

## **Music Study, Mobility, and Accountability Project**

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### **Guide to Finances, Recognition Issues, and Other Practical Matters**

In the production of this publication, the authors gratefully made extensive use of the excellent publications on related subjects produced by NAFSA (Association of International Educators). A detailed list of these and other publications can be found on the final pages of this document.

#### **FORMAL ARRANGEMENTS AND FINANCES**

Although some institutions have informal exchange contacts that are based on historic relations or personal contact between certain staff members, in order to guarantee continuity of relations and clarity of agreements, it is recommended that any arrangement for institutional cooperation be documented in the form of a formal contract.

##### **Bilateral Agreements**

Transatlantic exchanges of students and teachers between institutions are most commonly formalised in a bilateral agreement. Such an agreement is a contract between two institutions that lays down the basis of cooperation in student and/or staff exchanges, and (if appropriate) other types of activities. [Examples of bilateral contracts](#) are available at the project website.

Important financial issues to keep in mind when working with bilateral agreements are:

- What will the financial arrangements be? Especially in light of the great difference in amount of tuition fees in Europe and the United States, it is crucial to decide in advance how this will be handled. Most exchange agreements are based on ‘closed purses’, where students continue to pay the regular fee to their home institution while studying abroad. Students do not pay any additional fee to the host institution during their exchange period.
- How many students will be exchanged per semester/year?
- Which services are included for the host student? Although students live completely independently in many countries, in other countries student campuses provide food, housing and social and other activities. An agreement needs to be clear about what the host university can offer to the exchange student: e.g. on-campus housing, host family accommodation, finding independent accommodation, meals, language courses, social activities, and sports facilities.
- Students will have to take into account the following types of expenditure when going on exchange:
  - o Room and board
  - o Books and supplies
  - o Living expenses

- o Medical insurance
- o Instrument insurance
- o Round trip airfare (with possible extra charges for instrument!)

Normally, in an exchange programme working on the basis of the ‘closed purses’ principle mentioned above, admission and tuition fees should be waived by the host institution.

When going to the United States, students could be asked to sign a declaration of finances with proof of funds in form of a bank statement or a guarantee letter from a sponsor. (A sample [financial declaration form](#) can be found at the project website.)

- The bilateral agreement should also contain an article on the use of learning agreements for every student going on exchange; this will help to avoid problems with the academic recognition of study periods later on (see also paragraph on ‘Recognition Issues’).

### **Multilateral Network Agreements**

Instead of, or in addition to working bilaterally, many institutions decide to operate in larger international networks of schools. Benefits of the network method include the increased number of programmes, courses, and host institutions available to students wishing to go abroad. Special arrangements like reciprocal exchange with ‘closed purses’ form the financial basis of the multilateral agreement. Examples of such networks are the ‘MAUI-Utrecht Network’, the ‘ISEP-Network’, and the EU/USA programme.

#### *International Student Exchange Programme - ISEP*

ISEP is a worldwide network of 245 member institutions in the United States and thirty-five other countries. The programme is administered by a central office in Washington, D.C., and by the designated co-ordinator at each member institution. Member and participant fees support ISEP.

When organising student exchange, each member institution determines the ‘ISEP programme fee’, based on the usual fees (except tuition and admission fees) and living expenses at that institution. The programme is designed so that students exchanged throughout the ISEP network continue to pay their normal tuition fee to their home institution, and in addition pay the ‘ISEP programme fee’ to their home institution (for example €3,000, but this can vary significantly depending the geographic area). The home institution uses the money received from its own students to support the incoming students with room and board. The student will receive room and board when abroad from the host institution, which is paid for by the students who have left that institution on exchange. This method allows students to study abroad for approximately the same cost as studying at home; the only additional costs are travel, health insurance, and incidental expenses (room and board will be paid for during the exchange). The institutions pay a fee to ISEP of around €300 for each student sent abroad.

Member institutions nominate participants for the programme and, in their applications, these students specify the host institutions of their preference. The ISEP staff, which has expertise in the academic systems of participating countries, matches the qualifications and site preferences of applicant students with available openings at each institution. Because of this system, admission in the students’ first choice of institution is not guaranteed. This makes this particular system of exchange less suitable for music students, who usually have a very clear wish of studying with a certain teacher in a certain institution.

