

## The Study Abroad Programme – Exchange Semester at an FH SWF Partner University

Fully enrolled students (Bachelor, Master, Doctoral level) at FH SWF may spend one or two consecutive exchange semesters at a cooperating host university abroad within the framework of the Study Abroad Programme. They are exempt from paying tuition fees at the host institution. Support with the application for an exchange place and with the application for a suitable scholarship programme is provided by the Outgoing Team in the International Office.

An overview of cooperating partner universities and the available study places for each subject area and study cycle can be accessed at any time via the search portal of [Mobility Online search portal](#), the online application platform for stays abroad. A research and application guide, which supports students identifying a suitable host university, is provided as part of the [call for applications](#).

All students interested in the Study Abroad Programme are strongly advised to attend the information sessions that prepare applicants for the application process. The dates and access details for the online information sessions are published on the FH SWF website under [Information Events](#). For further questions, individual consultation appointments can be arranged with the International Office.

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Conditions of Participation</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Student Status	3
1.2 Academic Progress for Students with a Compulsory Year Abroad	3
1.3 Semester of Study	3
1.4 Language Proficiency	3
1.5 Attendance of Information Sessions	3
1.6 University Ambassador Role	3
1.7 Experience Report	3
1.8 Withdrawal from the Exchange Programme	4
<b>2. Research and Information Gathering</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Study Programmes at Partner Universities	4
<b>3. Scholarship Programmes and Financial Support</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Erasmus+ for Exchange Semesters in a Programme Country	5
3.2 Erasmus+ for Exchange Semesters at Participating Partner Universities in Canada, Mexico, Switzerland or Thailand	5
3.3 PROMOS for Exchange Semesters outside the Erasmus+ Programme	5
3.4 Additional Funding and Support Opportunities	5
<b>4. Application Procedure</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 Application Deadlines	6
4.2 Application Procedure and Required Documents	6
4.3 The Application Form	6
4.4 Completing the Application	7
4.4.1 Documents to Upload	7
<b>5. Selection Procedure</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1 Selection Criteria	8
5.2 Selection Outcome	8
5.2.1 Offer of a place	8
5.2.2 Rejection	8
<b>6. Steps Following the Allocation of a Place</b>	<b>9</b>
6.1. Nomination and Registration	9
6.2 Participation in a Scholarship Programme	9
6.3 Obligations before, during and after the Stay Abroad	9
6.4 Withdrawal from the Exchange Place	10
<b>7. Any questions?</b>	<b>10</b>

## 1. Conditions of Participation

**1.1 Student Status:** Only students who are enrolled as main students at Fachhochschule Südwestfalen during the application phase, and who will remain enrolled throughout their stay abroad, are eligible to apply for and participate in the programme.

**1.2 Academic Progress for Students with a Compulsory Year Abroad:** If a period of study abroad is a compulsory component of the degree programme, applicants must **independently** and **in good time** check the participation requirements set out in the currently valid subject-specific examination regulations that must be fulfilled before commencing their period of study abroad. If applicants are unsure whether they will meet all requirements before departure, they must contact the relevant Student Services Office and their departmental contact persons. If it becomes foreseeable that the requirements cannot be met shortly before departure, the International Office must be informed as soon as possible.

**1.3 Semester of Study:** Applications may be submitted once the first Bachelor's semester has been completed. In exceptional cases, applications from students who have not yet completed their first semester may be accepted for selected partner universities.

**1.4 Language Proficiency:** Applicants must possess sufficient knowledge (generally level B2) of the language of instruction and examination at the partner university by the start of their study period abroad. If their language skills do not yet meet the required level during application phase, applicants must credibly demonstrate that they will reach the required level in time for the stay abroad.

**1.5 Attendance of Information Sessions:** Applicants commit to attending an (online) information session in preparation of their stay abroad, where important organisational matters will be discussed and any uncertainties clarified.

**1.6 University Ambassador Role:** Participants in the Study Abroad Programme commit in taking part in international fairs and similar events at the host institution and to appropriately representing Fachhochschule Südwestfalen and their degree programme to prospective exchange students. Prior to their mobility, students will receive relevant informational material (information cards, brochures, presentations, etc.).

