

International mobility

Rules and Procedures

(Approved by CD: 15.12.2016; revision 1 approved by CD 12.12.2024; revision 2 approved by CD 05.02.2026)

This document establishes procedures for engaging in international collaborations for student mobility at the undergraduate and graduate levels, if applicable. These procedures will apply to all Schools. Once approved by CD, these procedures should be shared with and made accessible to all relevant university constituents.

The guidelines provided in this document ensure that communication across the University is unified, that the approval process is institutionalized, and that the LAU Rules and Procedures are adapted to successfully implement LAU's international agreements.

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For Outgoing students

Undergraduate students

LAU students may choose to spend a semester abroad, preferably during their junior year, in an approved program while still enrolled at LAU.

I. Eligibility requirements

- Minimum CGPA of 2.75 (Undergraduate);
- Completed their first semester at LAU at the time of application;
- Can be in the last 30 credits but not graduating during the semester abroad
- Completed ENG102 or equivalent with a good grade;
- Should not have any academic probation and/or disciplinary warning.
- Did not benefit from an international mobility previously.

II. Fees and Financial Aid

Exchange (EXC): Students selected for an international mobility under an Exchange agreement should be enrolled as full-time students while abroad (12-15 credits) and shall pay tuition fees at LAU in compliance with the terms of the agreement governing the mobility program. Students benefitting from financial aid will preserve their financial support while abroad.

Study Abroad (SA): Students selected for an international mobility under a Study Abroad agreement will pay the host institution's fees and will be enrolled in a 0-credit course at LAU for the duration of their study abroad program to maintain an active record.

Double/Dual Degree (DD): Students selected for international mobility under a dual degree agreement will be enrolled as SA students at LAU while studying at the host university, and the relevant transfer policy will apply. Students will pay tuition at LAU while attending LAU, and they will pay tuition to the host university while at that institution. Ultimately, students will earn two degrees, one from each partner university, in compliance with the graduation requirements of each university.

Students selected for an international mobility under any other type of program shall pay their tuition fees as per the terms of the relevant governing agreement.

III. Application and Selection Procedure

Students will first complete an online application at LAU, and if selected, they must also complete the host university's application.

Students are eligible for only one outgoing mobility at the undergraduate level.

To apply for an international mobility, LAU students must:

- Consult with the International Services and Programs (ISP) Office at LAU on the programs available for their major;
- Check the list of courses offered at the host university of their choice;
- Complete a tentative mobility course form with their online application. <https://studyabroad.lau.edu.lb/images/Mobility%20Course%20Form.pdf>
- Complete the online application form and submit all the required documents to ISP within the below tentative deadlines:
 - Summer Term: January 30
 - Fall Semester: February 20
 - Spring Semester: September 15
- Required documents:
 - CV (optional)
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Sponsorship Letter
 - Health Form
- Complete application process will be available online on the ISP page. <https://studyabroad.lau.edu.lb/study-abroad-exchange/>

Selection

After the application period closes, ISP will share the received applications with each respective International Services Committee (ISC) School Representative. They will coordinate internally in their respective school to select students based on eligibility criteria, course options, academic merit, financial need, and the available spots at each partner university.

After receiving the selection decisions from the ISC School representative, ISP will notify the students, process confirmations, and proceed with nominations at the relevant offices of the partner universities.

Selected candidates will be required to submit the courses they intend to take at the host university on [EDMS](#) for the respective chairperson(s) for approval. Students will follow the instructions of the host university and start preparing for their semester abroad.

IV. Registration Process

Once selected for an international mobility, students must follow the following procedures so as to maintain their status as an active student at LAU:

- Sign a commitment letter
- Pay a deposit (\$500) to reserve their place at the host university. The deposit is non-refundable in case of last-minute cancelation. The deposit can be refunded only in the case of a visa rejection or force majeure justification (security, health, host university). The deposit is deducted from the tuition fee of the student for the subsequent semester upon their return.
- ISP will inform Registrar to register student on Banner as EXC (15 credits for exchange, zero-credit for study abroad)

- Full-time enrollment for undergraduates is defined as not less than 12 credits or more than 15 for regular semesters and not more than 9 credits for summer programs.
- Once courses at the host institution are confirmed and registered, ISP will provide the Registrar with the signed and approved course transfer form. Registrar will create the course topics on Banner accordingly.
- Exchange students will settle their tuition fees at LAU as per the regular process.
- Study abroad students will settle their fees at the Host University.
- Senior students would also be encouraged to do research work abroad

