

study semester abroad

for master students of
TU/e Department of the Built Environment

*Inge Timmermans (AUDE)
exchange RMIT, Melbourne, Australia
2022-2023*



Dear student,

*The information in this handout is in addition to the [departmental](#) and [institutional](#) information on international experiences in the online TU/e education guide. If additional information is needed, you can send an e-mail to exchange.be@tue.nl or schedule [an online appointment](#) with me in MS Teams. On **Tuesdays** between 12.00 and 14.00h., you can drop in (VRT 2.12) without a prior appointment.*

Henny Houben

Student exchange coordinator / Erasmus coordinator
Education and Student Affairs (ESA) – Team Built Environment

Introduction

Independent research shows that the personal and international skills acquired during an international experience, strengthen a student's position on the job market. We are living in a globalized world, and to succeed professionally, graduates need to be able to interact effectively across borders and cultures. TU/e therefore strongly encourages students to gain international experience during their higher education study.

At the Department of the Built Environment, graduate school students can gain this international experience by either spending a study semester at one of our exchange partners, or by doing a 15 EC

research internship abroad. If your MSc thesis supervisor approves, it is also possible to go abroad as part of your graduation program.

In this handout the details concerning study semesters abroad are explained. If you are interested in a research internship or graduation project abroad, you are advised to download the handout *internships abroad* from the [ABP and CME study guide pages on international experience](#).

Orientation and partner choice



Exchange partners

From the [ABP and CME study guide pages on international experience](#) you can download the departmental *exchange partner survey*. At most European partners, the number of available exchange spots is limited to 1 or 2 per academic year. Outside of Europe the number of available semester spots is variable, and subject to yearly negotiations. Some semester places are more popular than others. If necessary, the available places will be assigned by lot.

Course offer and exams

Our *exchange partner survey* contains information on the master programs that are open based on the agreement. In case of uncertainties you can best contact the partner's contact person for incoming exchange students mentioned in the survey.

Carefully study the academic calendar of the partners of your choice, which you can find on their webpage. Some academic years start with the autumn/winter semester (so in our semester B). It also often happens that the start and end date of a semester is in conflict with our own academic calendar. This can have an impact on your exams. *In view of this it is important to know that our examination committee does not allow students to take a first TU/e exams abroad.* Only in very exceptional cases students can be allowed to take at max. 1 TU/e *re-sit* abroad, but the conditions for this are very strict, and in practice it is quite difficult for the student to arrange this. For more details see our department's [regulations of the examination committee](#).

Free movers

If you would like to do a study semester at a non-partner institution, it is sometimes possible to apply as a so called "free mover". Free movers will be charged tuition fee at both the home and host institution. In most cases they can only get accepted by a non-European University as within Europe all student exchange is arranged in bilateral Erasmus agreements. To get the required prior permission from the departmental examination committee, you need to file a well-motivated request with the [examination committee's secretary](#) well in advance. As soon as the committee has approved your application, you should register in Mobility Online, and tick the box "I will arrange a place at an institution abroad myself"

Mobility Online (MO)

Mobility Online (MO) is an online tool to guide our students through the internal TU/e exchange application process, including the mobility scholarship application. The tool should be used by all TU/e students going out for a study semester or internship abroad, and can be accessed through the [TU/e webpage on Mobility Online](#). From this MO webpage you can also download the [MO user manual – outgoing courses](#).

Before registering in MO you should carefully read the following additional instructions/remarks:

All exchange agreements are exclusively for the exchange of MSc level students. If you indicate in MO that you are still a BSc student, the program will not show any exchange options.

Do **not** use the MO option “*search for exchange possibilities*” as this option will list *all* the exchange agreements concluded by TU/e. This information is not relevant, as you can only make use of the exchange agreements that have been concluded by the Department of the Built Environment.

Some exchange partners are more in demand than others. To increase your chances, we advise you to indicate at least three (3) destination preferences in MO. Should the number of interested students for a certain partner exceed the number of available semester spots, then these spots will be assigned by lot.

Before selecting your preferred partners in Mobility Online, you should have consulted the information on these partners in the departmental *exchange partner survey*. **The fact that MO allows you to choose a certain exchange partner does not automatically mean that all its MSc study programs are open to our students, or that the available programs will suit your specific field of study!**

Make sure to indicate your destination preferences in MO before the internal TU/e **deadlines:**

March 1*

- For study exchanges in the autumn/winter semester (= our semester A).
- For study exchanges in our semester B, with partners with an *uneven* yearly number of available semester spots**

MO registration opens on November 1 of the preceding year.