**1.7 Experience Report:** Participants commit to writing an experience report after completing their stay abroad. The report serves internal evaluation purposes and is also published in anonymised form on the university's website for students interested in the Study Abroad Programme and potential host universities.

Participants may object to publication; however, the obligation to submit the report applies to all participants.

**1.8 Withdrawal from the Exchange Programme:** Students who have successfully applied for an exchange place within the Study Abroad Programme and who either do not accept the place offered to them or withdraw from it without valid reason will be excluded from participating in the Study Abroad Programme for the remainder of their study cycle. Further information can be found under “6.4 Withdrawal from an Exchange Place”.

## 2. Research and Information Gathering

Applicants must obtain **comprehensive information in time** about the Study Abroad Programme, the application requirements and procedure at the regular information events held on campus and online, as well as on the website of the International Office.

If applicants have individual questions about the Study Abroad Programme that cannot be answered during the information events, they should contact the Outgoing Team in the International Office (contact details and dates for open consultation hours can be found on the website).

For questions regarding individual study progression and examination planning, applicants should seek academic advising from the programme coordinators in their faculty in good time.

General and preparatory information on studying abroad can be found on the websites of [studieren-weltweit.de](https://studieren-weltweit.de) and [daad.de/en/study-research-teach-abroad/](https://daad.de/en/study-research-teach-abroad/)

### 2.1 Study Programmes at Partner Universities

- Applicants researching partner universities should pay particular attention to the **semester dates** there – which may differ significantly from FH SWF – and to the (English-language) **module offerings**. In cases of uncertainty regarding the possible recognition of modules, the responsible staff members in the faculties should be contacted.
- An overview of the cooperating partner universities and the available study places for each study area and phase can be assessed at any time in the search portal [Mobility Online](#), the FH SWF online application portal for study abroad stays. The search portal provides further information on the content of each cooperation and the relevant participation requirements.
- Responsibility for recognising academic achievements completed abroad lies with the Faculty Examination Board. The basis for recognition of the respective valid subject examination regulations, the [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System \(ECTS\)](#) and the [Lisbon Convention](#).

## 3. Scholarship Programmes and Financial Support

FH SWF supports its students in undertaking a study-related stay abroad by offering various scholarship programmes or cooperating with relevant organisations. Depending on the partner university or host country, the following scholarship programmes are available:

### 3.1 Erasmus+ for Exchange Semesters in a Programme Country

Students who have successfully applied for a study place at a partner university in one of the following Erasmus+ programme countries automatically receive an Erasmus+ scholarship for their stay:

#### Member States of the European Union (EU)

Austria -- Belgium -- Bulgaria -- Croatia -- Cyprus -- Czech Republic -- Denmark -- Estonia -- Finland -- France -- *Germany* -- Greece -- Hungary -- Ireland -- Italy -- Latvia -- Lithuania -- Luxembourg -- Malta -- Netherlands -- Poland -- Portugal -- Romania -- Sweden -- Slovakia -- Slovenia -- Spain

#### Associated Programme Countries outside the EU

Iceland -- Liechtenstein -- North Macedonia -- Norway -- Serbia -- Türkiye

### 3.2 Erasmus+ for Exchange Semesters at Participating Partner Universities in Canada, Mexico, Switzerland or Thailand

Students who have successfully applied for a study place at a partner university in the Erasmus+ partner countries Canada, Mexico, Switzerland or Thailand automatically receive Erasmus+ funding for their stay.

Detailed information on the Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme and on funding for exchange semesters in programme and partner countries can be found in the document „[Info-Sheet\\_Scholarship Programmes\\_26.27](#)“ as well as on the [website](#) of the International Office der FH SWF.

### 3.3 PROMOS for Exchange Semesters outside the Erasmus+ Programme

Students who spend one or two semesters abroad at a host university outside the Erasmus+ programme (see above) can apply for a PROMOS scholarship.

Comprehensive information on the PROMOS programme, the application process and conditions, as well as the funding rates per destination country, can be found on the [website](#) of FH SWF International Office in the drop-down menu for scholarship programmes (select PROMOS). Sie auf der des International Office der FH SWF im DropDown-Menü bei PROMOS.

