

# Frequently Asked Questions (TUMexchange)

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## Questions

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## Answers

### What are the application prerequisites for the TUMexchange program?

In order to be able to apply for TUMexchange at least four semesters of your bachelor studies have to be completed. Therefore, you can go abroad with TUMexchange no earlier than during your fifth semester of the bachelor studies. Moreover, applicants have to have a firm knowledge of the language of instruction in the host country and good to excellent grades.

The application is possible for under – and postgraduate students, who have a firm knowledge of the course language, as well as “good” to “very good” grades.

Please visit the [TUMexchange website](#) under “prerequisites” for detailed information.

### My grade point average is not very good (3.2). Is it still worth applying?

The TUMexchange program is not subject to restricted admission. However, for countries with a very high number of applicants, such as North America and Australia, it is advisable to have an above average grade point average. An overview of the number of applicants per country for last year’s program is available at the [TUMexchange website](#).

### What deadlines do I need to consider?

Applications for the TUMexchange program are accepted once a year at the start of the winter semester. Detailed and up-to-date information is available before the start of the semester at the [TUMexchange website](#) .

### Is it possible to submit documents after the deadline?

You must comply with the deadlines because you cannot submit documents afterwards.

### Can I apply to more than one university/country?

You can apply to up to two international universities (outside of Europe). The universities can be in the same or in different countries.

The one you mark as your first choice, is going to be interpreted as your preference at the selection.

### Where can I find out which universities offer my academic subject area?

Not every partner university offers the same subject areas offered at TUM. And not every program

at the partner university is open for TUMexchange students. Information on the degree programs offered at partner universities is available at the [Online Databank](#). We recommend that you also visit the website of the partner university. Be aware that the schools and departments of the partner university are not perfectly analogous to TUM's. The learning objectives of courses offered at the partner university may be markedly different from those in your curriculum at TUM. In other words, the exchange may be open to your discipline, but not offer courses relevant for your studies.

#### How many letters of recommendation do I need?

You do not need letters of recommendation for your application to the TUMexchange at the International Center. After your successful application at TUM, however, in many cases, you need one, sometimes two, letters of recommendation for your application to the partner university. Your application to the partner university should be in English (or the language spoken in the respective country) and be in the form of an essay. Once you have been nominated by the TUM International Center, you should immediately request your letters of recommendation straightaway.

#### Why are there only a limited number of students selected to study in North America and Australia?

Universities in North America and Australia are commercial enterprises financed through the collection of student tuition, which generally runs between 10,000 and 20,000 USD per semester.

For this reason, these universities cannot simply accept exchange students without charging tuition. Instead, a student from a North American partner university, who continues to pay tuition at his or her home university, must come to TUM in order to enable the exchange then, for a TUM student going abroad free of tuition. Because more German students speak English than North American students speak German, the number of spaces in these exchange programs is limited.

#### Can I write my bachelor's or master's thesis at a partner university through the TUMexchange program?

The TUMexchange program is designed primarily for students attending courses at one of our partner universities. Any student wanting to work on a bachelor's or master's thesis during a stay abroad must independently organize a supervisor at both TUM and the partner university.

It is, generally, not advisable to conduct research abroad as part of an exchange program.

In such cases, it is better to apply to the desired university as a so-called "Freemover."

Information about financial support for self-organized stays of research is available on the [scholarships](#) pages of the [TUM International Center website](#). At most North American universities, students from abroad attending the university to complete a thesis are exempted from tuition payment or are subject to reduced charges, such as Visiting Research Student Fees.

For research stays in the USA, your supervising professor must be able to issue a DS-2019 immigration document that you are to submit to the consulate in Germany to obtain a J-1 visa.

#### Is it possible to combine TUMexchange and Erasmus?

No, at least it is not possible during the same year. Afterwards though, you can apply for another program.

Do I have to prove TOEFL and all required language levels at the application for TUMintern already?

When you apply for a stay abroad at TUM, official proof of your language level is not yet required. However, you must present it at your second application at your partner university. Since this application is only a few weeks after the application at TUM itself, it is advisable to already have the required language certificate prior to when it is actually required.

Do I have to get a language certificate even if it is my native language?