Exchanges can occur at any tertiary academic level and in any discipline and can range in length from one academic term to two years. ISEP participants register as regular students and participate in the same activities as students at the host institution. Except for language and civilisation courses designed for international students, the courses that ISEP participants take are the same as those attended by local students.

Besides reciprocal exchanges, ISEP is active in ‘ISEP-Direct’ for study abroad programmes and in ‘ISEP-Summer Programmes’. For detailed information on the ISEP Programme, see <http://www.isep.org/>.

#### The MAUI-Utrecht Network Exchange Programme

The MAUI-Utrecht Network consists of almost 39 member institutions in Europe and the United States. The participating US universities are members of an organisation called MAUI (Mid-America Universities International). The universities in MAUI work together to actively promote overseas educational opportunities for students and international teaching, consultation, and research opportunities for faculty members. The participating European partners are members of the Utrecht Network, a group of universities co-operating in the area of internationalisation. The two co-ordinating institutions are the Utrecht University and the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

The MAUI-Utrecht Network Exchange Programme enables students from member universities to study at one of the other member institutions for a semester or academic year. Each student pays tuition to his or her home university and takes regular classes at the partner institution, based on the system of ‘closed purses’.

For detailed information on the MAUI-Utrecht Network Exchange Programme, see [http://www.umsl.edu/services/cis/cisworld/Studying\\_Abroad/mauiexch.html](http://www.umsl.edu/services/cis/cisworld/Studying_Abroad/mauiexch.html)

MAUI: <http://www.ksu.edu/oip/maui.html>, Utrecht Network: <http://www.utrecht-network.org>

#### **External Funding**

##### EU: Erasmus Mundus

The Erasmus Mundus programme is a European Union cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education. It aims to enhance quality in European higher education and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries ('third countries' means countries outside the EU and its official candidate countries). The programme is intended to strengthen European cooperation and international links in higher education by supporting high-quality *European Mundus Master's Courses*, by enabling students and visiting scholars from around the world to engage in postgraduate study at European universities, and by encouraging the outgoing mobility of European students and scholars towards third countries.

The Erasmus Mundus programme comprises three concrete actions:

- *Erasmus Mundus Master's Courses*: these high-quality Master's courses form the central component around which Erasmus Mundus is built and are offered by a consortium of at least three universities in at least three different European countries. To be selected under Erasmus Mundus, the courses must be 'integrated', which means that they must foresee a study period in at least two of the three universities and that it must lead to the award of a recognised double, multiple, or joint diploma.

- *Erasmus Mundus scholarships*: a scholarship scheme for third-country graduate students and scholars from the whole world, linked to the Erasmus Mundus Master's Courses. This scholarship scheme addresses highly qualified individuals.
- *Partnerships*: Erasmus Mundus Master's Courses can establish partnerships with third-country higher education institutions. These partnerships allow for outgoing mobility for graduate EU students and scholars involved in the Erasmus Mundus Master's Courses.

For detailed information on the Erasmus Mundus programme, guidelines, and application forms, see [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html).

#### *United States: Fulbright Programme*

The Fulbright programme was established in the aftermath of World War II, as a ‘vehicle for promoting understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries of the world’. Fulbright grants are made to U.S. citizens and nationals of other countries for a variety of educational activities, primarily university lecturing, advanced research, graduate study, and teaching in elementary and secondary schools.

The Fulbright Programme is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) assists in the administration of the Fulbright Scholar Programme for faculty and professionals. The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Programme is an annual appropriation made by the United States Congress to the Department of State. Participating governments and host institutions in foreign countries and in the United States contribute financially through cost-sharing and indirect support, such as salary supplements, tuition waivers, and university housing. Fulbright bi-national commissions and foundations are non-profit organisations established to oversee the Fulbright Programme abroad. For a list of all Fulbright Commissions world-wide, see <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/fulbright/commiss.htm>.

