Applying for a Stay Abroad at ETH Zurich, Academic Year 2021/22: Instructions for Regular Visiting Students

Important Information on COVID-19
Your mobility stay will likely look somewhat different from what the experience would be like in a “normal” mobility stay. Please read the following information leaflet with the most important points thoroughly and carefully.

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1. Rules and Conditions

Students from a university that has no exchange agreement with ETH Zurich may apply as visiting students if they want to attend courses. Please note that applications will not be accepted from partner universities that already have an exchange agreement in the field of studies in question.

Regular visiting students can study for a period of up to two semesters and do not acquire an ETH Zurich degree. Once the maximum of 12 months is reached, re-admission to exchange or visiting studies at the same academic level, or re-admission at a higher level immediately after the first stay, are not possible. A mobility study period constitutes no claim to recognition in the case of a later enrolment as a regular Bachelor or Master student at ETH Zurich.

Regular visiting students must pay the regular tuition fees and compulsory semester fees. Please note that visiting students are not eligible for tuition fee waivers. Please also see below for further details on fees.

You must read the information on our website regarding prerequisites, language skills, etc. carefully.

Please note that the application is binding.

2. Preparation (before online application) and application deadlines

The application deadlines at ETH Zurich are as follows:

- For the Autumn Semester: 15 April (13:00 CET) (online application completed and submitted, including all documents)
- For the Spring Semester: 15 October (13:00 CET) (online application completed and submitted, including all documents)

Late applications are not allowed. Exceptions are not possible.

3. Important information about visiting studies at ETH Zurich

### Semester dates

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<th>Autumn semester 2021</th>
<th>Spring semester 2022</th>
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<td>Session exams</td>
<td>24.01.2022 – 18.02.2022</td>
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When planning your stay at ETH Zurich, be aware of the semester dates and examination periods as you cannot shift any exams, i.e. you have to take the regular examinations! See [website on study planning](#) for further details about the examinations.

**Visa and residence permit**

- Citizens of the European Union or EFTA states do not require a visa for Switzerland and therefore need do nothing in this regard before their arrival.

- Citizens of other countries must check with the Swiss Embassy whether they need a visa for Switzerland. You are responsible for determining whether you need an entry visa and, if applicable, for obtaining the visa; you will receive detailed information about the visa application process and the necessary official confirmation from us if your application to ETH Zurich is successful. Please note that the process of obtaining a student visa will take up to 3 months, so timely application for your visa is essential!
Do not enter Switzerland with a tourist visa or with a Schengen residence permit: these allow you to travel to Switzerland as a tourist, but not to study there!

Any questions regarding the visa requirements or process must be addressed directly to the respective Swiss embassy/consulate abroad.

Regardless of your nationality, you require a **residence permit**. To obtain a residence permit, you must register with the appropriate authority within 14 days of your arrival in Switzerland. You will find more information about this procedure in your ETH Zurich letter of acceptance.

**Proof of sufficient financial means:**
Visiting students must produce evidence of sufficient financial means to support their stay in Switzerland. You can do so by providing bank statements, scholarship awards, or (if you are an EU/EFTA citizen) a letter of your parents – see below for more information.

**For bank statements:** The Immigration Office requires **confirmation from a bank with a branch in Switzerland** (foreign bank with a branch in Switzerland or a Swiss bank). In the Canton of Zurich, as a rule, you must be able to provide evidence of having **CHF 1750 per month** during your visiting studies, including the examination period at ETH Zurich. The account must be registered in your own name and the currency must be Swiss Francs, Euros or US Dollars. No other currencies are accepted! **Important:** Even big and internationally well-known banks are not accepted if they do not have a branch in Switzerland. See this [list of accepted banks](#) for more information.

**For EU/EFTA Citizens only:** Instead of providing a bank statement and/or scholarship award, you may also hand in a letter of your parents confirming that they will support you with CHF 1750 per month.

When you need to provide the proof of financial means depends on whether you require a visa:

- **Visiting students who require a visa for Switzerland** must furnish proof of financial means together with their visa application.
- **Visiting students who do not require a visa for Switzerland** will need to furnish proof of financial means only when applying for their residence permit.

Any questions regarding the proof of sufficient financial means must be addressed directly to the respective Swiss embassy/consulate abroad.

**Health Insurance**
Everyone who lives in Switzerland for at least three months (90 days) is required by law to have health and accident insurance coverage from a Swiss insurance company. Additional information is listed under 'Living in Zurich' and on this [website](#).