September 1

- For study exchanges in the spring semester (= our semester B).

MO registration opens on May 1.

***Exception:**

Exchanges with RMIT, Melbourne, Australia

Students that would like to go out to RMIT, should send an e-mail to exchange.be@tue.nl

at least 3 weeks before the afore mentioned internal deadlines. In view of the early RMIT nomination deadline, the allocations for RMIT will already take place on February 15 (autumn/winter exchanges) and September 15 (spring/summer exchanges).

****Partners with an uneven number of available semester spots (e.g. 1 or 3 spots yearly)**

All yearly number of available semester spots of these partners will be allocated once a year (in the first week of March). Students that are interested in one of the available spots in semester B, should send an e-mail indicating their preferences to exchange.be@tue.nl before the deadline of March 1, even though the registration in Mobility Online for their semester is not yet open.

Although it is technically still possible to indicate your preferences in MO after the above mentioned deadlines, late applications will not be taken into account by the international office.

In the week following the internal deadline we will let you know through Mobility Online which partner institution abroad you have been allocated to.

Should you decide to refrain from your exchange after our internal deadline, this would mean that your semester spot will be lost for other students. In this case you may be asked to give account to our departmental examination committee.

“Get out of your comfort zone and experience new cultures!”

*Rachelle Weerts (USRE)
exchange TU Graz, Austria
2022-2023*



Composing your exchange study program

Course level and course restrictions

- You need to obtain a minimum of 15 EC abroad. This is a TU/e requirement. Most of our partners however require incoming students to sign up for a higher number of credits, usually varying between 20 and 30 EC. If so, you are of course bound to this.
- Our examination committee only allows you to take **master level** courses and projects abroad.
- Some agreements offer the opportunity to compose a study program consisting of courses from different faculties. Other agreements have very strictly narrowed down their course offer. For more information you can consult the exchange partner survey.
- *Note the remark in our [regulations of the examination committee](#) regarding language courses: “...Language courses (Dutch and English, both as a foreign language) are permitted at C level; no more than 1 language course per student.*

Using courses and projects for your master study program ABP or CME

IMPORTANT

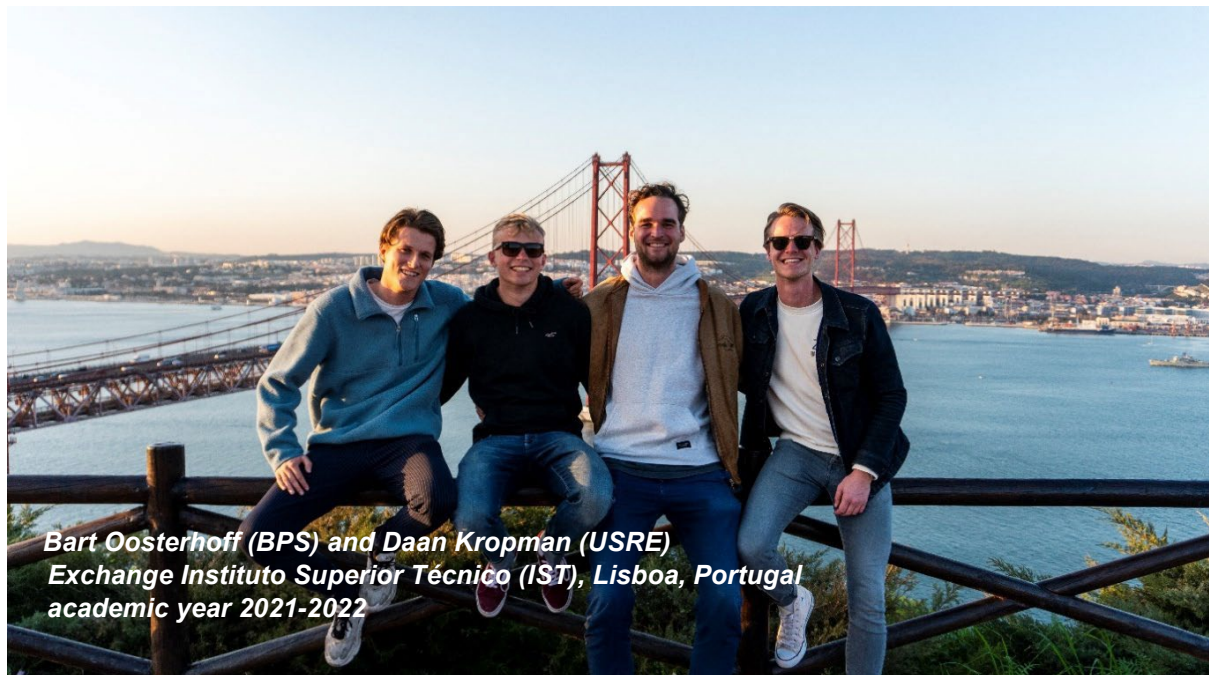
The week after our internal deadline you will be informed through Mobility Online which university abroad you have been assigned to. You can then start preparing your study plan abroad. Your choice of courses/projects first needs to be approved by your mentor, and thereafter by the departmental examination committee through the form [approval form exchange study program](#). This form can be downloaded from our departmental education guide pages on international experience.

