



**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**

**Updated: July 2019**



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## WHO

A successful international mobility experience is based on the **COLLABORATION** of 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 Exchange Office Staff (Studesk-Bovisa):** 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 Exchange Office - Studesk Campus Bovisa](#)  
[Appointed Faculty Members for International Mobility](#)  
[Complete International Exchanges Guide \(& FAQ\)](#)



## **WHEN**

Management Engineering students who wish to study abroad must apply to the yearly **[CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY](#)**, that opens in November/December. The call provides detailed instructions, to guide the candidates through the step by step 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 Programmes for Management Engineering students (Alliance4Tech and Qtem).

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 Exchanges 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 their application, **as a form of consideration towards all participants**. A withdrawal from the programme, due to an 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 between January and March.

The candidate will have to **formally accept** the assigned exchange destination in order for the Studesk to 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 MOVING** (Study abroad experiences at universities that currently are not Politecnico partners): the School has established strict rules (available on the [International Exchanges Guide](#)) for students wishing to pursue this path. Applications submitted without the appropriate requirements will be rejected.
- **ATHENS**: Please check the website and follow the instructions.





## 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. The Studesk will be able to provide some advice, feedback and useful information based on experience, however it will be **the candidate's responsibility to do the appropriate research**.

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 international exchange section on the partner schools' website.

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 **choose carefully** 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 Studesk 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 Studesk 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:** Here starts the collaboration with your **faculty advisor for international mobility**, collaboration that will end once you return, with the validation of the exams taken abroad. On the SoM website, under *international experiences*, 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, that you then submit to the Studesk.

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

**THE (POSSIBLE) 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 LA 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.)



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## 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 study abroad, and the number increases constantly. Of these, over **280** 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 the expected ones.

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, without you having to submit a request before leaving. Once the ToR is received and posted online by the Studesk, it will be possible to proceed with your course/credit validation.

**SURVEY:** A mandatory step before your advisor can complete the course/credit validation 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: [exchangemanagement-dig@polimi.it](mailto:exchangemanagement-dig@polimi.it)

**TRAVEL STORIES:** The Commission believes that sharing the exchange experience with your peers can be of great help to students when selecting their study abroad destination. So the request is for all students to write a brief report on their exchange experience (8000 characters minimum), that then will be shared online, with the student's consent.

If in need of support please contact: [exchangemanagement-dig@polimi.it](mailto:exchangemanagement-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.