter before booking flights etc. (especially ARTS)**

**Consider carefully the timing of making your travel arrangements & other payments. Make sure you have a sufficient cancellation cover in order to avoid extra costs.**

**Check if covid-19 related health documents are still required (eg.your vaccination certificate)**

**Check tips from previous exchange students' travel reports from the Destination Database.**

# Insurances I

- **Arranging the insurances is your own responsibility!**
- **In some insurance companies it is possible to combine the travel insurance with your home insurance.**
- **Ask for an insurance certificate in English from your insurance company.**
- **Some host universities have their own mandatory insurances (especially AUS, USA) – check what they cover and what you might need in addition to the university’s own insurance.**
- **If your exchange is later cancelled due to a pandemic/other crisis, Aalto will not provide financial support for travelling, living costs or for costs related to organising the moving of any property.**

# Insurances II

- **Aalto University's statutory insurance for students**  
[https://www.aalto.fi/en/support-for-studying/statutory-insurance-for-students?check\\_logged\\_in=1](https://www.aalto.fi/en/support-for-studying/statutory-insurance-for-students?check_logged_in=1)
- **The study-related accident insurance covers accidents during studies or a work placement abroad, provided that the studies or work placement is part of the curriculum of the student in the Finnish educational establishment.**
- **Students travelling abroad are recommended to take out personal travel insurance to complement the statutory insurance to cover illness during travel or trip interruption or cancellation.**
- **Aalto University's insurance does not cover accidents sustained for instance, during lectures or otherwise on the university premises, but only those sustained during practical assignments (e.g. studios, workshops, exercises in laboratories or field practice).**

# Safety and crisis situations I

- [www.formin.fi](http://www.formin.fi)
- **Travel advice:** <https://um.fi/matkustustiedotteet-a-o>
  - **Submit a travel notification! ([matkustusilmoitus.fi](https://matkustusilmoitus.fi))**  
(Finnish citizens)
- **Order the travel advice to your phone:**  
<https://um.fi/matkustustiedotteet2>
- **Webpage and contact information for the Finnish embassy/mission in the host country**
  - Most common travel scams
- **Add Emergency contact information (ICE) to your phone**
- **Check the local emergency number**
- **Respect the local laws, habits and the rules of the host university.**
- **Be aware that level of corruption in some countries**



# Safety and crisis situations II

- Aalto University in no way takes responsibility for students who find themselves in destinations where outbreaks, disasters, conflicts or other emergency situations occur. What Aalto University can do is help inform students about developments in the situation depending on the context and means of communication available
- Please read through the Aalto University [waiver for students going abroad](#) carefully! This document was part of your online exchange application
- <https://um.fi/preparation-for-a-crisis-abroad>
- By following Ministry for Foreign Affairs' and the missions' Facebook and Twitter accounts you will get information on the current affairs in the destination.



# Waiver

## WAIVER AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS GOING ABROAD

(Please read carefully)

### INSURANCES

For longer than one month visits and requiring broader insurance coverage the student understands that he/she is personally responsible for adequate travel, health, accident, disability, hospitalization and liability for third parties insurance coverage during participation in the exchange program/study visit abroad. Aalto University recommends those students travelling abroad to obtain travel, health and medical insurance, particularly in compliance with any insurance requirements of the visa/residence permit for the destination country. In addition, not replacing proper insurance, those students staying within the European Union are advised to get the European Health Insurance Card (*EHIC*). The student must make sure that he/she is entitled to obtain the card. Furthermore students are reminded to research the benefits offered by the local student card. The student is aware that if hospitalization is necessary for any reason while in a foreign country during their time abroad, Aalto University does not take any responsibility for payment of such costs.

For less than one month exchanges/study visits abroad as part of students' studies or courses Aalto has a travel insurance. The terms of the insurance are limited. Please check the details with your study coordinator

### PERSONAL CONDUCT

Any reported disruptive or illegal behaviour will be taken seriously by Aalto University during the entire period of the exchange program/study visit. Aalto University has the right to revoke a students' status as an exchange student because of violation of stated rules – either those of the host institution or of Aalto University - for any conduct that might put Aalto University in legal jeopardy.

### LEGAL AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT (IPR) ISSUES

The student acknowledges and understands that should he/she fall into legal problems with any foreign nationals or government jurisdiction, the student will attend to the matter personally with his/her own personal funds, including compensating any possible loss or damages that the student may cause to the host institution or any third parties. Aalto University cannot guarantee any assistance under any circumstances. Moreover, the student understands that as a foreign citizen in another country, he/she will be subject to the laws of that foreign country and agrees to conduct himself/herself in a manner that will comply with the regulations of the destination country and host institution.