V. Credit Transfer for Students upon return from Semester Abroad

- The Course Transfer form allows students to get course equivalence or credit transfer for courses taken at partner universities.
- Before attending the host university, students should submit a completed and signed Course transfer form as per above.
- If a student is taking a course at a host university that does not have an equivalent at LAU, they can count it as an exchange elective course (EXC 380) to be approved by ISP. Students can take up to the equivalent of 6 credits only of exchange elective credits for their whole mobility.
- Discipline Specific Special Topics (1-6 credits): If a student is considering enrolling in a major course that is not offered at LAU, the relevant department may consider it as an elective required towards the major requirement. This course can be evaluated as a discipline-specific special topics major elective (add "XC" to refer to an exchange course in this context).
- *After* taking the courses, and upon returning to LAU, the student will provide the course syllabi to the ISP if need be.
- Once the official transcripts or online formal transcript arrive at ISP through the international office at host, they will be submitted along with the course transfer forms by the ISP office on EDMS for the Registrar's office final validation.
- The students' transcripts will show a comment entry explaining the nature of the mobility program (exchange or study abroad) and the name of the partner Host University and country for this particular semester.
- Students should be advised that only courses with grades equivalent to C or above in undergraduate courses may be accepted for transfer:
 - For exchange students: grades are transferred on a P/NP basis. In case the grade is not equivalent to C or above, the grade will be recorded as NP on the student record.
 - For study abroad students: grades are transferred as T. Grades below the above-mentioned passing grade will not be transferred.
 - Only courses with letter grades are transferable; courses with P/NP grading at the host university are not transferable.

**P/NP and T grades have no quality points and are not included in the CGPA calculation.*

VI. Last 30 Credit Rule

- The last 30 credit graduation rule shall be waived for both study abroad and exchange students since they will be enrolled at LAU during their semester abroad, and the semester will count for residency.

Graduate students

I. Eligibility requirements

- Minimum CGPA of 3.0;
- Completed their first semester at LAU at the time of application;
- Not graduating during the semester abroad;
- Should not have any academic probation and/or disciplinary warning.
- Did not benefit from an international mobility previously.

II. Fees and Financial Aid

- **Exchange (EXC):** Under an exchange agreement, outgoing students should be enrolled as full-time students while abroad and shall pay tuition fees at LAU in compliance with the terms of the agreement governing the mobility program. Graduate students on exchange may remotely carry their Graduate Assistantship (GA) workload while maintaining their GA tuition coverage for the semester abroad. (Approved by CD, July 25, 2024)
- **Study Abroad (SA):** Under a study abroad agreement, outgoing students will pay the host institution's fees and will be enrolled in a zero-credit course at LAU for the duration of their study abroad program.
- **Double/Dual Degree (DD):** Students selected for international mobility under a dual degree agreement will be enrolled as SA students at LAU while studying at the host university, and the relevant transfer policy will apply. Students will pay tuition at LAU while attending LAU, and they will pay tuition to the host university while at that institution. Ultimately, students will earn two degrees, one from each partner university, in compliance with the graduation requirements of each university.

III. Application and selection Procedure

Students will first complete an online application at LAU, and if selected for international mobility, they must also complete the host university's application.

Students are eligible for only one outgoing mobility at the graduate level.

To apply for a semester abroad at LAU, students must:

- Consult with ISP on the programs available for their major;
- Check the list of courses offered at the host university of their choice;

- Complete a tentative mobility course form with their online application. Course equivalencies should be signed by the respective department chairperson. <https://studyabroad.lau.edu.lb/images/Mobility%20Course%20Form.pdf>
- Complete the on-line application form and submit all the required documents to ISP within the below tentative deadlines:
 - Summer Term: January 30
 - Fall Semester: February 15
 - Spring Semester: September 15
- Required documents:
 - CV
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Sponsorship Letter
 - Health Form
- Complete application process will be available online on the ISP page.

Selection

After the application period closes, ISP will share the received applications with each respective ISC School Representative. They will coordinate internally to select students based on eligibility criteria, course options, academic merit, financial need, and the available spots at each partner university.

After receiving the selection decisions from the ISC School representative, ISP will notify the students, process confirmations, and proceed with nominations at the relevant offices of the partner universities.

Selected candidates will be required to submit the courses they intend to take at the host university on [EDMS](#) for the respective chairperson(s)/program director for approval. Students will follow the instructions of the host university and start preparing for their semester abroad.

