



Universität Regensburg

Internationalization@UR

Universität Regensburg's Internationalization Policy, March 24th 2021

Organizational structures, processes, measures

Preamble

As a transnational hub, Universität Regensburg continuously focusses on shaping a truly outward looking international campus. UR places strong emphasis on both increasing the international mobility of its students and enhancing its attractiveness as a prime destination for international students and academics.

The following guidelines provide a framework for implementing the internationalization process at Universität Regensburg and for ensuring the existing measures are developed further.

1) Responsibilities and allocation of tasks

1. Planning and coordination

A. Vice President for Internationalization and Diversity

In addition to representative and communicative tasks, the office of the Vice President for Internationalization and Diversity is responsible for developing and implementing an internationalization concept, for the structuring of international partnerships and for the overall strengthening of Universität Regensburg in its diversity as an international campus and transnational hub.

B. Staff Unit Internationalization

The Staff Unit Internationalization

- a) supports the Executive Board in the strategic development of Universität Regensburg's internationalization;
- b) plans and supports measures to implement the university's internal internationalization strategy;
- c) contributes to the further development of Universität Regensburg's internationalization concept;
- d) participates in coordinating cooperation between the Executive Board, and the university's faculties and central institutions pertaining to developing their internationalization further;
- e) promotes communication and networking with internal and external partners pertaining to Universität Regensburg's continuing internationalization;
- f) and cooperates with the other staff units in the President's Office.

C. Committee of Faculty Representatives for International Affairs

Faculty representatives for international affairs

- a) coordinate internationalization activities at the faculty level;
- b) support the university's internationalization activities in an advisory capacity via the Committee of Faculty Representatives for International Affairs;
- c) regularly report on faculty and university internationalization activities in the Faculty Board and in the Conference of Internationalization Officers;
- d) support their faculty in the implementation of the internationalization policy (especially concerning the simplification of recognition processes, bilingual communication and the establishment of English-language teaching);
- e) support their faculty in the development and evaluation of the faculty's internationalization concepts,
- f) form the jury deciding on applications to the Bavarian Ministry of Science's program for the recruitment of international visiting professors;
- g) and act as contact persons at faculty level for problems and complaints arising from selection and recognition processes.

This is a translation of the original "Internationalization@UR" document.

Only that original is legally binding. No legal claims or titles result from this English translation.

2. Implementing, coordinating and monitoring the mobility of students and academics

A. International Office

The International Office is the main advisory center for all those who either want to go abroad or who come to UR from abroad. For the areas of Europe/Erasmus and Overseas the International Office

- a) coordinates all overseas and ERASMUS activities and funding programs at UR,
- b) initiates and finalizes partnership agreements,
- c) applies for funds to support the mobility of students and academic staff as well as research support staff and also manages the relevant budgets,
- d) organizes study-related mobility (in and out),
- e) coordinates the selection processes for Regensburg students applying to study abroad,
- f) provides organizational support for international students to study at UR,
- g) advises on the different funding programs,
- h) instructs students in the procedure for the recognition of course and examination credits acquired abroad,
- i) offers assistance to international guest researchers and PhD candidates in practical matters via the Welcome Center.

B. Partnership coordinators at the faculty level

Academics who are committed to support cooperation with international universities can act as partnership coordinators at the faculty level. Generally, they

- a) initiate new partnerships and agreements,
- b) check the courses offered at the partner institution for compatibility with the program at UR,
- c) check, in cooperation with the International Office, whether reciprocity is to be expected and whether agreements represent a useful addition to UR's portfolio of international contacts,
- d) clarify with partners whether the courses offered by Universität Regensburg are suitable for international students,
- e) establish consensus within the faculty on the desired agreement,
- f) forward the draft agreement to the International Office for the preparation of an agreement ready to be signed.

In addition, partnership officers are involved in monitoring these agreements by

- g) participating in the central selection procedures and in the placement of applicants for study abroad, and by
- h) advising examination boards on questions regarding universities abroad, where necessary.

