



POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

DIPARTIMENTO DI
INGEGNERIA
GESTIONALE

A CONCISE GUIDE TO INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

**Useful tips for a successful and satisfying international
mobility experience**

**International Mobility Commission
CCS Management Engineering
Politecnico di Milano**

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WHO

A successful international mobility experience is based on the **COLLABORATION** between three main actors:

The Student: RESPONSIBLE AND PROTAGONIST of making all relevant decisions and of respecting rules and deadlines, both the ones established by Politecnico and the ones indicated by the selected partner programme.

The International Mobility Unity Staff (IMU): Liaison between the students and the partner schools, for exchanges, double degrees and ME Special Programmes. It provides support for all administrative procedures related to the Mobility Call, and for those required by the partner school's application process.

The International Mobility Commission: The exchange experience is based on an academic learning experience at a partner university, experience that is reflected in a document called the Learning Agreement. Appointed by geographic area, the faculty members that compose the Commission support (do NOT substitute) the student in selecting courses compatible with the Study Plan. The faculty advisors do not provide information regarding the partner schools, nor do they provide support for any administrative procedures.

Useful Links:

[International Mobility Unit](#)

[Appointed Faculty Members for International Mobility](#)

[Complete International Exchange Guide \(& FAQ\)](#)



WHEN

Management Engineering students who wish to study abroad must apply to the [CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY](#), that opens twice a year, approximately in November and in April (the exact dates vary every year). The call provides detailed instructions, to guide the candidates through the process that will eventually lead to the exchange experience.

The call pertains to: standard exchanges (1 or 2 semesters) in EU and EXTRA-EU countries, International Double Degrees, Special Programme for Management Engineering students (Alliance4Tech).

Due to the timing of the current procedures, students will apply a year prior to when they intend to take part in the exchange programme.

Eligibility to apply to the International Mobility call for Management Engineering BSc and MSc students is based on **strict rules**. Those can be found on the [International Exchange Guide](#).

As shown later, students will be required to select their preferred exchange destinations **at the time of their application** to the mobility call. You are therefore strongly encouraged to collect detailed information on all the preferred destinations you will list in your application, also **as a form of consideration towards all participants**. A withdrawal from the programme, due to inadequate research of the course offerings, will be a missed opportunity for you and for others, who could have otherwise taken advantage of the opportunity you did not wish to take after all.

Once applied to the mobility call, candidates will have to **follow the deadlines carefully**, monitoring the placement lists, and confirming (or not) their interest for the assigned destination. Dates vary for each mobility call; however, this part of the process normally takes place approximately between January and March for the first call, and May and July for the second call.

The candidate will have to **formally accept** the assigned exchange destination so that the International Mobility Unit can proceed with the student's "nomination" to the partner school. Missing the deadline will result in being **excluded** from the exchange programme.



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IMPORTANT!

Students willing to participate in the programmes below follow **different application processes and timelines**:

- **UNITECH**: Please check the website and follow the instructions.
- **FREE MOVERS**: Two types of experience fall under this category: study abroad experiences towards earning credits at universities that currently are not Politecnico partners; and studying at a foreign university for thesis research purposes. The university has established strict rules on this matter (please refer to the [International Exchange Guide](#) and to the University [Guidelines](#)). Applications submitted without the appropriate requirements will be rejected.
- **ATHENS**: Please check the website and follow the instructions.
- **UIC DOUBLE DEGREE**: To know more about the Double Degree Programme with the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) please refer to the Management Engineering [website](#). For further information please contact the Management Engineering International Relations Office: international-dig@polimi.it





WHERE

The Mobility Call requires that the student indicates a list of preferred exchange **destinations**. Therefore, BEFORE applying, students will need to research and evaluate the schools. This part of the process does not involve the appointed faculty advisors. For any information regarding the administrative processes and requirements of each partner school please refer to the partner university website typically, “exchange/incoming students” webpage.

The BSc and MSc Management Engineering degree programmes have partnership agreements with nearly **200** universities, and those will be visible to students on their mobility application page.

Students can also refer to:

- Their degree’s Manifesto degli Studi (*Internationalization section*), for a list of the partner universities.
- The School of Management website for an overview of its [international network](#). Students will then have to view the pages dedicated to international exchanges on the partner schools’ website.
- The section of the Polimi website dedicated to [mapping](#) all the exchange and double degree partner schools and to providing useful information. It is possible to filter by school and study programme.
- The [Exchange your Mind](#) webpages, including student and alumni testimonials, presentations, and information on the many available opportunities.

Remember that there is an **overall value in a study abroad experience**, tied to many different factors; thanks to this experience you will get to know a new country, a new language, and new people. These aspects must be taken into consideration in your international mobility choice, as it is not a mere matter of compatibility with your course curriculum.