Students may create results protected by law as part of their studies. Aalto University is not responsible for any of student's IPR right related issues abroad such as grant of rights/licenses or IPR violations unless agreed such mandate in a written form. The student is aware that all actions in courses or elsewhere requiring IPR rights from student shall be handled according to the policy of the host university or other host entity (e.g. for-

# Accommodation in Finland

If you want a rent-paying student to your apartment for the time you are on exchange, you can sublet your apartment e.g. to an incoming exchange student.

Students living in AYY and HOAS can easily sublet their rooms/apartments. All the information can be found on their webpages:

- AYY: <https://www.ayy.fi/en/changes-in-living/subletting-an-apartment>
- HOAS: <https://www.hoas.fi/en/tenants/living-in-hoas-housing/subleasing/subleasing/>

Aalto Sharetribe: <https://aalto.sharetribe.com/?category=tilat>

Make sure the person who rents your apartment has an insurance

# Accommodation in the host country

- Host university usually helps students to find housing or gives tips. However it is up to the student to find/apply for housing.
- Travel reports (Destination Database) often offer useful information for apartment hunting!
- Check the host university's webpages for information on accommodation.



# Student financial aid abroad

- If you are entitled to KELA's student financial aid, you should be eligible during your studies abroad as well.
- Criteria for full-time studying is valid for studies abroad as well!
- You must inform Kela about the exchange study period.
- Aalto scholarship for exchange studies does not affect the income limits.
- If you need a certificate of the study grant, contact Kela.
- For more information, visit Kela webpages:  
<https://www.kela.fi/financial-aid-for-students-if-you-study-abroad>

# Aalto scholarship for exchange studies

- You will receive instructions from your own school on what documents you need to return (documentation requirements vary between exchange programmes, e.g. grant agreement in Erasmus programme)
- You will return the required documents and your banking details in an online form.
- First installment of the scholarship will be paid when you have filled in the online form and returned the required documents as instructed in the email
- In general, first installment of the scholarship will be paid in August (autumn term), in January (spring term)
  - Scholarships will be paid only if the student has submitted the needed documents etc. by the deadline.
- Please check your e-mails regularly to get all the important information! Follow the instructions you receive from your school (by e-mail)!

# Erasmus+ Green Travel Support

- Erasmus+ students can get extra support for ‘green travel’. i.e. traveling to exchange destination in a more environmentally friendly way (by train, shared ride, bike or bus).
- Paid if majority of the trip, or at least the one-way is made environmentally friendly.
- More details: <https://www.aalto.fi/en/other-studies/erasmus-scholarships>
- Paid after the exchange, once the student has submitted the after exchange form with a declaration for green travel (and a receipt or similar evidence if needed) confirming the travel arrangements.

# Erasmus+ fewer opportunities top-up & inclusion grant

- **Fewer opportunities top-up grant:** for students with disabilities, social obstacles, underage children, health problems, or migrant background can be eligible to apply for an extra grant for their Erasmus+ mobility (EUR 250 /month).
- **Inclusion grant:** can be applied for if the student needs extra support due to disability, health problems etc. during the exchange e.g., accommodation arrangements, extra travels, medication, therapy. Inclusion grant application must be sent to Finnish National Agency for Education (OPH) from the student's Aalto School. OPH makes the decision on the amount of this grant per applicant.
- The student can be eligible for *both* the fewer opportunities top-up and the inclusion grant.
- The need for these extra grants is collected through *Student Exchange 2nd phase/Grant form* in exchange portal

# Other grants

- **Start applying as soon as possible. Some organisations issue grants also during the exchange, but usually not afterwards.**
- **The application can usually be supplemented by sending the admission letter afterwards (check this when you apply for the grants)**
- **Tips:**
  - Keep an open mind. It's a good idea also to apply for grants from other organisations than those related to your study field.
  - SYL grants database
  - Study-related organisations
  - AYY
  - Foundations, etc. Tekniikan edistämissäätiö.
  - Google will help you 😊

## GRANTS DATABASE

SYL maintains a database of grants and scholarships. The SYL is responsible for the information being accurate and up to date.

If you would like to publish details on the grants offered, please contact us.

Other sites with grants databases include

[Luckan](#)

[Suomen kulttuurirahasto](#)

[Säätiöpalvelu](#)

[Cimo](#)

[ScholarshipsTimes.com](#)

Offer grants

Hae tietokannasta:

No data available in table



# Taxation

- [www.vero.fi](http://www.vero.fi) -> Detailed Guidance > Guidance > Taxation of grants, scholarships, awards for merits and other awards
- Taxation of grants: you will have to pay tax for grants you received in 2023 if the total grant income you received from public and private sources in 2023 is more than €24,965.04 after the deduction of expenses.





