



ACADEMIC EXCHANGE

HANDBOOK
FOR FINU STUDENTS

**developed by the
FinU International
Team**



General Information about the Academic Exchange Program

The **Academic Exchange Program** provides FinU students with a unique opportunity to study abroad during one semester at one of our partner universities. After successful completion of the Program a student is issued a **certificate** confirming their participation in academic mobility.



Students who want to participate in the Academic Exchange Program must take part in the **Competition** held annually in **February**. If, after the main Competition is finished, there are still some available spots at foreign universities, an **additional competition** is organized in **September**. The exact dates of the Competition are set by local normative acts of Financial University and are posted on the official website.



Who can participate in the Competition?

The main **Competition** is open to students who have successfully completed*:

- **3 academic semesters** - for students of undergraduate programs (2-3 year students);
- **2 modules** - for students of master's degree programs.

An **additional competition** is open to **3-year undergraduate students**. This restriction is caused by the fact that according to the results of an additional competition, students are sent to study at partner universities for the spring semester of the same academic year.

* successful completion means that the student has an average score of **at least 4.0** (on a five-point scale) and **has not failed any exam** during the entire period of study at Financial University.

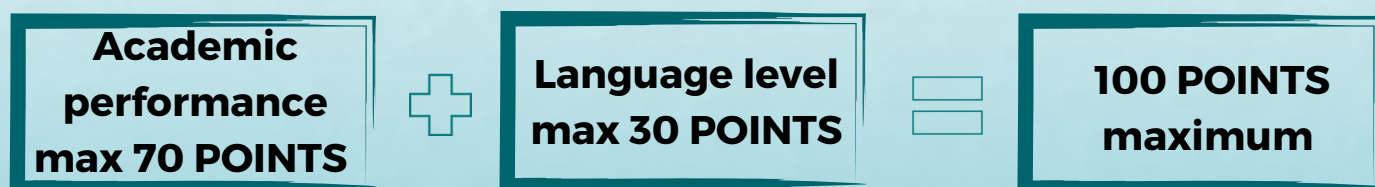
What documents do I need to prepare for the Competition?

The following documents are submitted in one set to the **International Relations Office** at 49/2 Leningradsky Prospekt, rooms **413** and **100a**:

- an **application** form completed in MS Word and signed by the dean of the faculty and the head of the master's program;
- a **document confirming foreign language proficiency** at level B2 or higher (international language certificate or a FinU certificate signed by the head of the Department of Foreign Languages; the procedure for obtaining this document can be found [here](#) in Russian);
- a **copy** of the first page of your **international passport**.

The Academic Mobility Division of the International Relations Office also obtains a students' academic transcript at the Student Office (students themselves do **not** have to provide it). A student is **unable** to participate in the Competition if the set of provided documents is **incomplete**.

What criteria are used to evaluate participants?



A **100-point system** based on two criteria is used to evaluate the contest participants and then compile the rating: a student's **academic performance** (maximum 70 points) and their **level of foreign language proficiency** (maximum 30 points).

The **score of academic performance** depends proportionally on the student's GPA, i.e. the average score (on a five-point scale), based on the correspondence of the maximum average score (5.00) to **70** points. The **foreign language score** depends on the level of proficiency in accordance with the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) assigned to the student based on the results of an international exam or a certificate from the Department of Foreign Languages. The maximum score (**30** points) corresponds to levels C1-C2.

What documents can confirm foreign language proficiency?

There are **two types of documents** confirming a student's proficiency in a foreign language: an **international language certificate** and a certificate signed by the head of the **Department of Foreign Languages** at Financial University. When preparing your documents, we recommend that you pay attention to the following facts:

- Some partner universities **require an international language certificate** for students participating in exchange programs. If this requirement is not specified in the promo materials, you do not have to provide the certificate, but it increases the number of points of the contestant;
- When applying to universities in some countries (for example, Germany and France), the proof of a **second foreign language** proficiency is required. The process of obtaining a certificate of proficiency in a second foreign language is similar to that of obtaining an English certificate.
- Some international language certificates (including IELTS and TOEFL) are valid for a certain period of time. Expired certificates are **not accepted**.