The Fulbright Programme encompasses a variety of exchange programmes, including those for faculty and professionals: the US Fulbright Scholar Programme, the Visiting Fulbright Scholar programme, the Pre-Doctoral Fellowships, the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Programme, and more. For detailed information, application forms, and guidelines regarding the Fulbright Programme see [http://www.cies.org/about\\_fulb.htm](http://www.cies.org/about_fulb.htm).

#### *EU/US Programme*

In 1995, the European Union and the United States established a cooperative programme on higher education and vocational education and training. The so-called ‘EU/US Programme’ is administered jointly by the US Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and the European Commission’s Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC). The European Commission supports the EU lead and partner institutions; FIPSE supports the US lead and partner institutions.

The following types of projects are supported by the programme:

- *Consortia Implementation Projects* are three-year projects fostering institutional partnerships centred on students. Students benefit from the addition of international curriculum and cultural

dimension to their studies through a combination of curricular innovation and study or training abroad.

- *Consortia Preparatory Projects* are one-year projects that provide opportunities both for developing international innovative cooperation and for giving access to the programme to institutions with little or no international experience.
- *Complementary activities* are two-year projects designed to support the overall purpose of international curriculum development and preparing students for work in a global workplace (the Music Study, Mobility, and Accountability Project is an example of this type of project).
- *Fulbright/EU grants* provide support for a full academic year or a one-semester programme of research or lecturing on EU affairs or US-EU relations at an accredited institution in the United States or in the European Community. Eligible applicants for a Fulbright/EU grant are professionals, policy makers, or academics involved in European Union or United States affairs and must have personal qualities, a proven level of academic or professional excellence, as well as outstanding records. Applicants must be US citizens or residents of the EU. For more information on the Fulbright Programme, see below.

For detailed information on the EU/US Programme, guidelines, and application forms, see [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/eu-usa/usa\\_en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/eu-usa/usa_en.html).

### **Further Financial Aid: Grants, Scholarships and Loans**

Detailed information on financial aid for education abroad (from the United States' perspective) can be found in *NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators*, pp. 75-89 (see resources list below). Issues and possibilities are explained using the following set of questions:

- What is financial aid? How do students qualify for it?
- Can financial aid be used for study abroad? For other forms of education abroad?
- What must my campus do to help students use aid for education abroad?
- Are there funds specifically for education abroad? Can I raise money for this purpose?
- How can I help my students find inexpensive programmes?
- Am I willing to assist students in investigating scholarship opportunities for study and research overseas?

There are, of course, many sources of financial aid; it can originate in governmental, institutional, or private sources or from foundations, associations, or public corporations. Student grants are usually 'need-based' and normally expect some minimum standard of academic progress from the student, whereas scholarships are generally merit-based and mostly require awardees to undertake specific activities (which can be to give presentations for the scholarship sponsor, publish articles, compete in sports, etc.).

Student loans in general have low and/or fixed interest rates and repayment does not commence until after graduation. International relations co-ordinators should nevertheless be wary that studying abroad based on loans may not be very advisable and students should be warned about the consequences of borrowing large amounts of money.

International relations co-ordinators should always work in close contact with the financial aid department at the institution in order to raise awareness of study-abroad possibilities and to help students by providing information on possibilities. Special problems that can occur when using financial aid to study abroad follow:

- To receive state/federal aid, students often need to be enrolled in an institution in the home country.
- The aid provider may have requirements regarding the number of credit hours that students must be enrolled in.
- Study abroad credit may have to receive preliminary approval before the student leaves.
- Often the aid can only be paid at a very late stage when the student has already left for the study abroad and is therefore not able to sign for receipt in the home country.

It is important to check the rules that apply when the student does not finish the study period or course abroad: does the grant, scholarship, or loan have to be partly or fully reimbursed?

### **Making Information Available on Financial Aid, Grants, and Scholarships**

Providing information about financial possibilities for students who wish to go abroad can require a lot of work, but at the same time it is very rewarding.