With our examination committee's prior approval courses and projects taken abroad can be used for your ABP/CME study program as follows (it is also possible to combine these options):

- Courses and projects can be used to fill the *free elective* part of your study program. These will show in your TU/e study program with the **foreign** course code and course name.
- Courses can be used as *specialization* elective.
Remark: for AUDE register track students the *specialization elective* option is restricted, as they are only allowed to replace at max. 1 specialization elective by a course taken abroad.
- A project taken abroad can be used to replace one of our own 10 EC master projects. In this case you need to seek prior permission from one of our own responsible master project lecturers. This lecturer needs to re-grade the project upon your return in Eindhoven. This project will then show in your TU/e study program for **10 EC** with the TU/e course code and course name, and with the respective TU/e grade.

Grading

All passed courses will be graded alphanumerically (grade DN = done).



Additional requirements



Language requirements

You should note that not all education at our exchange partners is conducted in English. Master study programs in Italy for instance are often still fully or partially Italian-language, and in Spain you will need some knowledge of the Spanish or Catalan (Barcelona area) language. It may

therefore be possible that a partner makes demands on your skills in the respective language. For more information you can best consult our *exchange partner survey*, and the partner's webpages for incoming exchange students.

IMPORTANT:

*Some partners have requirements for Spanish or Italian language proficiency **even if you intend to only take classes taught in English**. Do bear this in mind when selecting your possible exchange partners! These requirements are strict, and if you cannot upload the required language certificate during your online exchange application, you will not get accepted!*

Some partners might require an official **English** language test result. If an official IELTS or TOEFL test is required, you can sign up for it through the [IELTS](#) or [TOEFL](#) webpages. The costs for taking an official language test come on your own account. Make sure to take this test at an early stage, so that sufficient time remains to retake it if necessary. To determine your exact English language level, you can register in Osiris for an online diagnostic English language test – course code **SFC600**.

To brush up your language skills, you can sign up for a language course at (e.g.):

English → [TU/e Language Center \(TLC\)](#) .

Spanish → [Courses at the TU/e campus](#) or at [Fuentes](#) in Eindhoven.

German → [Goethe-Institut](#).

Several languages → [Babel](#)

Other requirements

To meet TU/e's requirement for an international experience, you need to generate a **minimum** of 15 EC abroad, and you need to reside in the host country for at least 3 consecutive months. Students that do not meet this requirement are not eligible for a TU/e mobility scholarship.

It is not possible to apply for a study exchange of one *quartile* only, as all our agreements are based on the exchange of students for a full *semester*.

Also note that most *partners* recommend or require students to generate a *minimum* number of credits during their exchange (mostly varying between 20 and 30 EC). If this concerns an actual requirement instead of just an advice, you are of course bound to this. It might furthermore be possible that a partner requires a portfolio, or a minimum obtained average study result (this especially goes for our partners in Australia and New Zealand). For more information you can consult our *exchange partner survey*, and the information on the respective partner's website.

Accommodation

Most partner institutions offer housing to incoming exchange students, although the number of available accommodations is sometimes limited. If housing cannot be arranged, the host institution can provide you with information on how to find suitable student accommodation on the private market. There are also platforms like [Housing Anywhere](#) that may be of help to you in this regard. Wherever the student housing market is tight, there will be people trying to take advantage of it. Be aware of this, and try to avoid being scammed when looking for housing on the private market!



Financial issues

Tuition fee waiver

During your international experience you need to remain enrolled at TU/e as a fulltime student. In case of agreement based student exchanges, tuition fee is only due at the sending institution (TU/e). At the host institution a tuition fee waiver applies.