### 3.4 Additional Funding and Support Opportunities

Furthermore, students have the opportunity to obtain further financial support for their study-related stay abroad:

**Auslands-BAföG:** Students can apply for Auslands-BAföG for an exchange semester abroad. All necessary information regarding requirements, conditions and application procedures can be found on the website of [Deutsches Studierendenwerk](#).

**Individual scholarship programmes:** Students spending an exchange semester at a partner university may also be eligible to apply for additional scholarships. A useful overview of various scholarship programmes can be found, for example, in the [scholarship database by DAAD](#).

## 4. Application Procedure

The application procedure for an exchange place at a partner university of FH SWF takes place exclusively **online** and within the specified application deadlines. It is conducted in two rounds.

Applications that are not submitted on time and in full will not be considered in the future application process. Applicants are themselves responsible for accuracy and completeness of their application documents!

### 4.1 Application Deadlines

**Application round 1 (2026/2027)** – for stays during the entire academic year 2026/2027, the winter semester 2026/2027, or the summer semester 2027: Applications must be submitted from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025 **until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026**.

**Application round 2 (2026/2027)** – for any remaining places in the summer semester 2027: Applications must be submitted from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026 **until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026**.

### 4.2 Application Procedure and Required Documents

The application procedure for an exchange place at a partner university as part of the Study Abroad Programme consists of several steps carried out via the [Mobility Online portal](#).

Only applications for which all steps have been completed fully and within the deadline, can be considered.

Applicants may submit one application per round for up to three partner universities.

**Exception:** If you are applying for winter and summer semesters at two different universities, you must submit one application per semester in [Mobility Online](#). It is sufficient to create one complete application set (CV, Transcript of Records, motivation letter, language certificate) and upload the same documents to both applications.

### 4.3 The Application Form

During the application periods (see above), applicants open the application form and first enter their **personal details** and information about their degree programme.

In the next step, they can select their **preferred university or universities** – in total, applications can be submitted to up to three partner universities at the same time. Applicants enrolled in a degree programme with compulsory exchange semester(s) must specify a first, second and third choice. Students planning a voluntary study abroad semester may select up to three partner universities but must indicate at least one as their first choice.

Information on how to conduct research can be found in the “Research and Application Guide”.

**Important:** The prioritisation of preferred universities should be chosen carefully!

In **application round 1**, applicants must **make a binding decision** on the semester in which they wish to complete their stay abroad:

- Winter semester 2026/2027
- Winter semester 2026/2027 **and** summer semester 2027 (full academic year abroad)
- Summer semester 2027
- Winter semester 2026/2027 **or** summer semester 2027 (no preference)

In **application round 2**, applications can only be submitted for any remaining exchange places in the summer semester of the following academic year.

After confirming agreement to data processing, data protection regulations and the publication of their experience report, the application form can be submitted.

#### 4.4 Completing the Application

After submitting the application form, applicants receive a registration confirmation by email containing a personal link to the [Mobility Online](#) portal.

Applicants then log in to Mobility Online using their personal login details and continue to work on their application by completing their personal data and uploading the required documents.

##### 4.4.1 Documents to Upload

- Curriculum vitae (CV)
- Current, **complete** Transcript of Records (including failed attempts)
- Proof of language proficiency in the language of instruction at the host university (DAAD language certificate)\*<sup>1</sup>
- Motivation letter (approx. 700-800 words)\*<sup>2</sup>

**Language proficiency** \*<sup>1</sup>: If applicants cannot provide proof of the required language proficiency during the application phase, they must upload a document showing that they are currently attending a language course and will complete the required test before the exchange semester begins.

Language certificates must not be older than two years (e.g., TOEFL test, higher education entrance qualification).

**Motivation letter** \*<sup>2</sup>: The motivation letter, written in English or German, should be addressed as follows: Auswahlkommission im International Office der FH SWF. In the motivation letter, applicants should explain their reasons for applying to the Study Abroad Programme. They should refer specifically to the module offering at their preferred university and demonstrate how the courses offered there fit with their individual study plan.

**Important:** After the application deadline has passed, the International Office will not accept any application documents. Applicants are solely responsible for the accuracy and completeness of their documents.