- **Students from EU and EFTA countries:** In the framework of the Bilateral Agreements between the EU and Switzerland, visiting students from EU and EFTA countries can **apply for an exemption** from the Swiss compulsory health insurance, provided that they obtain the ‘European Health Insurance Card’ from their health insurance in their home country.
- **Students from other countries:** If your insurer is acknowledged by the Swiss authorities, you may be **exempted** from having to take out compulsory health insurance in Switzerland. If you are not exempted, which will most likely be the case, some Swiss insurance companies offer [special packages](#) for foreign students.

**Studying with a disability**
Please contact the [disability advisory service](#) at an early stage for information on support options and procedures. This is particularly important with regard to study conditions, examination arrangements and the housing situation in Zurich.

**Accommodation**
Visiting students are obliged to find accommodation on their own. Finding accommodation in Zurich is difficult and time-consuming. In the Spring Semester, the availability of student housing is usually slightly better than in the Autumn Semester. You will receive detailed information about accommodation in Zurich with your letter
Living costs in Zurich
Please be aware that living costs in Switzerland are very high, and especially so in Zurich. The Immigration Authorities identify a sum of CHF 1750 per month as necessary to support oneself financially. Your expenses will depend largely on your monthly rent. Finding cheap housing in Zurich is difficult. For more information, see the information on our website.

German courses
The joint Language Center of the University and ETH Zurich offers semester courses in ‘German as a foreign language’ for all levels of proficiency, as well as intensive German courses for three levels of proficiency in Spring and Autumn (in the two weeks before the respective semester starts). Mobility students may take the intensive German course plus one semester course. Pre-registration on the website of the Language Center is necessary and course fees apply. In addition, there may be a charge for copies and other course materials. Details are given in this leaflet.

Arrival and enrolment at ETH Zurich
Students need to register at the helpdesk of the Student Exchange Office after arrival. There is also an official welcome and information event on the first Monday of the semester in week 38 (Autumn) or the Friday just before the semester starts in week 7 (Spring). Its exact time and location will be specified at a later stage.

Department of Biosystems Science and Engineering (D-BSSE) in Basel
Note that certain conditions and services differ substantially for students applying for the department of Biosystems Sciences and Engineering (D-BSSE), which is located in Basel. Refer to the separate factsheet of D-BSSE for important details on immigration policies, housing, catering, sports facilities, etc.

Living/Studying outside of the canton of Zurich
Information provided by the Student Exchange Office concerning visa, residence permit and health insurance only applies to mobility students who live and study in the canton of Zurich. Mobility students in D-BSSE in Basel (canton Basel-Stadt) should consult the separate fact sheet. Mobility students with a place of residence or place of study in another canton are responsible on their own to clarify the necessary conditions, carry out the respective formalities and respect the regulations that are applicable. The Student Exchange Office cannot assist mobility students not living in the canton of Zurich or the canton of Basel-Stadt with respective questions.

4. Documents required for online application
ETH Zurich uses the ‘Mobility-Online’ tool to manage its applications. See the chapter on the application procedure for information on how to start your online application. All documents except the photo should be uploaded as PDFs.

Study plan
Please read the information on preparing a study plan carefully. Any changes to the study plan need to be made online after the start of the semester and need to be re-approved by your department at ETH Zurich.

Letter of recognition from your home university
Your home university has to confirm in writing that they will recognize the majority of courses you take during your stay at ETH Zurich and credit them towards your degree programme. They must use the template provided – any other confirmations than the form provided will not be accepted.

Confirmation of supervisor (where applicable)
Important: As a regular visiting student, you apply for coursework at ETH Zurich. Should you also wish to do a project, it must not exceed 10 ECTS, otherwise you would have to apply as an invited visiting student instead.
You are responsible for finding a project supervisor. Please apply directly with professors of ETH Zurich. Once you have found a supervisor, have the form 'Confirmation of Thesis / Research Project Supervisor for Incoming Mobility Project Student' filled in and signed by your supervising ETH professor before uploading it in Mobility-Online. You may either use:

a) the (unpersonalised) version, or
b) the (personalised) version, which you will download as a part of the application process.

Any other confirmations than the form provided will not be accepted.

**Transcript of records**

You must upload a complete, official transcript of records in English or German of all your studies to date, i.e. including your Bachelor’s degree studies if you are already a Master’s degree student.

**Grading Key**

You need to upload a grading key/legend explaining the grading system of your home university or any other previous universities you attended.

**List of courses to be completed prior to mobility studies**

You are required to upload a list of the courses that you plan to take at your home university before your stay at ETH Zurich and which are not yet listed on your transcript of records. You may make your own list or use the template here.