IV. Registration Process

Once selected for an international mobility program, students must follow these procedures so as to maintain their status as an active student at LAU:

- Sign a commitment letter
- Pay deposit (\$500) to reserve their place at the host university. Deposit is non-refundable in case of last-minute cancelation. Deposit can be refunded only in the case of a visa rejection. Deposit is deducted from tuition fee of the student for the subsequent semester upon their return.
- ISP will inform Registrar to register student on Banner as EXC (6-9 credits for exchange, zero-credit for study abroad)
 - Full-time enrollment for graduate students while abroad is defined as not more than 9 credits in regular semesters and 6 credits in summer modules. Graduate

rules and regulations allow maximum transfer of 6 credits for all graduate programs. 9 credits will be allowed for LAU exchange programs only.

- Graduate students would also be encouraged to do research work abroad
- Once courses at host institution are confirmed and registered, ISP will provide Registrar with the signed and approved course transfer form. Registrar will create the course topics on Banner accordingly.
- Exchange students will settle their tuition fees at LAU as regular process.
- Study abroad students will settle their fees at Host University.

V. Credit Transfer for Students upon return from Semester Abroad

- The Course Transfer form allows students to get course equivalence or credit transfer for courses taken at partner universities.
- Before attending the host university, students should submit a completed and signed Course transfer form as per above.
- *After* taking the courses, and upon returning to LAU, the student will provide the course syllabi to the ISP if need be.
- Once the official transcripts or online formal transcript arrive at ISP through the international office at host, they will be submitted along with the course transfer forms by the ISP office on EDMS for the Registrar's office final validation.
- The students' transcripts will show a comment entry explaining the nature of the program (exchange or study abroad) and the name of the partner Host University and country for this particular semester.
- Students should be advised that only courses with grades equivalent to B or above in graduate courses may be accepted for transfer:
 - For exchange students: grades are transferred on a P/NP basis. In case the grade is not equivalent to B or above, the grade will be recorded as NP on the student record.
 - For study abroad students: grades are transferred as T. Grades below the above-mentioned passing grade will not be transferred.
 - Only courses with letter grades are transferable; courses with P/NP grading at the host university are not transferable.

**P/NP and T grades have no quality points and are not included in the CGPA calculation.*

For Incoming students

In exchange for LAU students attending partner universities, LAU will be hosting international incoming students at both graduate and undergraduate levels. International incoming students may attend LAU within the framework of an exchange, Erasmus+, study abroad, or faculty-led program.

I. Eligibility requirements

- Minimum CGPA of 2.5 for UG and 3.0 for GR;
- Completed their first semester at the host university at the time of application;
- Should not have any academic probation and/or disciplinary warning.
- The host university will confirm the equivalent level of English proficiency, which should be equivalent to at least ENG 101.

II. Fees and Financial Aid

- International/incoming Students studying at LAU through an exchange agreement should be enrolled as full-time students while at LAU and shall pay tuition fees at their home university in compliance with the terms of the agreement governing the exchange.
 - Full time load for UG students: between 12-18 credits. It is recommended to balance the load at 15 US credits. UG students are not eligible to register GR level courses
 - Full time load for GR students: cannot exceed 12 GR credits. For incoming students who need to register up to 15 credits, SINARC courses can be an option to compensate for the needed credits. GR students can register UG courses if approved by their home university.
- Incoming students on exchange are required to submit to ISP an approved learning agreement of courses signed by their home university during the week of registration.
- LAU is not responsible for the transfer of credits to home university. It is the responsibility of the incoming students to confirm the transfer of courses at home university.
- International incoming Students studying at LAU through a study abroad agreement will pay LAU tuition fees as per the terms set in the agreement.

III. Nomination process

Partner home universities will nominate to ISP the students who are selected to attend LAU based on the signed agreements as per the following schedule:

- Nominations for fall should be received no later than June 30 of each year
- Nominations for spring should be received no later than November 30 of each year
- Nominations for summer should be received no later than April of each year

IV. Application and Admission Procedure for incoming students

Nominated students to ISP will be receiving a welcome package from ISP within the next two weeks of nomination. The welcome package includes:

- LAU admission application process for exchange/study abroad
- Information about visa and residency
- Housing details
- Insurance instructions (LAU insurance is required if the student does not provide another equivalent insurance package)
- The learning agreement will be shared with the students to be completed before arrival

Once admitted, international incoming students will:

- receive their admission letter,
- be matched with an LAU Buddy,
- be provided with arrival safety and security instructions
- be required to finalize their learning agreement
- be required to submit their health forms
- be provided with a detailed Orientation program

International incoming students will be requested to provide ISP with their arrival details and addresses during their stay in Lebanon. For security reasons, they will also be required to register their names at the embassy of their home country.