Reimbursement of travel costs

Students that receive Dutch study finance through DUO, remain entitled to this finance when they are doing an internship abroad as part of their Dutch study program. During your exchange you can put your Dutch “OV-kaart” on hold and apply at DUO for a partial reimbursement of your local travel costs ([OV-vergoeding buitenland](#): € 114,92 per month in 2024). The application form can be downloaded from the DUO site and should be signed on behalf of TU/e by the departmental international office.



Merel van de Ven (former SED student)
Exchange Lund University, Sweden

TU/e mobility scholarships

Students can apply in Mobility Online for one of the TU/e mobility scholarships listed below, on the condition that they will stay abroad for *at least* 3 consecutive months, and that they will earn *at least* 15 EC. **If, and which type of mobility scholarship you are entitled to, will automatically be destined by our Mobility Online tool during the application workflow.**

Erasmus scholarships for study

Erasmus scholarships for study are possible for study periods between 3 and 12 months in an Erasmus country (EU-countries plus Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland, Turkey and Macedonia) on condition of the existence of a bilateral Erasmus agreement between the host institution and our department. The scholarship amount (lump sum of approx EUR 1000,--) depends on the living standard in the country of destination. For more information you can download the Erasmus+ App from the Google Play store (for Android) or from the Apple Store (for iOS).

Erasmus OLS test

If you are entitled to an Erasmus scholarship for study, and the language of education at your Erasmus host university is either German, English, Spanish, French or Italian, you will be asked to take an [Erasmus OLS test](#) at the start and end of your exchange semester. This Online Linguistic Support Test is compulsory, but the result will not have any consequences for your personal situation. It will mainly be used to monitor the linguistic development of mobility students in general. The program also offers the opportunity to improve your proficiency in the respective language for free.

Erasmus non-scholarship students

If our department has signed an Erasmus agreement with your host institution, and you are not eligible for an Erasmus scholarship (e.g. since you have already received a TU/e scholarship for an earlier mobility) you may get the status of *Erasmus non-scholarship student*. Although you will not receive any mobility scholarship in this case, the Erasmus status ensures that you are exempt from tuition fees at the receiving institution.

Fund International Experience (FIE) and Holland Scholarship (HS)

The FIE scholarship amount is a lump sum between EUR 300 and EUR 500 (in 2023/2024). The exact amount depends on the nature of your exchange, and on your exchange destination. Students with the Dutch nationality that are entitled to a FIE scholarship, will automatically enter the selection for the Holland Scholarship grant (lump sum of EUR 1.250,-- in 2023/2024). This HS scholarship will be awarded based on a student's study progress and GPA (Grade Point Average = gewogen studiegemiddelde). Students that win a Holland Scholarship will automatically lose their right on the FIE scholarship.

Other financing possibilities

For general information on the financial part of your international experience you can consult the [respective wilweg webpages](#).

Beursopener

The [Beursopener search engine](#) provides information on a wide range of grants and scholarships you can apply for instead of, or in addition to, your TU/e mobility scholarship.

Cultureel Verdragbeurzen

A number of countries offer study and research grants for Dutch students and graduates. Many of these scholarships are part of a Cultural Treaty with the Netherlands. Cultural Treaties promote cooperation between countries in cultural, educational and scientific fields. There are [Cultureel Verdragbeurzen](#) for study, research and summer courses. A country may decide for itself which students it wants to attract. The conditions, grant amounts and possibilities therefore vary greatly per country.

Duitslanddesk

An ample amount of grants is available for students that have been accepted for an exchange or internship by a German university or company. For more information you can consult the webpages of the [Duitslanddesk](#). It may be possible to receive one of their grants *in addition* to one of the Erasmus mobility grants.

Working alongside your study abroad

It is important to orientate yourself well with respect to the conditions in your host country, and with respect to tax payment issues. Before you leave you can best ask the [embassy of your host country](#) for advice.

Subletting your accommodation

Maybe it is possible to sublet your room. If you like, I can bring you into contact with inbound mobility students looking for accommodation in Eindhoven for the same semester.

Insurance

Travel insurance

TU/e has arranged [collective travel insurance](#) for all students going abroad for their study. Once registered in Mobility online, you will automatically be registered by TU/e for this collective insurance for the duration of your exchange semester abroad.

Health insurance

In general Dutch health insurances already include some coverage for medical costs abroad. If this coverage is insufficient, the remainder can be claimed from TU/e's collective travel insurance. In some countries it is compulsory to take out specific student health insurance, even if your health insurance is offering the required coverage. In this case this compulsory health insurance is needed for your student visa application. This goes for e.g. Australia and South Africa. If this indeed applies to your exchange, you will receive further instructions directly from the respective host institution.