**Language skills and confirmation**

The language of instruction of the individual courses is indicated in the course catalogue. For courses taught in German, a good knowledge of German (min. C1) is mandatory; for courses taught in English, a good knowledge of English (min. C1) is required. Your choice of courses determines which language certificate you need.

You only need a language confirmation for the languages in which you want to attend courses (i.e. if you only want to attend courses taught in English, you only need an English language confirmation, but no German language confirmation; if you want to attend courses in English and German, you need a language confirmation for both languages).

The minimum requirement C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages applies to both teaching languages. We accept all well-established language certificates or a confirmation from an academic supervisor/language teacher at your home university confirming your language level C1 or higher. Confirmations and certificates that do not explicitly confirm a C1 cannot be accepted.

Exempt from having to submit a language confirmation in the respective language of instruction are:

- Students who have studied exclusively in the respective language for at least 2 years prior to the start of the planned visiting study period (i.e. in English for the English language confirmation, respectively in German for the German language confirmation).

- Students with a corresponding native language. By ‘native language’ we mean the main language which you acquired in childhood with no formal teaching. It is also the language in which you now write, speak and understand written and oral communication with the least effort and with the greatest competence (level C2 and higher1). By ‘bilingual’ (second native language) we mean that your knowledge of a second language fulfils the same criteria as those listed above for your native language.

**Passport**

You will also be required to upload a scan of your valid passport: page(s) with your photo and personal details (name, date of birth) only. EU/EFTA citizens may also upload a scan of their identity card instead.

**Photo**

You must upload a photo of yourself in portrait format which will be used for your ETH student card. Make sure that the picture quality is good and that you are recognisable in the photo (full-face, well-lit, neutral background, etc.). The photo may not be larger than 800x600 pixels (height x width) and 1 MB maximum.
CV
You are required to upload a curriculum vitae (CV) in English or German. Ensure that it is up-to-date.

Motivation Letter
You must upload a motivation letter in which you state your motivation for a mobility stay at ETH Zurich. Maximum 1 page (A4), in English or German.

Students of Architecture: Portfolio
Applicants in architecture must submit with their application a portfolio. The portfolio must be uploaded in electronic form on Mobility-Online. Note the binding requirements for the portfolio of the department of architecture outlined on their website.

5. Fees

Tuition fees
Regular visiting students pay tuition fees at ETH Zurich (see website for details).

- Tuition fees (per weekly hour, i.e. for a course taking place each week for one hour for the duration of the whole semester): CHF 60

- Maximum tuition fees per semester (for students taking courses for more than 12 weekly hours): CHF 730

Regular visiting students are required to obtain at least 20 ECTS per semester, hence the maximum tuition fees usually apply.

Compulsory semester fees
In addition to the tuition fees, there are ‘compulsory semester fees’ of CHF 69 (for use of sports facilities, general services, etc. – see website for details) which are charged per semester enrolment.

Application fee
When applying in Mobility-Online for a stay as regular visiting student, you will be requested to pay the application processing fee of CHF 150 by credit card. Note that you must have a valid credit card.

Invoicing of tuition fees and compulsory semester fees
In the 5th week of the semester, students will automatically receive an invoice from ETH Zurich for their tuition and compulsory semester fees, based on the selection of courses/project work. Please note that you will not be able to attend any courses you have not signed up for, nor will you be able to take exams or receive any kind of confirmation. The invoice will be sent out electronically by email to your ETH email address. It can be paid in cash at any post office or at the ETH cash desk. For detailed information on how to pay your semester invoice, consult the student portal.

It is very important to always update your valid postal address, so that any postal correspondence is sent to the correct place.

6. Preparing a Study Plan
The study plan is the list of courses you plan on taking at ETH Zurich. It is an essential part of your application and determines which department you are applying to.
7. Application procedure

Begin your application process by clicking here (for the German version of the search portal, please click here) and follow the procedure outlined below.

**Application form**

Enter the required information and submit the form. As your email address, it is preferable to give your student email address from the home university (universities are normally less restrictive in sorting potential spam than private providers) and/or to set the domain ethz.ch on your whitelist, so that you are sure to receive ETH Zurich emails.

After submitting your form, you will receive an email with details how to set up a user account. After setting it up you will receive a further email with details of how to log in to Mobility-Online to complete your application. You may only submit the application when you have completed all the necessary steps! Please note that you must submit it by the given deadline.

Should you have been at ETH Zurich as a visiting or exchange student before and should you either have forgotten your password to Mobility-Online or should your account no longer be active, please contact us by sending an email to exchange@ethz.ch.