The most obvious way to make information available to students, teachers, and colleagues is by establishing a ‘study abroad’ library. Libraries, however, need space and archives, and information becomes out of date very quickly. A more advisable way to reach students and teachers is via the website of your institution, a good example of which is the University of Minnesota’s Learning Abroad Center: <http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/index.html>. The (online) library should contain information on financial aid possibilities, grant and scholarship opportunities, and international insurance links.

Some useful links to include follow:

- Many cities have branches of international friendship organisations such as the Alliance Française ([http://www.alliancefr.org/html\\_uk/index1.php](http://www.alliancefr.org/html_uk/index1.php)); Goethe-Institut (<http://www.goethe.de/enindex.htm>); and Dante Alighieri Society (<http://www.soc-dante-alighieri.it/>), which have modest programmes that aid students who study or do research in their country of interest.
- The Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) (<http://www.aca-secretariat.be>) is a European organisation of nationally based organisations responsible for the promotion and funding of education cooperation in their countries: [http://www.aca-secretariat.be/03membership/member\\_list.htm](http://www.aca-secretariat.be/03membership/member_list.htm).
- The Rotary Foundation is responsible for different types of academic scholarships worldwide: [http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb\\_scho/](http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb_scho/).
- A student guide to financial aid: <http://www.finaid.org/>.

## **APPLICATION AND ADMISSION**

### **Application Procedures**

Procedures for applying to US universities are different and in some cases more complicated than in most European countries. Students who wish to go on exchange in the United States need to be advised that:

- Applying to an institution in the United States may cost a lot of time, energy, and money. This will depend to a great extent on the exchange arrangements between the home institution and the partner institution abroad.
- A Statement of Financial Support is required, certifying the amount and source of income available for study in the United States. This amount may be as much as \$6,000 per semester. Most institutions will send instructions and a special form to complete; otherwise a letter and bank statement will be sufficient.

American students planning a study period in Europe need to take into account that:

- Admissions procedures and standards vary widely throughout Europe.
- Visa requirements are different in each European country.

All EU and US students with transatlantic exchange aspirations are recommended to understand that:

- Exchange students need to be realistic about their own artistic and academic level and skills and not only select the most competitive institutions.
- International (transatlantic) admissions procedures are time-consuming; students should start planning at least a year in advance.
- Some institutions require an application fee, which is not refunded even if the application is rejected. This will greatly depend on the exchange arrangements between the home institution and the partner institution abroad.
- It may be necessary to send in official copies (with original signatures and a school stamp) of diplomas, reports, academic transcripts, etc. Translations may need to be provided in the language of the institution of choice.
- Some institutions require that applicant students take one or more tests as part of the application process. The most common test for English proficiency for non-native English speakers is the TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language. For more information see <http://www.toefl.org>.

Other well-known tests are the SAT I (Scholastic Assessment Test) ‘Reasoning Test’ and SAT II ‘Subjects Test’. For more information see <http://www.collegeboard.com/splash>.

- Some institutions require a personal essay as part of the application material.

- Many institutions require one or more letters of recommendation from teachers, professors, employers, or other.
- The international relations office/contact person has an important role in applications of students with partner institutions:
- Information provision: accurate information on all partner institutions should be available to students in the international relations office. It may be useful to include reports from former exchange students at a particular institution in addition to the general information that contains study guides, curriculum overview, educational system, credit point system, grading system, venue, accommodation possibilities, etc.
- Application forms: internal application forms for study abroad should be available, as well as the application forms for foreign students at partner institutions. The international relations office should compile all application forms for one institution, check for completeness and correctness, and send to the host institution. [Examples of application forms](#) are available at the project website.