V. Registration Process for incoming students

Once the incoming student's mobility is confirmed, ISP coordinates with the Registrar, HR, and Business Office to register and support this group of students.

- **Registration:** Incoming students will complete their LAU registration during Orientation week. The ISP handles the registration of incoming students manually in coordination with the relevant academic departments and the Registrar to better coordinate issues related to the academic program and pre-requisite restrictions that are specific to visiting students.
- **Insurance:** Incoming students must settle the relevant insurance fees applicable to their status. If they possess international insurance that provides coverage while they are in Lebanon, they will have the opportunity to submit proof of this insurance. Upon verification, we will waive the fees associated with our insurance program. Unsettled fees will create a hold on the student's account and prevent the issuance of an official transcript.

VI. Credit Transfer for incoming students

Upon the satisfactory completion of the semester at LAU, ISP will request the official transcripts of incoming students from the Registrar and ship/share the electronic versions with the respective home university of each international incoming student. If an official copy of their transcripts is needed, they will be advised to request those through the Portal before they return home.

Comprehensive Definitions of International Education Concepts and Programs

Outgoing student: designates an LAU student who is being sent for a limited duration to a partner institution in the framework of an Inter-Institutional Agreement according to a pre-approved study agreement, internship agreement, or research agreement.

Incoming student: designates a student being sent by their home institution to LAU for a limited duration in the framework of an Inter-Institutional Agreement and according to a pre-approved study agreement, internship agreement, or research agreement.

Home institution: designates the sending institution where a student is enrolled as a full-time student.

Host institution: designates the receiving institution that has agreed to welcome a non-degree student from a partner institution for a limited duration in the framework of an Inter-Institutional Agreement.

Free mover: designates a student being sent on study mobility for a limited duration to an institution outside the framework of an Inter-Institutional Agreement.

Study Abroad Program

A study abroad program allows students to temporarily enroll at a foreign university for a semester, year, or short-term period. Participation does not require reciprocity with the host institution. Students may pay tuition either to LAU or directly to the host university. Approved credits earned abroad transfer back toward the student's LAU degree. Study abroad programs may include faculty-led courses, internships, language immersion, and thematic academic experiences.

Exchange Program

An exchange program is a reciprocal agreement between LAU and an international partner university. Students pay tuition at LAU only and study at the host institution without additional tuition fees. Approved credits earned abroad transfer back toward the student's LAU degree. Exchanges operate on a balanced flow of incoming and outgoing students and provide full integration into academics and campus life.

Joint / Double Degrees

Joint Degree: A single diploma issued jointly by LAU and partner universities through an integrated curriculum and shared academic governance.

Double/Dual Degree: Two separate diplomas, one issued by LAU and another issued by the partner institution, requiring students to meet both sets of graduation requirements. Both models enhance global employability and strengthen academic collaboration.

Short-Term Immersion or Experiential Learning Programs

Short-term immersion programs (1–6 weeks) include language courses, fieldwork, cultural immersion, internships, service learning, or faculty-led modules. They offer high-impact international learning with minimal disruption to student progression.

Erasmus+ is the European Union’s flagship program that supports education, training, youth, and sport. It funds student and staff mobility, joint Master’s programs, capacity-building projects, international partnerships, virtual exchange, and institutional cooperation.

Key components relevant to LAU include:

- **International Credit Mobility (ICM)** – outgoing and incoming mobilities for students, faculty, and staff
- **Jean Monnet Actions** – EU studies, modules, and research
- **Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE)** – institutional strengthening projects
- **Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters (EMJM)** – high-level integrated Master’s degrees

Erasmus+ is central to global academic cooperation and supports institutions in enhancing quality, innovation, and international partnerships.

Faculty-Led Programs are short-term academic experiences abroad designed, led, and supervised by LAU faculty members. These programs typically range from one to six weeks and include structured coursework, field visits, cultural activities, and experiential learning directly tied to a credit-bearing LAU course. Students remain enrolled at LAU, pay LAU tuition for the course, and travel as part of a cohort guided by the faculty member. Faculty-led programs provide high-impact, immersive learning opportunities—especially for students who are unable to participate in semester-long mobility—and strengthen global exposure, academic engagement, and disciplinary learning through hands-on international experience.

