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HÁSKÓLINN Á BIFRÖST  
BIFRÖST UNIVERSITY

International Department  
Policy and procedures

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## Bifröst University Policy on International Activities

Bifröst University emphasises active participation in the international community and its activities. The objectives of the policy on international activities shall be achieved by integrating the policy with the institution's educational offerings and by ensuring an international dimension in learning and teaching and by participation in research and development with other universities and stakeholders.

A purposeful emphasis on social responsibility in learning content bears witness to the Bifröst University objective to educate people for positions of impact and responsibility in the economy and the community. The University community is open and international. As stated in the Bifröst University Policy Objectives to 2030, Bifröst University makes its contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by integrating its curricula with the SDG objectives.

Bifröst University is a leader in digital education and places emphasis on enhancing and developing opportunities for digital learning exchange studies through strong cooperation with distance teaching universities abroad.

### **Learning**

Bifröst University policy is:

- That in each study programme, electives are offered for study abroad, and that distance learning exchange studies will be among the options.
- That credit study-abroad programmes, short or long, are always an option and are appropriately recognised in a student's learning record.
- That in each study programme there is at least one course taught in English each semester. Such a course can be taught by a teacher from the department in question, or jointly with a cooperating foreign university.
- That students have equal opportunities and flexibility to study abroad during their learning, and additionally that all learning should nevertheless have an international dimension, regardless of whether students live abroad during their learning.
- That students are informed about opportunities for exchange studies during orientation days and during on-campus sessions.
- That each study programme should offer distance teaching in cooperation with other distance teaching universities.

## **Bifröst University policy for exchange students**

- That learning at Bifröst University should be accessible for exchange students with varied backgrounds, where they fulfil University entry requirements.
- That courses taught in English should be available, both in on-campus learning and in distance learning. This will ensure that all students at the University can attend these courses.
- That exchange students at Bifröst University should receive information at the start of term from student counsellors, from Academic Services, and from teachers, about the support available to them in their learning.
- The cooperation of Bifröst University students' union should be elicited to ensure that exchange students are offered a mentor from the student body at the University.
- That exchange students who come to Iceland to study at Bifröst University are offered a course on the Icelandic language and culture.

## **Teaching**

Bifröst University policy is:

- That student and staff exchange should be an integral part of the institution's activities.
- That all teachers and staff should have the option of participating in teacher and staff exchange, which gives the opportunity to expand personal networks, strengthen cooperation between institutions and enhance academic debate.
- To increase cooperation with foreign universities through participation in joint courses and study programmes.
- To encourage discussion on intercultural sensitivity and multicultural teaching methods through open discussion meetings at the beginning of the academic year.
- To make agreements with other distance teaching universities.

## **Research and development projects**

- Bifröst University belongs to the international scientific community and emphasises the enhancement of research activities.

- Cooperation through the EADTU (The European Association of Distance Teaching Universities) will be part of policy-oriented international activities at Bifröst University.
- The International Office shall purposefully work towards establishing cooperation with companies and their endeavours in the international arena, e.g. through EEA Grants development fund ([www.eeagrants.org](http://www.eeagrants.org)) and Europe Enterprise Network ([www.een.is](http://www.een.is)).
- Bifröst University has undertaken to work towards six principles on responsible management education under the aegis of PRME, which is supported by the United Nations.
- In the PRME, Bifröst University is a party to the cooperation forum for Nordic university departments of business education, PRME Nordic Chapter.

Each study programme at Bifröst University is reviewed on a cyclical basis. The policy for international activities and the above specified international policy for learning and teaching, shall be taken into account during such reviews.

The International Department specifies measurable objectives on activity and participation of students, teachers and other staff in operations with an international connection, e.g. student and staff exchange. The International Department ascertains annually the number of courses taught in English during the previous year and provides information on the number of students that completed those courses.

While preparing the Bifröst University annual report, the International Department, in cooperation with the Research Centre, makes an overview on activity and participation in work with an international connection, and at a meeting in the spring term shall report on data from the previous year and update objectives for the coming two years.

# The Procedures for Outgoing Student Exchange

## Objective

The objective of these procedures is to ensure the effective and professional preparation and implementation of outgoing student exchange in compliance with Bifröst University's policy on student exchange and international relations.

## Disclosure of information

The International Office (IO) is responsible for providing students with information on possible student exchange programs and grants in due time before application deadlines, which are, as a rule, two times each year. The IO is responsible for providing necessary information to students regarding all the steps of the process, both in relation with the selected partner university and the available grants. The IO administers all relations with prospective exchange students from Bifröst University.

