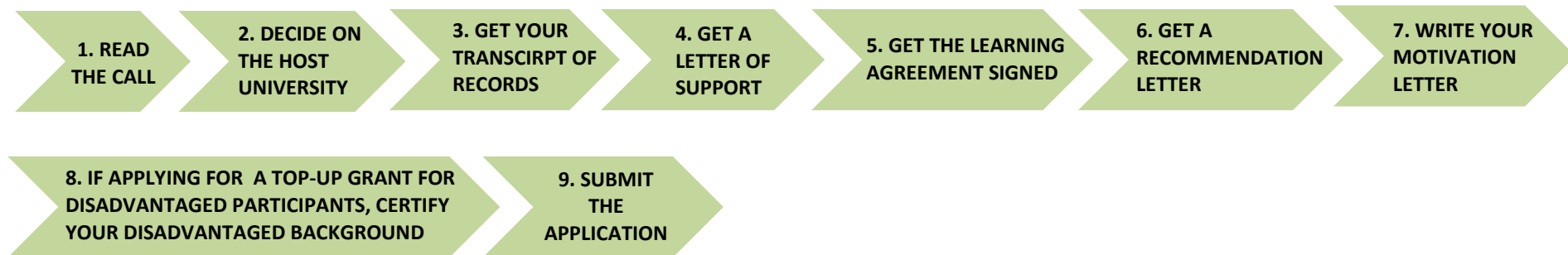


APPLICANT'S GUIDE FOR BACHELOR STUDENTS

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



1. Read the call

Under the current call only Bachelor students from Russia can apply.

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-idiommas-para-la-convocatoria-2017.pdf>.

Be aware that if you get selected for the exchange program, you would need to advance all the initial costs such as insurance, visa application, flights, accommodation and then have sufficient funds to cover living expenses for the first week or two, since you will receive the grant only once in Spain and once you opened a bank account at a Spanish bank. A significant sum is necessary to prepare for this exchange as Erasmus+ funds only reach the student once he/she is in the country of mobility. You may check if your sending university can assist with a loan or advance the funds on your behalf.

Those who receive the top-up grant for disadvantage participants will have their flight covered upfront.

Important: the Call is the base document for the mobility scheme, so in case of any doubt, consult it first.

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>

Check the course offer on the host university website, or use factsheets, published on <http://alliance4universities.eu/en/mobility-scholarships/>. Get an initial idea of courses that you might take during mobility, making sure they are relevant to your subject area. Talk to your academic tutor to see if the chosen courses will be recognized at your sending university upon return. Note that Erasmus+ exchange can only take place if the courses you take at the receiving university are recognized, fully or partially, by your sending university.

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>
<https://www.uab.cat/web/study/undergraduate/undergraduate-offer/bachelor-s-degrees-in-english-1345667078818.html>
<https://www.uab.cat/web/study/undergraduate/undergraduate-offer/subjects-in-english-1345678921142.html>

At each faculty there is a designated academic, named International Mobility Coordinator, who can help you with queries regarding the courses. Their contact details can be found on <https://www.uab.cat/web/mobility-international-exchange/mobility-international-exchange-programmes/exchange-offices-1345671998722.html>.

UAM: <https://www.uam.es/uam/en/grado> and <https://www.uam.es/uam/en/internacional/english-courses>

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> and click on Course Offer

3. Obtain the Transcript of Records from your sending university.

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

4. Obtain a nomination letter.

Obtain a nomination letter from the International Office at your home university or your Faculty. 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.

5. Get your Learning Agreement signed

Get familiarised with the Learning Agreement form 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 you are selected for the grant, the receiving university will check if your learning agreement can be accepted and if so, will sign it. Other pages of the Learning Agreement will be filled in during and after the mobility.

In case of any doubts on how to fill in the form, check the footnotes in the relevant fields. The International Office at your home university may also be able to help you fill in and sign the Learning Agreement.

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. Participants from disadvantaged backgrounds

If applying for a top-up grant for disadvantaged participants, gather the official documentation that confirms your status as a disadvantaged participant.

9. Submit your application

Fill in the application form on <http://alliance4universities.eu/en/mobility-scholarships/>, and attach the Transcript of Records, the nomination letter, the motivation letter, the Learning Agreement signed by the sending university and yourself, and if applying for the top-up grant, the documentation certifying the disadvantaged background.

Make sure your referee sends the recommendation letter before the application deadline.

If your application has any errors or omissions, you will be notified by email and will be able to submit the corrected/missing documentation during the 10-day “cure period” according to the dates indicated in the Call (see FAQs below). In any case, it is a good idea to submit your application ahead of the deadline so that it can be checked for any errors or omissions in advance and give you a better chance to have a complete application.

It is possible to apply for two or more destinations, in which case the applicant should submit two separate applications. The transcript of Records, the nomination letter and the 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

- **What is a cure period?**

The cure period is a time during which applicants can remedy any deficiencies in their application, such as adding missing information or documentation.

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

It is the student who checks the available courses 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 sending 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 a full-time work load at your home university, taking into account that you will studying in a different country, environment, and 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?**

No, you should get in touch with the receiving university and clarify it.

- **Can students take courses outside their field of study/faculty? E.g. students majoring in psychology taking courses in leadership.**

As a general rule, students should choose the majority of their courses from the same department/subject area 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.