During your  
exchange

# Promote Aalto

- Promote Aalto at host institution's international events
- **Information on Aalto & your school at**
  - <https://www.aalto.fi/en/international-students/welcome-to-aalto-university>  
(Info for incoming exchange students)
  - Ask for presentation slides from your exchange coordinator
  - Videos  
(<https://www.youtube.com/user/aaltouniversity>)
  - Virtual Campus Tour <https://virtualltour.aalto.fi/>
  - <https://materialbank.aalto.fi/>



# Problem situations

- **Don't make haste decisions to interrupt your exchange without contacting your Aalto Exchange Coordinator first**
  - Unless you are seriously ill or face other similar situations.
- **Keep in mind that your exchange scholarship depends on the duration of your exchange and the required amount of credit points must be completed.**
  - If duration & credit points gained are not according to the rules, you might have to return a part or the full scholarship.
- **If you think you might not be able to reach the requirements, contact your Aalto exchange coordinator immediately, so that we can help you to solve the situation.**



# After the exchange



# Internship abroad after exchange

If you're interested in completing an internship abroad

visit <https://www.aalto.fi/en/other-studies/international-internships> for more information

- Internship reports about internships abroad
- Information on how to find a placement
- **Intership grant available**

# All the good things come to an end...

- Prepare yourself for the end of the semester!
- Remember to check for example what is needed to close your local rental agreement, mobile connection and bank account.
- Gather all the required information from your exchange (eg. the course syllabus etc. in order to make the credit transfer at your home university as easy as possible).
- Get the required certificates and signatures well in advance before your departure.
- Erasmus exchange students should note that certain Erasmus documents (LoC, LA or OLA) must be signed by the host university.



# After the exchange (1/3)

*(Only for TECH and ARTS students,  
BIZ students information is given at own separate session)*

**Take care of the credit transfer as soon as possible.**

- You will require an electronically signed or officially stamped transcript of records from the host university
- A clarification of the course content and scope (unless the course was graded with the ECTS points which are used also in Finland)
- In addition you might also need for instance a description of the course content. The required documents might vary depending on your school at Aalto.
- Instructions here
  - Apply for credit transfer in Sisu, each course separately
  - The credit transfer will be done in your own study programme. (TECH)
  - All courses transferred into your degree will be marked as passed.
  - All completed courses will be transferred into your Aalto degree.
  - Transferred courses should not overlap too much with the courses already included in your degree.



# After the exchange (2/3)

- **Second part of the study abroad scholarship is paid after exchange**
- **For payment deliver the following documents to your Aalto exchange coordinator:**
  - Travel report
  - Official transcript of records from your host university
  - Aalto transcript of records, on which the transferred courses can be seen (**only TECH**)
  - Credit transfer has to be completed and visible in Sisu (**ARTS**)
  - Online feedback questionnaire (**BIZ and ARTS**)
- **Erasmus-students have also the following parts to be completed:**
  - 1) Letter of Confirmation
  - 2) Learning Agreement signed by the host university
  - 3) Erasmus+ participant report (EU survey)

# After the exchange (3/3)

- The aim for studies is 30 ECTS (bachelor) or 24 credits.
- If you do not reach the minimum requirement, the second part of your scholarship is not paid, or if you fall significantly below the goal you may even need to pay back a part of/ the entire scholarship.
- Scholarships are paid twice a month (middle & end of the month) (documents must be returned at least 2-3 weeks prior to the date when you would like to receive the payment).
- **BIZ:** If you will need to supplement the international study minor with Aalto courses, the Aalto courses must be first approved before the second part of your scholarship can be paid.
  - supplementing may slow down the scholarship payment process.

# Contact information

**ARTS:**     [out-exchange-arts@aalto.fi](mailto:out-exchange-arts@aalto.fi)

**BIZ:**       [outgoing-biz@aalto.fi](mailto:outgoing-biz@aalto.fi)

**CHEM:**     [international-chem@aalto.fi](mailto:international-chem@aalto.fi)

**ELEC:**     [outgoing-elec@aalto.fi](mailto:outgoing-elec@aalto.fi)

**ENG:**       [exchanges-eng@aalto.fi](mailto:exchanges-eng@aalto.fi)

**SCI:**       [exchanges-sci@aalto.fi](mailto:exchanges-sci@aalto.fi)



Enjoy your  
exchange!