C. Examination boards

Generally, the examination boards of the individual degree programs are responsible for recognizing courses and examinations which have been obtained abroad. They are responsible for

- a) recognizing courses and examinations in accordance with legal requirements and criteria (Lisbon Convention, BayHSchG, relevant examination and study regulations) on the basis of learning agreements,
- b) providing a justification if courses and examinations or parts thereof are not recognized,
- c) documenting and archiving decisions on recognition.
- d) The examination boards can delegate the operational tasks to learning agreement coordinators who have corresponding examination authorization.

Learning Agreement Coordinators

- aa) advise students on their learning agreements (LA),
- bb) sign students' learning agreements prior to their departure,
- cc) are contacted by students who have started their studies abroad if amendments to their learning agreement become necessary.

The process of creating a learning agreement and making changes to it can be found in the [procedure description](#) in detail. A concise, clear description, which students (should) also use, can be found [here](#).¹

¹ Learning agreements must be prepared in March/April/May and amended in August/September/October.

3. Contact persons in case of conflict and problems or discrimination

A. First points of contact for advice

In case of any problems or difficulties that may arise in the course of their mobility abroad, students can contact the Erasmus+ or Overseas Mobility Coordinators in the International Office for advice.

B. Complaints regarding selection decisions within the framework of voluntary student mobility.

If an application for voluntary study abroad is rejected, the person concerned can request that the decision is reviewed by the representative for international affairs of their faculty (or, if the representative was involved in the initial decision, by the dean of studies). The latter will make a recommendation on how to proceed with the application.²

C. Complaints concerning the recognition of courses and examinations

If recognition for a course is refused either in the process of negotiating a learning agreement or after returning to Universität Regensburg, the student may request that the relevant examination board review the decision. The latter requests a written statement from the person refusing the recognition of the reasons for the refusal and takes the final decision on recognition.

D. Complaints concerning discrimination

The University Anti-Discrimination Office is responsible for complaints regarding discrimination (antidiskriminierung@ur.de).

2) Organizational Measures to promote international mobility

1. Transparent selection procedures for students applying to study abroad within voluntary student mobility programs

The International Office organizes and coordinates the selection procedures for students applying to study abroad within voluntary student mobility programs. The decisions are made by selection committees, if applicable with the participation of representatives from the partner university.

After the selection process is completed, the decision on whether a student has received a place at a partner university is communicated in writing.

The criteria on which an application is judged are:

- performance in studies to date,
- language skills (especially in the language of instruction),
- quality of the study project and integration into the study program in Regensburg,
- level of preparation,
- motivation.

The International Office ensures the procedures and criteria are communicated to the students and faculties appropriately.

2. Recognizing courses and examinations taken abroad

Courses and examinations successfully completed abroad are generally recognized if no significant difference can be determined with regard to the competencies acquired, in accordance with the BayHSchG and the Lisbon Convention (BayHSchG Art. 63 Para. 1 Sentence 1, Lisbon Convention Article VI.1).

Students must provide sufficient documentation of the courses they have taken (detailed course descriptions with details of learning outcomes, contents, work undertaken in courses and exams as well as credit points, cf. the regulations of the relevant examination regulations as well as the Lisbon Convention Article III/3). The assessment of whether courses and examinations are eligible for recognition is based on these documents.

On this basis, a learning agreement is concluded.

The conclusion of a learning agreement includes agreement on the recognition of all courses and examinations. This means: If a learning agreement is signed, all courses and examinations which are detailed therein and successfully completed are to be recognized.

² This is not a formal legal review in the sense of a preliminary procedure (Vorverfahren) under VwGO. If the study abroad is part of the compulsory or constrained elective curriculum of a program, the selection criteria and procedure are regulated by the examination regulations.

The recognition procedure must be completed within a reasonable period of time after the student returns from studying abroad; generally, one month is recommended. The deadline begins with the submission of all the documents required for the completion of the procedure (learning agreement and transcript of records).

A. Requirements for the recognition of courses and examinations taken abroad

a) Key elements

According to the recommendation of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK; Projekt Nexus, 2013, Modus 2021: Leitfaden zur Anerkennung von im Ausland erworbenen Studien- und Prüfungsleistungen), the following five key elements should be used to check for significant differences between programs at UR and abroad:

- quality of the foreign university's program,
- level of the studies done abroad (bachelor's, master's),
- profile of the program at Universität Regensburg (do the learning outcomes achieved fit the profile of the program at the UR),
- learning outcomes,
- workload.

b) Assessment criteria

The assessment of significant differences focusses on the competencies to be acquired (learning outcomes). The learning outcomes are not to be compared in detail at a micro level, but in terms of the requirements demanded by further study. Recognition is granted in particular,

- if the learning outcomes largely correspond,
- if a "learning agreement" has been previously concluded in writing.

