

APPLICANT GUIDE FOR BACHELOR STUDENTS

What are the main steps in preparing an application for A4U Erasmus+ grant?



1. Read the call

Read the Call carefully, and ensure you meet the eligibility requisites. B2 level of English is equivalent to score 72-94 in TOEFL iBT (after October 2016) and score 5,5-6,5 in IELTS. A table of equivalences of B1 level to other English certificates is available on <http://alliance4universities.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Tabla-de-equivalencia-de-niveles-en-idiomasy-para-la-convocatoria-2017.pdf>.

2. Decide on the host university for your mobility

Alianza 4 Universidades is a consortium of 4 public Spanish research universities, of which two are located in Madrid:

1. Universidad Autónoma de Madrid <http://www.uam.es/ss/Satellite/en/home.htm>
2. Universidad Carlos III de Madrid <https://www.uc3m.es/home>

and two in Barcelona:

3. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (located outside Barcelona, and reachable by a frequent local train in 40 minutes from Barcelona city) <https://www.uab.cat/>
4. Universitat Pompeu Fabra (in Barcelona city) <https://upf.edu>

Applicants to/from Russia can apply for mobility only within existing agreements. Check Annex in the Call to see what agreements exist between your sending university and a potential host university.

Applicants from other participating non-European universities can apply for any A4U university.

Please check the course offer on the host university website, or use factsheets, published on <http://alliance4universities.eu/en/mobility-scholarships/>, for course offer as well as a snapshot of host universities, information on the academic calendar, available services and contact persons at the International Office. Get an initial idea of courses that you might take during mobility, making sure they are relevant to your subject area. Discuss the chosen courses with your academic tutor/International Office at your sending university bearing in mind that the chosen courses will have to be recognized at your sending university upon return.

Course offer at A4U universities can be checked on:

UAB: <https://www.uab.cat/web/study/undergraduate/undergraduate-offer/all-bachelor-s-degrees-1345667078809.html>

UAM: http://www.uam.es/ss/Satellite/en/1242662979898/listadoEstudios/Undergraduate_Studies.htm

UC3M: https://www.uc3m.es/ss/Satellite/Grado/en/ListadoGrados/1371212987094/Oferta_de_titulaciones

UPF: <https://www.upf.edu/web/incoming/exchange-students-academic-information>

3. Obtain your Transcript of Records.

The Transcript of Records should indicate all the courses that have been taken and evaluated.

4. Obtain a letter of support.

Obtain a letter of support from the International Office at your home university. The letter should indicate the average mark for your transcript of records and confirm that your level of English language is at least B2. The International Office at your home university might want to make sure that you are suitable candidate for mobility and may have an internal pre-selection procedure for applicants.

Important: there might be a minimum average mark required by A4U so please check the eligibility requirements in the Call for the details.

5. Get your Learning Agreement signed

Please familiarise yourself with the Learning Agreement available on <http://alliance4universities.eu/en/mobility-scholarships/>. Fill in the necessary information on p.1 of the Learning Agreement and obtain signatures for the “Commitment” table by your home university and sign it yourself. Scanned signatures are accepted. If selected, the receiving university will also sign your learning agreement. Other pages of the Learning Agreement will be filled in during and after the mobility.

Important: students going from Spain to Russia should get their agreement signed by the sending university, receiving university and sign it themselves, before submitting the application.

The International Office at your home university can help you get the Learning Agreement signed. In case of any doubts on how to fill in the form, please check the footnotes in the relevant fields.

6. Get a recommendation letter

Identify a referee who can provide a recommendation letter for you in English or in Spanish. It can be your academic tutor or another member of academic staff who can comment on your skills, personal attributes and suitability for mobility. The referee should know you well enough to be able to write positively about you and they should also know you relatively recently to be able to comment on your present development. There is no pre-defined format for the recommendation letter but the referee might want to address questions like:

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant?
2. What are the strengths of the applicant?
3. How will the applicant benefit from a stay abroad?

Ask the referee to send the recommendation letter directly to coordinacion@a-4u.eu with “Recommendation letter” in the subject line before the application deadline.

7. Write your motivation letter

Write a motivation statement, in English or in Spanish, outlining why you would like to go on mobility, and justifying your choice of the host university. There is no pre-defined format for the motivation letter.

8. Submit your application

Fill in the application form on <http://alliance4universities.eu/en/mobility-scholarships/>, and attach the Transcript of Records, the letter of support, the motivation letter, and the Learning Agreement signed by the sending university and yourself for students who apply to come to Spain (and by sending, receiving institutions and yourself for students who apply to go to Russia). Make sure your referee sends the recommendation letter before the application deadline. It is highly recommended you submit the application well in advance of the deadline so that we can check that it is complete and that you can make corrections if necessary.

It is possible to apply for two destinations, in which case the applicant should submit two separate applications. Transcript of Records, letter of support and recommendation letter can be the same in both applications. The learning agreement and the motivation letter should each be specific to the receiving university.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- **How do I choose courses to take at the receiving university, and who signs the learning agreement?**

It is the student who checks the courses available and chooses those that are relevant to his/her study programme at home university. This choice has to be validated by an academic responsible for mobility/international relations at the faculty/department (at A4U universities: el coordinador académico de movilidad), or head of your academic programme (e.g. Director of Bachelor Studies). In any case this person, usually an academic, has to have the authority to recognize credits obtained at the host university upon student's return to home university and it is him/her that signs the learning agreement. It can also be signed by the International Office provided they have the agreement of the academic in charge of recognition.

- **Is there a minimum or maximum credit requirement?**

While there is no a minimum or maximum number of ECTS that you have to take during mobility, the general rule is that your work load should be comparable to full-time work load at your home university, taking into account that you will studying in a different country, environment, possibly in a different language. So check with your home university that your planned work load is comparable to that you would do at home.

Important: Erasmus+ Programme requires courses that you take abroad be recognized by the home university and become part of your transcript of records.

- **Should I leave the ECTS field blank if the course catalogue does not specify the ECTS?**

It is preferable that you get in touch with the receiving university to clarify it.

- **Can students take courses outside the field of study/faculty? E.g. students majoring in psychology might want to take courses on leadership.**

As a general rule, students should choose the majority of their courses from the same department/area of studies in which they are enrolled at their home universities. The host university can advise you on the possibility and specifics of taking courses from other departments, but first you need to make sure that a course outside your main area of study would be recognized by your sending university.

- **What happens if I fail to pass courses taken during mobility?**

This is a rare occurrence to start with, since the vast majority of students try their best to pass their chosen courses. If it does happen, A4U won't apply any penalties, and you will not be asked to reimburse the grant. It is up to the home institution to take any action if necessary.