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

ECTS is a standardized credit system used across Europe to facilitate transparency, student mobility, and credit recognition. One academic year typically equals 60 ECTS credits, with one ECTS representing 25–30 hours of total student workload (including lectures, labs, assignments, and independent study). ECTS ensures comparability of academic programs across countries and institutions, enabling smooth credit transfer for exchange and mobility students.

Credit conversion Formula (LAU credit / ECTS)

- 4 ECTS = 3 LAU credits
- 4.5 ECTS = 3 LAU credits
- 5 ECTS= 3 LAU Credits
- 5 ECTS is not transferred as 4 US credits
- 6 ECTS= 3 LAU credits
- 10 ECTS= 6 LAU credits (2 courses)

The Bologna Process is a European higher education reform initiative that harmonizes degree structures, quality assurance, and credit systems across 49 participating countries. Its goals are to create the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), enhance comparability of degrees, promote student and staff mobility, ensure quality standards, and adopt tools such as ECTS, the Diploma Supplement, and a three-cycle degree structure (Bachelor–Master–Doctorate). The Bologna Process underpins most mobility, joint degree, and recognition frameworks across Europe.

Credit Recognition

Credit Recognition is the formal process by which an institution evaluates and accepts academic credits earned at another institution—whether abroad or domestically—as equivalent to its own degree requirements. Credit recognition ensures that courses taken during exchange, study abroad, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) COIL-linked mobility, or transfer programs count toward a student’s graduation. Under the Bologna Process, credit recognition must be transparent, fair, timely, and based on learning outcomes, often facilitated by tools such as ECTS, Learning Agreements, and the Diploma Supplement. Robust credit recognition practices reduce academic barriers, support student mobility, and ensure that students do not face delays in degree completion.

Presumed Transferability refers to the practice of pre-approving or “assuming” that academic credits earned abroad will transfer back to the home institution as long as the courses fall within agreed academic parameters. Under this approach, courses taken at a partner university are considered *automatically eligible* for credit transfer—unless they clearly fall outside the student’s degree requirements or academic standards.

This model reduces administrative barriers, encourages student mobility, speeds up academic advising, and aligns with best practices in international education, particularly within the Erasmus+ and Bologna frameworks, where credit recognition is expected to be fair, transparent, and efficient. Presumed transferability shifts the burden from students to institutions and fosters a more supportive, mobility-friendly environment.

Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe is the EU’s largest research and innovation program, funding collaborative research across countries in areas such as health, climate, digital transformation, social

sciences, and global challenges.

Key features:

- Supports international research consortia involving universities, industry, and NGOs
- Promotes open science, innovation, and global impact
- Includes the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) for researcher mobility and training
- Encourages partnerships between European and non-European institutions

For LAU, Horizon Europe offers opportunities to participate in large research networks, secure funding for collaborative projects, and strengthen global research capacity.

Internationalization at Home (IaH)

Internationalization at Home promotes global and intercultural learning on campus without requiring study abroad. This includes internationalized curricula, multicultural classes, engagement with international students on campus, virtual exchange, and globally oriented co-curricular activities. IaH ensures equitable access to international education for all students.

Virtual Exchange

Virtual Exchange uses digital platforms to connect students across countries for collaborative projects, discussions, and coursework. It builds global competencies without physical travel and may be integrated into academic courses (e.g., COIL) or offered as standalone programs.

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

COIL is a pedagogical model that connects students and faculty from two or more institutions in different countries through shared online coursework and collaborative projects. It is typically embedded within an existing course at each institution, where faculty jointly design learning activities that promote intercultural dialogue, teamwork, and comparative academic perspectives. Students work together virtually—through discussions, group assignments, or problem-solving tasks—developing both subject knowledge and global competencies. COIL is considered a form of virtual mobility and a core pillar of Internationalization at Home, offering global learning opportunities without requiring physical travel.

Appendix B: ECTS equivalency table (CD approval: November 9, 2017)

Credit conversion Formula (LAU credit / ECTS):

4 ECTS =3 LAU credits

4.5 ECTS =3 LAU credits

5 ECTS= 3 LAU Credits

5 ECTS is not transferred as 4 US credits

6 ECTS= 3 LAU credits

10 ECTS= 6 LAU credits (2 courses)

Appendix C: Previously approved courses database (in progress)

This appendix provides the official link to the LAU–partner universities course matching tool:
[HERE](#)

Appendix D: Transfer grading matching table (in progress)

This appendix provides the official link to the LAU–partner universities passing grades reference table: [HERE](#)