At the same time, it is important to remember that you will **not always be assigned your top favourite destination**, so you will have to be sure to **carefully select** each exchange university you include on your application.



HOW

You took part in the mobility call, you were assigned a position at a partner university, you accepted it. Congratulations!

And now? What next?

THE NOMINATION: Once you accept the destination assigned to you, the International Mobility Unit will be able to inform the partner school. At this point procedures vary, so you will submit your application following the partner school's deadlines and requirements. The International Mobility Unit will support you; you will also have the opportunity of talking to other Polimi students who took part in the exchange programme before you, at the same partner university, for some peer-to-peer advice.

THE LEARNING AGREEMENT: The collaboration with your **faculty advisor for international mobility starts here**; this collaboration will end once you return, with the validation of the exams taken abroad. On the Management Engineering website, under the *International Experiences* tab, you will find a series of tools and useful information for this phase of the process (the Complete International Exchanges Guide and FAQs, the Format Dossier, the Dual Degree prospects). Make the most of them! The faculty advisor will assess the course information you collect (at times, if deemed necessary, the advisor will require the support of an expert in the field, still a member of the Commission); once you reach an **adequate number of credits** and an appropriate course match with your study plan, the advisor signs the Learning Agreement, to be submitted through the new OLA application.

ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES: Depending on the exchange type and on the destination, there will still be a few [administrative processes](#) to complete (visa, signing of contracts, etc.). The International Mobility Unit will be your reference point: make sure you read their emails and follow their instructions, and everything will proceed smoothly.

THE (LIKELY) UPDATE OF THE LEARNING AGREEMENT: Be aware that (very) often the partner school's course offerings will have changed by the time you get there, so some of your courses might not be available. **Don't panic!** Should this happen, you will be required to contact your faculty advisor to identify possible course substitutes and update your OLA accordingly. This is a **standard procedure**, for which you will receive full support from the Politecnico, so do not be concerned.



IMPORTANT: Even while on exchange you remain first of all a Politecnico student. So be sure to **follow the deadlines and procedures required** by the school **for Polimi students** (ISEE, Study plan, etc.)

WHY

There is an overall consensus towards recognizing the importance of a study abroad experience in today's higher education. The **2019 EU Report** on the effectiveness of Erasmus exchanges, based on a group of 77.000 individuals, indicates that **72%** of them refer that the exchange experience **increased their employment opportunities**, also by accelerating their job placement, especially in southern European countries. And, most importantly, today **nearly 80% of graduates with an international experience find a job within three months from graduation.**

In addition to getting to know a new country and a new culture, they indicate the following skills as being most strengthened by the exchange experience: **adaptability, interpersonal skills, intercultural skills, foreign language, critical thinking, problem solving, ability to take decisions, ability to work in a team, entrepreneurial skills, digital skills.**

Every year over **1500** Politecnico students go abroad, and the number increases constantly. Of these, over **400** are Management Engineering students, indicating the School of Management's **strong commitment towards the internationalization of its study programmes.**

With all of this in mind, students should apply to the mobility call knowing there are many opportunities available to them and that each one is also a **networking and personal growth** opportunity.

It will be crucial to acquire, right from the beginning, the **flexibility** and adaptability skills required to fit in a different university system and context, and to take into **consideration all the possible benefits** rather than the risk, for example, of enrolling in fewer courses than planned or that those courses might not be quite what expected.

As of today, **80%** of our students would recommend their exchange experience to other Management Engineering students and nearly **95%** provide very positive feedback.



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LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

Upon your return from the exchange, in order to formally end your experience, there are a few important steps to take.

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS (ToR): The document that officially certifies your academic work abroad is called a Transcript of Records. It is issued by the partner institution and sent to Politecnico or given to the student. Be sure to verify that this is done automatically, or if you need to submit a request before leaving. Once the ToR is received and posted online by the International Mobility Unit, you have to accept it on the Polimi online services, and it will then be possible to proceed with your course/credit validation.

SURVEY: An important step will be to take part in the Commission's online survey on your international exchange experience. Thanks to this minor commitment, you will contribute effectively towards improving the experience for those who will go abroad after you. The link will be sent to you upon your return. If in need of support, please contact: international-dig@polimi.it.

TRAVEL STORIES: Sharing the exchange experience with your peers can be of great help to students who are considering a study abroad experience or when they are in the process of selecting their study abroad destination. So, we might be asking you to provide a brief testimonial of your experience. Thank you in advance for your collaboration! If in need of support, please contact: international-dig@polimi.it.

COURSE/CREDIT VALIDATION: By accessing the Transcript, your exchange faculty advisor at Politecnico will be able to proceed with the transfer credit evaluation. Please contact your advisor, to know how to proceed. Once this step is completed, your study plan will be updated with the courses taken abroad. Should you not be satisfied with one or more of your grades, you will be able to refuse them and take the exams again at Politecnico.