The **certificate** signed by the head of the Department of Foreign Languages is equal to **15 points** out 30, while the results of international exams score higher:

Points	Level (CEFR)	TOEFL iBT	IELTS	TOEIC	Cambridge Exams Score	Linguaskill
30	C1-C2	100-120	7,0-9,0	945-990	185+	180+
25	B2	90-99	6,5	851-944	176-184	170-179
20	B2	79-89	6,0	785-850	169-175	160-169

How do I find out which universities I can go to for my studies abroad?

Information about [partner universities](#) can be found on the website of Financial University in the "Student Exchange" section. The main principle of selection of foreign universities is to choose the one whose academic program and list of disciplines is **closest to your major** at Financial University. Using the hyperlinks, you can go to the web page of the host university dedicated to academic exchange programs and get acquainted with offered disciplines to compare them with your curriculum at FinU.

How many universities can I choose?

The student has the right to indicate **3 foreign educational organizations** in their application form, distributing them in order of **priority**. Please remember that priority is crucial for the results of the competition: the rankings are formed on the basis of priorities indicated by students, so we ask you to carefully consider the choice of a partner university.

As a guideline, you can use a **simple rule**: if you do not have an international language certificate, the number of your points will not exceed 85. In this case, it is advisable to select the "top university" with the leading positions in international rankings as the first priority and choose the universities that occupy lower places for the second and third places. Keep in mind that international rankings are not the only true indicator of the quality of education at a university, but they attract the attention of a large number of the Competition participants. You can also check with the coordinator of a particular university the "pass score" based on the results of the Competition held last year.

How do I find out how many available spots a partner university has?

In order to get all the necessary information on quotas, you should **contact the coordinator** of the university you are interested in by e-mail or by phone, which you can find on this page. You can also get this information at the **information stands** located in building 49/2 (Leningradsky Prospekt) near the rooms of the International Relations Office on the 1st floor.



What should I do after submitting my documents?

After submitting the documents, you should wait for the **official publication of the results** of the Competition, which will be posted on the [official website of Financial University](#). For further instructions, please reach out to your coordinator, who will contact you at the email address indicated in the application form. First of all, the coordinator performs a **nomination** of students for consideration by the host university. This procedure is largely formal in nature, but may require you to submit additional documents immediately after the announcement of the results, so you should **check your email address at least 2-3 times a day**. If you are not sure that you left a valid email address, please **contact your coordinator** for clarification.

How do I register for the program at a partner university?

The vast majority of foreign universities, after having approved the students nominated by FinU, will send out acceptance letters by e-mail. These emails contain a list of documents that need to be collected, as well as deadlines when this should be done. If you find it difficult to understand exactly which documents you need to submit, please contact your coordinator for help. As a rule, a student is required to submit a **transcript** (the procedure for obtaining a transcript can be found here), fill out **registration forms**, decide on the **place of residence** and choose the **subjects** they plan to study. Documents may vary depending on the university you choose, so you should carefully read the requirements.

Timely submission of these documents is the key to receiving an invitation to apply for a visa in advance, so we advise you not to postpone the submission of documents. Keep in mind that in many cases services for registering for academic disciplines and providing housing work on the **“first come – first served” principle**. A delay in preparing documents may leave you unable to enroll in a subject of interest or make you spend additional time and financial resources on finding and booking accommodation.

How do I choose academic subjects?

The choice of a partner university should be based on the similarity of the content of educational programs. Despite the fact that it is often impossible to achieve a complete match, you should try to select as many subjects **similar to the ones you study at Financial University as possible**.