## 5. Selection Procedure

Once the deadline has passed, the application portal is closed and all applications submitted on time are checked for completeness.

Applicants who have not submitted all required documents within the deadline are excluded from the further selection process and will be informed accordingly.

### 5.1 Selection Criteria

All complete application documents are reviewed and assessed by a selection committee before suitable applicants are allocated to the available exchange places.

**The following criteria play a role in the selection process:**

- A **well-founded and academically coherent study plan** for the host university is essential. Applicants are expected to research the host university's curriculum and academic focus in depth and present this in their motivation letter.
- Adequate **proficiency in the language of instruction** at the host university is essential for academic success and therefore crucial for the selection process; knowledge of the host country's or region's local language is also an advantage.
- **Good academic performance**, evidenced by a current transcript of records.
- **Voluntary work** either within or outside FH SWF is not a requirement, but it has a positive influence on the application and should therefore be mentioned.

### 5.2 Selection Outcome

Once the review of application documents has been completed, applicants are informed of the selection committee's decision by email from the International Office. For organisational reasons, these emails may be sent at different times.

**5.2.1 Offer of a place:** Students receive maximum one offer, corresponding to their highest possible priority (ideally their first choice). Applicants who receive an offer for an exchange place have one week to accept or decline it.

**Important:** If applicants do not accept the place offered within the specified period, **they will be excluded from reapplying for participation in the Study Abroad Programme** during their current stage of studies (Bachelor's, Master's or doctoral studies).

**5.2.2 Rejection:** If the selection committee does not select an applicant for an exchange place or if the desired place(s) have already been allocated, the applicant will also be informed by the International Office. They may apply again in the following application round.



## 6. Steps Following the Allocation of a Place

By accepting the exchange place at the partner university, successful applicants become outgoing students and must take several preparatory steps before their semester abroad:

### 6.1. Nomination and Registration

After the applicant has accepted the offered place, the International Office of FH SWF nominates the student to the partner university within the relevant deadline.

Students will then usually be required to complete the **partner university's own application forms** (application, accommodation forms, etc.) and submit additional documents. The necessary information will be provided in good time by the International Office or by the partner university.

### 6.2 Participation in a Scholarship Programme

After accepting the exchange place, students are informed about the scholarship programmes available for their host institution.

Students who receive Erasmus+ funding for their stay abroad must attend a **compulsory** preparatory (online) information session and will be informed about the application process and required documentation. Dates for these sessions will be announced in good time.

Students applying for an individual scholarship or a PROMOS scholarship are responsible for ensuring that their application documents are submitted on time and in full.

### 6.3 Obligations before, during and after the Stay Abroad

As participants in the Study Abroad Programme, students are required to complete and submit **certain documents** to the International Office before, during and after their stay abroad:

#### Before the stay abroad

- Learning Agreement
- If applicable: Grant Agreement <sup>\*3</sup>

#### During the stay abroad

- Changes to the Learning Agreement
- Confirmation of Arrival

#### After the stay abroad

- Confirmation of Stay
- Transcript of Records
- If applicable: EU Survey (automatically requested by the EU via email) <sup>\*3</sup>
- Enrolment Certificate from FH SWF <sup>\*4</sup>
- Experience Report

\*3 **Grant Agreement & EU Survey:** Required for Erasmus+ scholarship holders.

\*4 **Enrolment Certificate from FH SWF:** The certificate must cover the period during which the student completed their semester abroad.

The International Office informs participants by email or Mobility Online about the required documents and corresponding deadlines.

## 6.4 Withdrawal from the Exchange Place

If students wish to withdraw from their exchange place, they must take note of the following:

- If students withdraw after accepting their exchange place without a valid reason and without providing appropriate evidence (e.g., a medical certificate in the event of illness), they will be excluded from participating in the Study Abroad Programme for the remainder of their current study phase.
- If students are considering withdrawing, they should contact the International Office as early as possible. This allows the International Office to assess the situation, discuss it with the student, and potentially find a solution to avoid withdrawal.

## 7. Any questions?

For further questions about undertaking an exchange semester at a partner university within the Study Abroad Programme, please contact the Outgoing Team in the International Office: [mobility@fh-swf.de](mailto:mobility@fh-swf.de)