Courses and examinations can be recognized in both compulsory and elective areas.

The burden of proof that a course or examination taken abroad differentiates significantly lies with the body carrying out the assessment (Art. 63 Para. 1 Sentence 1 BayHSchG, Lisbon Convention Article III.5). If a course or examination is not recognized, justification must be provided.

c) Workload check

Students who study abroad via a UR exchange program are expected to complete a study program at the target university that corresponds in scope to the regular workload of students there (for Europe 60 ECTS credit points/year).

Quantitative deviations (fewer credit points for individual courses) are not sufficient grounds for refusing recognition. The focus is on the competencies and skills acquired.

If a course is recognized for which more credit points are awarded at the foreign university than at Universität Regensburg, these surplus credit points can be credited in the elective area. However, the total number of ECTS credit points earned abroad may not exceed the key 60 ECTS credit points per academic year.

d) Conversion of grades

Grades given by foreign universities are generally accepted. The conversion of grades is carried out by the Central Examination Office in accordance with a conversion table that has been agreed upon throughout the university and that is continuously updated.

B. Recognition notices and objections

a) Upon submission of all the necessary documents, the examination board usually recognizes courses and examinations within one month. This information can be accessed by the student via the examination management system FlexNow.

b) Rejection notices must be justified in writing by the examination board.

c) The rejection notice must be verifiably delivered to the student. If the decision is accompanied by instructions on how to appeal, students can file an appeal within one month after the decision has been notified.

d) If no appeal is filed in due time, the decision becomes final.

e) If the information on the right of appeal is missing, the period for filing an appeal is one year.

C. Transparency and quality assurance of recognition procedures

Recognition processes are communicated according to the following scheme, increasing their transparency:

Legend:

VPL = Vice President for Studies, Teaching and Continuing Education

VPI = Vice President for Internationalization and Diversity

IO = International Office

	VPL / VPI	Admin. Div. I/1 Quality Management	Admin. Div. I/4: International Office	Faculty Representatives for international Affairs/ Dean of Studies	Examination boards
1. Implementing procedures	Provide general information to members of the university on the introduction of procedures and criteria.	Develops a central store of information materials (procedure descriptions). Develops a database for documenting and archiving recognition decisions in cooperation with the Central Examination Office.	Provides detailed information for students and exam committees concerning the completion of learning agreements. Revises web pages in the relevant subject area .	Provide faculty-specific information (where available) on faculty or institute web pages .	Coordinate procedures with the Erasmus or exchange coordinators; apply the procedures
2. Reviewing procedures	Regularly discuss the procedures with internationalization officers / deans of studies (with the participation of Admin. Divisions I/1 and I/4).	Evaluates feedback from applicants (from quantitative and qualitative student surveys).	Reports problems to the VPI. Prepares the ERASMUS report : number of courses and examinations/applications recognized and rejected, duration of procedures, handling of credit point allocation, handling of grade allocation, problem cases.	Take responsibility at the faculty level . Make regular reports to the VPI.	Report problems to the Internationalization Officer/Dean of Studies.
3. Adapting criteria and procedures		Publishes evaluation results. Updates the central information materials.	Maintains the central website.	Update individual faculty web pages (where available).	

Erasmus audits complement these internal university quality assurance routines.

3. Taking visa processes into account when scheduling application deadlines

Application deadlines, especially for master's programs, should be scheduled so that international students have a sufficient time window for the additional formalities required (e.g. visa process). Generally, the visa process takes 6 weeks.

4. Consistent bilingualism/multilingualism of all documents relevant to study and qualification

To facilitate the mobility of both students and graduates, UR provides translations of all documents relevant to studies and qualifications, such as

- statutes, examination regulations and module descriptions,
- announcements and comments in LSF (or HISinOne, Exa), and
- performance overviews and degree certificates (award certificates, examination certificates and/or transcripts)

into English (in foreign language and literature programs: the corresponding second language).