We advise you to contact the Dean's office of your faculty, who will be able to help you with selection of necessary subjects. Keep in mind that after you return to Moscow, you will have to **take exams** for all subjects that you missed at FinU and instead of which you did not take similar ones at the partner university.

What should I do after receiving an invitation from a foreign university?

You need an invitation from your foreign university in order to **obtain a visa**. The student applies for a visa **on their own**, but if you have any questions or difficulties, you can contact your coordinator for advice and assistance. Please note that visa processing takes a certain amount of time, so we recommend that you do **not delay** the submission of documents to the visa department of the embassy.

What documents do I need to prepare for my departure from FinU?

In order to leave FinU for the Academic Exchange Program, you must obtain the **official permission** from Financial University. To have it issued, you will need to provide your coordinator with a set of the following **documents**:

-  Application for the official permission to study abroad
-  Application for transfer to a personal study plan
-  Completed personal study plan signed by the Dean of your faculty
-  Copy of the invitation from a foreign university
-  Russian translation of the invitation (you can translate it yourself)

Sample documents can be found on the website of Financial University in the [Academic Exchange](#) section. These documents should be submitted to the International Relations Office **immediately after receiving an invitation** from the host university. Sending a student without an official permission is impossible, and their absence from classes will be considered absenteeism, which may lead to various **administrative penalties up to expulsion** from Financial University.

How is participation in the Academic Exchange Program funded?

FinU students are exempt from paying **tuition fees** at partner universities, so studying there is **free of charge**. Other expenses (including transportation, visa fees, accommodation, meals, etc.) are **borne by the student**. You can gauge the approximate cost of living in a particular city [here](#). These costs can be covered through **additional scholarship** programs (for example, Erasmus+ or FIRST+), but the possibility of receiving such support should be discussed with the FinU coordinator **BEFORE** submitting documents for participation in the Competition.

Please note that students who pay for their education at Financial University are **not exempt** from paying the FinU tuition fees during a semester abroad.

How should I fill out a personal study plan?

A **personal study plan** (PSP) is the most important document to the student for the period of his/her participation in the Academic Exchange Program. The PSP contains a list of subjects that a student is supposed to study at Financial University, as well as a list of disciplines that the student plans to study at the host university. The PSP reflects the possibility of **recognizing the results of subjects taken abroad by FinU**, so it is necessary to indicate the names of disciplines at Financial University and a foreign educational organization in the corresponding columns. The PSP also sets **deadlines for taking tests and exams** in academic subjects that are **not included** in the student's curriculum at the host university. These deadlines are **mandatory**, and the Dean's office of the faculty monitors their compliance.

For advice on completing the PSP, you can contact your coordinator in the International Relations Office and the staff of the Dean's office of your faculty. Remember that by signing your PSP, you agree that **it is your responsibility** to follow it.

What should I do upon arrival at the partner university?

Upon arrival at a foreign university and after completing all the necessary registration procedures, you will need to **inform your coordinator** at the International Relations Office that you have arrived at the host university and are located in your chosen place of residence.

During the entire period of study, you should inform the **coordinator** at the International Relations Office and the staff of the Dean's office of the faculty of all emergencies that may arise **in advance**. Such cases include, for example, the loss of an ID, issues with academic performance, the need to change the date of return to Financial University, and other situations that **require immediate action**. Keep in mind that you must comply with the deadlines set by your personal study plan, and violation of these deadlines may result in an appropriate **disciplinary action**.

Return to FinU

What should I do after returning to Financial University?



Come to the Dean

Bring a transcript

Pass exams

Write a review

First, you need to **come to the Dean's office** and inform them about your return. The Dean's office will help you negotiate with teachers about recognizing the results of your study abroad and **passing the remaining disciplines**. In order for the results of your studies at a partner university to be recognized, you must submit a **transcript** issued by a foreign university and translated into Russian. The International Relations Office will be grateful if you fill out a **review** about your trip and share some photos with us. Your experience will be extremely useful for future participants of the Academic Exchange Program.