## Implementation of student exchange

The IO is responsible for the effective and professional processing and dealing with applications for student exchange abroad. Students are responsible for the progress of their studies during their time of stay at partner universities. After performing the selection process, the IO nominates exchange students to the respective partner universities before the deadline set by the partner. The appropriate Dean confirms a student's choice of courses by signing the student's Learning Agreement and briefs the student on which courses will be qualified as a part of the student's degree.

## Procedures overview

### Before departure.

The IO communicates the exchange opportunities to all students in late January each year by sending email to all students and by giving presentation to students who are interested. The IO expects enquiries and applications for exchange from students in February-March and meetings with all applicants are scheduled. When students have confirmed their interest in the exchange and chosen a partner university, the IO sends out nominations to the relevant universities. The student receives information package from the university soon after that. The student receives English test from Erasmus to complete within 30 days. The student must choose courses at the relevant partner university and complete Learning Agreement no later than 90 days before the beginning of the semester. The courses must be qualified with the curriculum/student's major at Bifröst University and the appropriate Dean must sign the Learning Agreement to confirm the course selection with a signature. If the student has chosen partner university within Europe, then the Erasmus grant is arranged for the student and the transfer is granted before the start of the semester.

After departure.

The exchange students must hand in the document 'confirmation of arrival' that the International Office at the host institution can sign. At the end of the semester, the host institution issues Transcripts of Records that is an overview of the courses completed and the grades. Bifröst University acknowledges the document as a 'confirmation of stay'. The students' academic results are sent to the Academic Services for record keeping. In the end, the student must submit final report to Erasmus to get the final payment according to the Erasmus agreement.

# The Procedures for Incoming Student Exchange

## Objective

The objective of these procedures is to ensure the effective and professional preparation and implementation of incoming exchange students in compliance with Bifröst University's policy on student exchange and international relations.

## DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

The International Office (IO) is responsible for providing students information on possible student exchange programs in due time before application deadlines, which are, as a rule, two times each year. The IO administers relations with foreign exchange students at Bifröst University and gives them information about studies, examinations, accommodation, and the rules and regulations of Bifröst University.

## Implementation of student exchange

The IO is responsible for the effective and professional processing and dealing with applications for student exchange. Students are responsible for the progress of their studies during their time at Bifröst University. The IO and the heads of departments are responsible for maintaining a curriculum of courses taught in English and for ensuring that there is enough supply of courses taught in English each semester for foreign exchange students to attend.

## Procedure overview

### Before arrival.

The IO receives nominations from partner universities from January to May and each student receives information package on how to apply and how to prepare for the semester in Bifröst. The IO works with the Academic Services Department and the Deans to confirm the course offerings taught in English before April 1st each year. The nominated students apply for the exchange studies by submitting their online application form and they receive confirmation letters from the IO within 2 weeks of application. By June 1st, the students must hand in Learning Agreements with course selection and the IO sends the Academic Guide to all accepted students. The IO submits an list of accommodation needs for students 3 weeks before arrival to the Housing office and requests student ID cards from the Service Manager for all accepted students.



After arrival.

The IO delivers the Orientation session and organizes events throughout the semester, such as Welcome Dinner, International Dinner, Day Trip. The IO prepares the departures of exchange students and issues Transcripts of Records for all students that are sent in hard copy to the relevant universitie

## The Procedure for Lecturers/Staff Exchange at Bifrost University

It is Bifröst University's policy to have foreign visiting lecturers teaching regularly at the University. Likewise, the University encourages its own lecturers to engage in teaching as visiting lecturers at Bifröst University's partner universities abroad, as possible. Bifröst teachers and staff are encouraged to participate in staff training weeks abroad to broaden their professional network, to acquire knowledge and specific know-how from good practices abroad and to gain practical skills relevant for their current job and professional development.

All academic employees at the University may show initiative in inviting foreign instructors to teach at the University, given the approval of the head of department and the head of the International Office. The Dean is responsible for drawing up an agreement on the arrangement of the teaching, the duration of the visiting lecturer's stay and remuneration. The head of the International Office takes care of the reception of the visiting lecturer and organises his/her stay on campus in consultation with Academic Services. The head of department organises the visiting instructor's work during his/her stay at Bifröst in consultation with the respective lecturer and Academic Services.

Visiting lecturers have identical duties to students as permanently contracted lecturer. Foreign visiting lecturers enjoy the same services as permanently contracted instructors at the University during their stay at Bifröst.



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