Liability insurance

TU/e's collective travel insurance only covers liability insurance for damages on the study or internship spot. This means that you are responsible for arranging proper liability insurance abroad yourself (e.g. through [AON Student Insurance](#)).

Cancellation insurance

Note that TU/e's collective travel insurance does not include any cancellation insurance. Before taking out cancellation insurance, you can best read the points of attention that are summarized on the [Consumentenbond](#) pages.

International students

International students that have taken out AON student insurance should check if their insurance policy also covers health and liability insurance during their exchange. If not, they should take out additional insurance. For more information on insurances during your internship, you may contact Ms. Petri van de Vorst from our institutional international office (e-mail: p.g.j.v.d.vorst@tue.nl).

Visa

If you need a visa, this visa is often either fully arranged by the host institution, or the host institution will assist with the visa application. If the host university does not offer any support in this respect, you can arrange your visa through the respective foreign embassy in The Netherlands. Bear in mind that visa procedures might take a couple of months, so you can best apply for it well in advance.

Unless this advice has explicitly been given by the embassy, we advise you not to go abroad on a *tourist* visa. If time allows it, you can best wait with buying an airplane ticket until you have received word from the host institution about your acceptance, and until your visa has come through.

EuroTeQ Engineering University

TU/e is partner in the EuroTeQ University, which is funded under the European Commission's Erasmus+ scheme. EuroTeQ University offers selected **virtual** courses organized by its partners DTU (Denmark), TU München (Germany), L'X (France), CTU (Czech Republic), TalTech (Estonia) and TU/e. The course offer in their [online course catalogue](#) is currently still limited but will be further expanded. Enrollment is free of charge. If you would like to incorporate a EuroTeQ course in your MSc study program you can ask for our examination committee's approval by including this course in your Personal Study Plan (PSP).



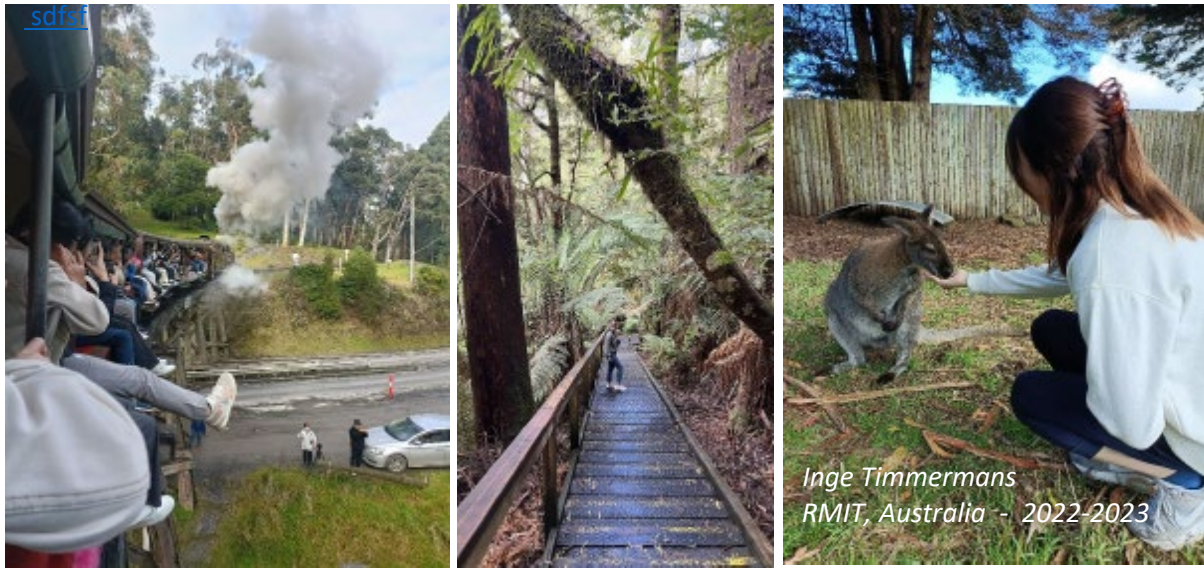
Useful information

Points of attention:

- For more information on specific exchange destinations, you can consult our students [travel reports](#) published in TU/e's online education guide.
- Consult [GGD](#) for information on vaccinations and health advice in the country of destination.
- **IMPORTANT:** Consult the [travel advice webpage](#) from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning possible Covid-19 regulations and other safety issues in the country of destination and download the BZ reisapp on your cellphone. When you subscribe to your destination country, you will automatically get a notification from the app when the situation in your destination country changes.
- Take care of arranging your banking business – if necessary, authorize your parents/partner.
- You can buy an international driving license (needed outside the EU) at [ANWB](#).
- An [ISIC card](#) is an official student identification card, and is supported by UNESCO, the European Union and many ministries of education worldwide. It is the only international proof of being a fulltime student.