**Login**

Always enter Mobility-Online by entering your details in the upper half of the login page (even after you begin your stay at ETH Zurich):

Note for Mac users: Please first activate the ‘Always show scrollbar’ setting; otherwise, depending on your browser setting, the scrollbar function may be deactivated and you may not be able to view your workflow correctly.

Logging in will call up your workflow with all pending steps. Complete these steps by clicking on the link to the corresponding step on the right. The compulsory steps must be completed in the designated order:

- **Study Plan Guidelines**
- **Conditions set by the departments**
Adding data

Add an emergency contact and an administrative contact at your home university. Click on the 'edit' button to make changes.

Study plan

The next step is to enter the study plan where you list all courses and/or projects you plan on taking. Your Departmental Exchange Coordinator will check it after you submit your application; it is an important part of the application. Be sure to adhere to the study plan guidelines and to the conditions set by the departments.

First, select your courses in the ETH Zurich Course Catalogue, where you will find detailed descriptions, information about prerequisites, etc. Add each of the chosen courses to your study plan in Mobility-Online by clicking on “Enter further courses”. You only need to type or copy/paste the course number from the Course Catalogue and autocomplete will fill in the rest (title and number of credits). A search function is also available.

You must, however, enter in full any courses of other institutions (e.g. the University of Zurich): these are not automatically linked. You must enter them manually in the study plan: Click on “Enter further courses” and add the title of the course, the amount of ECTS and if known the course number.

Projects (e.g. Bachelor’s or Master’s thesis) must also be entered as course units. There are special project course units for mobility students for 5 / 10 / 15 / 20 / 25 / 30 / 60 ECTS credits. One month of full-time project work corresponds to 5 credits. If necessary, you can also combine different course units. If you are unsure about the correct amount of credits, discuss the scope (i.e. workload) of the project with your supervisor. To search the project course units in the course catalogue, enter the desired project scope/credits under "course unit", e.g. "30 Credit Project". You can add these projects to your study plan in Mobility-Online by entering the course number from the course catalogue. Note that design courses in Architecture do not count as projects.

Projects (if applicable)

All projects must be entered in the study plan as course units (see above). In addition, you must enter details about the project in a separate step.

Important: As a regular visiting student, you apply for coursework at ETH Zurich. Should you also wish to do a project, it must not exceed 10 ECTS, otherwise you would have to apply as an invited visiting student instead.

You are responsible for finding a project supervisor. Please apply directly with professors of ETH Zurich. Once you have found a supervisor, have the form 'Confirmation of Thesis / Research Project Supervisor for Incoming Mobility Project Student' filled in and signed by your supervising ETH professor before uploading it in Mobility-Online. You may either use:

a) the (unpersonalised) version, or
b) the (personalised) version, which you will download as a part of the application process. Any other confirmations than the form provided will not be accepted.
Documents
Depending on the mobility programme, different documents should be uploaded: see the information above.

- Only PDF documents are accepted, no images (exception: photo for student card). Ensure that the resolution is good and that scans are of high quality.

Upload the documents according to the respective step in the application procedure.

If you wish to submit more than one document in one category, you may upload the second (and any following) document by clicking on the paper icon on the top left in the workflow step:

![Upload Documents Icon]

**Submitting the application**
After entering all of your information and uploading the documents, finish the application by confirming that it is complete and submitting it. You will receive an automatic confirmation by email.

**Next steps**
Your application will be perused in form and content after the application deadline.

Applications are competitive. The Student Exchange Office cannot answer any academic questions or make any assessment of an application’s chances of success.

The decision about admission as a visiting student is made by the department to which you apply. This decision is based on your grades and study achievements, your letter of motivation, your study plan for ETH Zurich, and the capacity of the department to accommodate visiting students related to the number of applications received. In Architecture, the additionally requested portfolio also plays an important part.

Note that admission as a regular visiting student does not mean that the admission criteria would be met for a full degree at ETH Zurich, e.g. Bachelor’s, Master’s or doctoral degree - different standards and requirements might apply.

Applicants are usually informed about the admission decision a few weeks after the application deadline - irrespective of whether they submitted their application earlier or not (i.e. no rolling admission). For the autumn semester, acceptance/rejection may be communicated as late as the end of May, for the spring semester the end of November. It is not possible to speed up the selection process.

If your application is accepted, you will receive an email stating that ETH Zurich has officially admitted you for your mobility period. Depending on the programme, there will be various further steps; you will receive a corresponding email describing them. You may log in to Mobility-Online at any time to view what information has already been sent, and which step comes next.