Even if it is your native language, you must have proof of your level, since it is not guaranteed that someone with a particular nationality can speak the official languages.

Which language skills do I need?

When applying for the TUMexchange program, you must submit verification of language skills for the language of instruction at your chosen university, which is not necessarily the same language spoken in the country. The language of instruction for exchange students at our partner universities in Japan, for example, is English.

Though we recommend language skills in Japanese, they are not required for a successful application. There is no minimum requirement at the time of application.

Consider, however, that you must have acquired competency in the language of instruction at level B1 before commencing your stay abroad.

Of course this is generally possible only when you already have basic knowledge of the language at the time of application. **NOTE:** The verification of language skills submitted with the TUMexchange application is not necessarily the same one required for your application to the partner university.

Do I have to get a language certificate that costs money, to apply at TUMexchange?

For the application at TUMexchange, you don't have to pay money to get a language certificate. There is some [valid language certificates](#) for the TUM-intern application in the website of TUMexchange.

After you have been nominated successfully by the international center, you have to apply directly to the partner university in a second step. Please inform yourself in our [Online-Database](#), if your partner university requires another language certificate.

What is the TOEFL/GRE and where can I take it?

The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) tests the English language skills of non-native speakers and is required by some partner universities. Information on dates of examination and how to apply is available at the [TUMexchange website](#) under "Application documents - Verification of language skills in the language of instruction".

The GRE is required for application to some master's programs. The GRE consists of two parts: the General Test and the Subject Test. The general test examines verbal, quantitative and analytical skills, while the subject test examines discipline-specific knowledge.

### In what language do I need to write my application?

Your application to the TUMExchange program should be completed entirely in English. Your application to the partner university should be written in the language of instruction of the respective country (e.g. Spanish for universities in Latin America).

### If I study in Asia, what language skills are required?

You are not required to speak the native language of the country for an exchange to a university in Asia. However, there are universities (e.g. Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia) at which few courses are offered in English. In this case, we recommend that you plan your exchange far enough in advance to attend language courses before the exchange begins.

### What forms of verification of my language skills do I need for Southeast Asia?

The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is generally not required for most partner universities in Southeast Asia.

For detailed information on language requirements at each partner university, visit the online database of the [TUMExchange website](#).

If you want to take a DAAD test, register early at the TUM Language Center. Be aware that testing dates before the application deadline are often fully booked.

### Do I need notarized copies of my verification of language skills/certificates?

For your application to the program at the TUM International Center, you do not need notarized copies. However, for your application to the partner university after nomination by the TUM International Center, you will need notarized copies, as well as, in some cases, translations.

### Is the stay abroad funded through the program?

Students selected for a TUMExchange are exempted from payment of tuition at the host university (with the single exception of master's students at GeorgiaTech). TUMExchange students are also eligible for all discounts associated with student status. Living costs (food, rent, leisure activities, books, etc.) are the student's responsibility. Please note: Living costs can vary greatly depending on the location of your exchange. For more information, read the experience reports of former TUMExchange participants. At the time of application to the TUMExchange, you can also visit the [Online Databank](#) for the country to which you have applied for information on scholarship and other funding opportunities.

### Will I get paid for the internship abroad?

You have to pay all travel costs (flight ticket, costs for visa, insurance etc.) as well as all costs of living (food, living, free time, books etc.) yourself!

Please be aware of the fact, that these costs can vary tremendously, depending on the country and the region.

Tuition fee is going to be paid.

Remuneration for internships is determined by the company in question. Because most internships are organized after arrival in the host country, you will not, at least initially, be able to finance your stay through an internship.

Are there scholarships for which I can apply?

For information on scholarships and other funding opportunities, visit the [Online Databank](#), at [scholarship pages of TUM](#), as well as [DAAD](#).

Will I have to pay student fees abroad?

Contractual agreements between TUM and its partner universities exempt TUMexchange students from paying tuition at the host university.

Currently, the only exception to this agreement is the master's programs at GeorgiaTech (USA), for which exchange students are required to pay tuition in the amount of USD 1,500.

How long can I study abroad and when is the best time to go?