Interesting and informative websites:

<https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/>
www.wilweg.nl
<http://about.cochsurfing.com/how-it-works/>
<http://www.craigslist.org/about/sites>



Step-by-step plan

I fully understand that you might feel somewhat uncomfortable with the prospect of all the administrative processes involved with your study semester abroad. It is also quite comprehensible that you sometimes find it difficult to see a common thread in what needs to be arranged. This step-by-step plan will hopefully give you more guidance in this respect. Should you still run into something, you may always ask me for advice. Judging by the stories of students that preceded you, their experience abroad was well worth the effort. 😊

Before the exchange

1. Orientate yourself towards the possibilities offered by our official exchange partners, and discuss your study abroad plans with the **mentor** that has been appointed to you. He/she can advise how you can best fit a study semester abroad in your personal TU/e study program.
2. **Register yourself in Mobility Online** before the respective internal deadline, and indicate the partners of your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice.
Approx. one week after the internal deadline you will be notified through Mobility Online which partner you have been assigned to. These deadlines are March 1 (for autumn semester exchanges, and September 1 for spring semester exchanges).
3. **Get approval for your exchange study program.**

Once you know where you are heading to, you can ask our departmental examination committee to approve the courses/projects you would like to take abroad. To do so, you need to complete and sign the form [approval exchange study program](#) and have it approved by your mentor and the departmental international office before sending it through to our study advisors for the master (academic.advisor.MSc.BE@tue.nl) They are mandated to approve your exchange study program on behalf of the examination committee. Do not forget to also include your changed Personal Study Plan (PSP) and course descriptions of the respective courses. Our academic advisors will notify you once your exchange study program has been approved and archived in your personal student file in Osiris.

4.

5. **Apply at the partner.**

Once the nomination procedure at the partner officially opens, you will be nominated as our candidate for this exchange. Once I have done so, you will receive a notification through Mobility Online. You should then apply for the exchange at the partner according to the instructions they will send you. In all likelihood you can also find these instructions on the partner's webpage for incoming exchange students.

6. **Proceed with the TU/e application process in Mobility Online.** Part of this process is the application of a TU/e mobility scholarship.

7. You can best wait (if possible) with booking your (flight) ticket till your intended host institution has confirmed your acceptance as an exchange student. You should also not forget to arrange housing, visa, insurances etc. (possibly in consultation with the host institution). If applicable apply at DUO for an "OV-vergoeding buitenland" and purchase an international driver's license from ANWB if you are travelling to a non-European country.

During the exchange

Should you like to (or need to) change the content of your study program abroad you will need to resubmit the form "approval exchange study program" to obtain our departmental examination committee's approval. This means that you need to redo the procedure that is described under point 3. listed here above. In this case it is also necessary to have the "during the mobility" form of your learning agreement signed by all parties involved (this is one of the mobility scholarship requirements).

After the exchange

1. **Confirmation of stay**

At the end of your stay abroad, you should ask the host institution's international office to complete, sign and stamp the form "statement of the host institution". In this document the partner needs to confirm your period of stay/enrollment at the host institution. You can download this form from Mobility Online and upload it there once signed and stamped.

2. Transcript of records (= grading list)

A couple of weeks after the official end of your exchange semester, the host institution will provide you with a Transcript of Records (TOR) that gives a survey of the grades and credits obtained during your exchange. If you do not receive this transcript within 5 weeks counting from the last day of the partner's examination week, you should contact the host institution's international office.

Once you have received the transcript, you should:

A) Upload it in your Mobility Online workflow at the step where you are asked to upload the *after the mobility part* of your learning agreement (this might seem a bit strange, but at TU/e we do not use the real after the mobility part of your learning agreement).

B) Send it to me as PDF per e-mail (exchange.be@tue.nl). The PDF should be secured by the partner, and tue information on the transcript should be verifiable. The transcript will be compared with your "approval exchange study program" form. If the courses match, the results will be processed in Osiris as indicated in the "approval exchange study program" form.

3. Close your TU/e mobility application

To officially close your exchange, and to secure your right to the mobility scholarship you need to finish the last steps in the Mobility Online tool.