Only the German texts are legally binding.

3) Internationalization of the curricula

The implementation of subject-related, transnational and transcultural dimensions and global perspectives in study programs enables students to critically examine complex issues from multiple viewpoints.

This is specifically supported by measures such as

- a) carefully considering time windows for study abroad within course structures and examination regulations;
- b) implementing free modules or free elective subjects in degree programs, in order to increase the options for credit transfer (recommended scope 30 credit points for Bachelor's programs);
- c) handling the possibility of repeating examinations flexibly, so that examinations not passed or not taken in the semester preceding the study period abroad can be repeated after it is completed;
- d) the internationalization of individual modules to integrate global, transnational dimensions;
- e) expanding the range of courses taught in English or other foreign-languages and the range of English-taught degree programs or degree programs taught in other foreign languages;
- f) developing further degree programs or certificate programs with a transnational orientation and global perspective;
- g) developing further double degree programs;
- h) evaluating and continuing the development of existing international degree programs;
- i) developing short-term international programs;
- j) providing information, advice and integration programs that go beyond the organization of teaching;
- k) integrating international visiting academics into teaching;
- l) building strategic networks between UR and international partners, in order to create flexible conditions for joint teaching and learning. This promotes international communication through exchange programs, virtual mobility offers and interuniversity learning platforms.

4) Internationalization of academic staff and academic-support staff

UR recognizes the potential inherent in the internationalization of both academic and non-academic staff with regard to increasing the visibility of the university as an attractive center for research and teaching. In particular, the following measures contribute to cultivating a shared understanding of UR as an international hub.

1. Measures to increase international mobility options for all members of the university

- a) Participation in the Erasmus+ program and other relevant mobility programs is open to all members of the university, whatever their status;
- b) consultation and coaching on the application process are offered;
- c) research and teaching networks, and bilateral key partnerships are set up purposefully through consistent participation in funding rounds from the DAAD and relevant funding organizations such as the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation;
- d) early career academics are given opportunities to train and gain qualifications (e.g. scientific writing, scientific English, teaching, etc.);
- e) training programs are specifically directed towards non-academic staff to increase foreign language and intercultural competence.

2. Measures for the recruitment of international (visiting) academics

- a) Internationally oriented marketing is developed for the whole university;
- b) PhD and postdoc programs are expanded, drawing the attention of international early career academics to Universität Regensburg;
- c) the budget for international scientists to visit UR is secured;
- d) participation in the programs of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation is increased;
- e) the International Guest House will house international visiting researchers and PhD candidates;
- f) professorships are advertised internationally, and help with [understanding references](#) to German legal texts is provided;
- g) tenure-track appointment procedures, which are more internationally compatible, are used more often;
- h) the possibility of teaching courses in English (or, in the case of foreign language and literature studies, the language involved) in appropriate subjects is emphasized;
- i) forms are provided in the English language (especially for recruitment procedures);
- j) infrastructure is provided for international conferences.

3. Measures for the integration of international guests

To facilitate the orientation and stay of international guests in the city of Regensburg and on campus from the very start, Universität Regensburg implements

- a) a bilingual campus orientation system (German-English signage and websites) and offers
- b) counseling on matters of daily life and campus-related questions,
- c) language courses,
- d) a comprehensive welcome service for international guest researchers and PhD candidates.

4. Incentives for engagement in the field of internationalization

In accordance with its guideline for the reduction of teaching duties Universität Regensburg grants, upon application, individual reductions to teaching duties of up to 2 teaching hours/week for special commitment to

- a) the internationalization of the curriculum,
- b) teaching within the context of international cooperation,
- c) the supervision and integration of international students,
- d) the initiation and implementation of cooperation with other universities.

5) Final clause

These guidelines come into force with effect from March 24th 2021/and replace the guidelines of Universität Regensburg for the internationalization of study programs of February 2nd 2010, (updated on April 13th 2015; Richtlinie der Universität Regensburg für die Internationalisierung der Studiengänge), together with the appendix 'Study Abroad and Recognition of Academic Achievements in the Bologna-compliant study programs' (Auslandsstudium und Anerkennung von Studienleistungen in den Bologna-konformen Studiengängen).

Regensburg, March 24th 2021

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