Generally, a stay abroad is 1 or 2 semesters long (i.e. between 3 months and a year). For very popular exchanges, an extension is not possible, as a rule, because the number of spaces for exchange students is part of a fixed agreement with the host university. An extension of one student's stay would, thus, prohibit another TUM student from participating in the program. It is best to discuss the timing of your exchange with the [international student advisor](#) of your TUM school or department.

Will I have to continue paying student fees at TUM during my stay abroad?

You can apply for an official leave of absence during your stay abroad, which would exempt you from paying fees for the basic MVV semester ticket. As a rule, you must continue to pay student union fees during the stay abroad. Contact the international student advisor of your TUM school or department for more information.

Do I have to ask for some time off?

Applications for leaves of absence must be submitted to the TUM Admissions and Enrollment Office. In the Application please discuss the reasons of an official leave of absence and recognition of credits earned in exams and coursework completed at the partner university with the [international student advisor of your TUM school or department](#) prior of the exchange.

Do I have to get a health insurance during my stay abroad?

It's your responsibility to find a suitable health insurance for your stay abroad. A valid health insurance is essential to get matriculated at your partner university. You don't get an insurance protection automatically through TUM and the TUM can't recommend one for you. Please inform yourself about possible offers, and get a health insurance that suits you best.

At some partner universities, students have to close a contract with the partner university. Please inform yourself at the [Online-Databank](#).

### Where can I find information about the security in my host country?

You are responsible yourself, to deliberate whether you find the security in the host country as enough or not, and if you apply for the country. You can find details about it on the website of the [Department of Foreign Affairs](#) or at the particular consulate or embassy. Please also pay attention to our [Security details](#).

### Can I extend my stay abroad while in the host country?

It is generally possible to extend your stay by one or a maximum of two semesters while abroad, but only if doing so does not keep other TUM students from participating in an exchange.

To extend your stay while abroad, you must contact the TUM International Center to discuss all matters with the TUMexchange coordinator for your region.

You are responsible for handling all legal matters concerning permits of stay relevant for an extension. To extend a permit of stay, you will need verification of student status from your host university. As a rule, extension of the stay abroad in North America and Australia is only possible if you assume the costs of tuition for the period of extension.

### How do I obtain a visa/permit of stay?

For information on visas/permits of stay, visit the consulate website of the respective country.

You cannot apply for a visa, however, until you have received written notification of your admission to the program from the partner university.

Instructions for applying for a visa to the USA are available at the [U.S. Department of State](#). The *Amerikahaus* has also recently started offering advice on visa application.

You cannot apply for a visa to the USA, however, until you have received written notification of your admission from the host university, including the forms DS 2019 and I20.

### Can I do an internship through the TUMexchange program?

TUMexchange is primarily designed for students attending courses at a partner university.

The program does not encompass internships.

You can, however, find an internship position in the country where you do your TUMexchange and complete it directly before or after your studies at the partner university.

### How is accommodation regulated?

Accommodation is regulated differently for each country and university. To get an overview, you can have a look at the factsheets of the partner universities, which you can find at the [Online-Datenbase](#) on the Website of the International Center. You should be aware of the fact, that the exchange student himself has to pay the costs for accommodation and TUMexchange doesn't take any of the costs. The amount of money depends on the region and the country, you are visiting. Please consider the fact, that there sometimes is a huge difference between the costs for accommodation in different countries, and if you can afford to pay for it or not.

### Will TUM give me credit for the studies I complete abroad?

The fact that your host university is a TUM partner university does not alone guarantee that the credits for courses you complete during the exchange will be recognized at TUM. Before you make your final decision to participate in the exchange, we recommend that you visit the [international student advisor of your TUM school or department](#) to avoid problems with credit recognition after your return. Consult the international student advisor of your TUM school or department to get advice on course selection. International student advisors have experience with the recognition of individual courses at many partner universities or can direct you to an experienced lecturer. Course offerings at the host university frequently change. If so, you can contact your TUM international student advisor by email from abroad for assistance. The recognition of credits earned abroad cannot, however, be guaranteed in advance. You must submit an application for the recognition of credits earned abroad to the Examination Board upon your return to TUM, together with a statement of position from the relevant TUM lecturer.