## **Information Package**

For institutions working with or planning transatlantic exchanges, it is advisable to produce the following documents, online or in print:

- ***Guide for home students wishing to pursue a study exchange abroad***, containing information on:
  - first points of contact (international relations office)
  - types of exchange opportunities
  - institutional eligibility
  - reasons for considering exchanges (e.g. personal development, cultural awareness, new learning environments, future employment opportunities, improvement of language skills, etc.)
  - duration of studies
  - overall costs
  - learning agreement
  - academic recognition of study periods abroad
  - application processes
  - current exchange partners of the institution
  - what is expected of the student following the exchange
- ***Guide for foreign students attending your institution***, containing information on:
  - any relevant visa requirements, immigration rules, residency permits, police (or other official) registration
  - location details of the institution and surrounding area (including traffic and travelling)
  - climate and clothing requirements
  - employment status (if the student wishes to work)

- o costs of living (i.e. accommodation, insurance, local taxes, travel, food, clothes, leisure)
- o banking opportunities
- o tuition and other institutional costs
- o financial assistance available (e.g. scholarships and bursaries)
- o health and welfare issues (e.g. signing on with a doctor/dentist, counselling)
- o social customs
- o religion
- o enrolment and acclimatisation issues
- o academic term dates
- o useful contacts and publications

## **RECOGNITION ISSUES**

Recognition issues are crucial in many types of international collaboration activities and can be distinguished on the following levels:

### **1. The Recognition of an Exchange Period Abroad as Part of the Student's Curriculum**

For exchange students, it is very important to ensure that a study period abroad is recognised as part of their curriculum. To avoid the loss of time and money for both students and institutions, it is advisable to keep in mind the following when hosting students from abroad and sending out students:

#### ***Institutional barriers***

The information below has mainly been extracted from the publication *NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators*, pp. 58-60 (see resources list below).

- *Staff involvement.* If the responsibility for transatlantic exchange lies in the hands of only one person, there may not be enough support from academic faculty and advisors. This will certainly have a negative effect on the recognition of studies for mobile students. If, on the other hand, the responsibility is divided over several offices and staff members, this may lead to bureaucratic hurdles for students wishing to do part of their studies abroad. An institution should therefore develop a clear policy on study recognition and staff involvement in order to ensure easy recognition of studies abroad for students.
- *Negative faculty or administrative attitude.* Many fears, some legitimate, can create barriers to international mobility in professional music training. Faculty members may fear that some of their best students will go away on an exchange; and what if an important, irreplaceable school orchestra member decides to finish the degree in another institution? Other fears include the academic quality of courses abroad, which is hard to assess when the educational system is very different. Faculty support, especially from well-informed and experienced faculty, is critical if an institution wishes to be successful in transatlantic exchange and the associated credit transfer for students.

- *Information.* Before engaging in any exchange activity, institutions and students should make sure that all required information on the host institution, its curriculum, and its educational system is available in order to ensure the future recognition of the studies/courses.

### **Different Categories of Credit for Transatlantic Studies**

In this paragraph, the word ‘credit’ is used as synonymous to ‘recognition’ (not to be confused with credit points and credit point systems, which will be discussed below).

- *Home-institution credit:* where students enrol in special study programmes abroad that are organised by the home institution.
- *Credit by transfer:* where students gain credit after evaluation of the host institution’s transcript. Specialists in the home institution registrar’s or admissions office ordinarily have final responsibility for determining what can be transferred, although they can consult with academic departments and use materials supplied by the student to document the coursework done abroad.
- *Experiential credit:* it is possible, though not very common, to grant credit for various experiences abroad (travel, work, service, internships). This can occur through registration in special home-school courses, for which credit and grades can result from journals, projects, or reports and post-programme assignments and interviews.
- *Credit by examination:* some institutions grant credit for studies abroad only after examining the student’s learning abroad on return. It must be clear that this approach is contrary to the idea of mutual trust between institutions in each other’s academic quality, which is the very basis of any bilateral or multilateral cooperation arrangement.

For detailed information and advice on how to go about setting up procedures for evaluating courses and academic work from abroad and other credit transfer issues, see NAFSA’s *Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators*, pp. 60-73 (see resources list below).

### **Credit Point and Credit Transfer Systems**

On both sides of the Atlantic, credit-point systems are used to facilitate flexible curricula for students and easy transfer of academic credit for exchanges. Credit systems, however, differ greatly, especially within Europe. Some European countries are still not making use of a credit-point system, whereas other countries use a national credit-point system alongside the ECTS system (see below).

When exchanging students within a bilateral agreement, credit points and grades gained overseas should be converted into home credit points, so students will not experience any study delay. To achieve this, before the student’s departure, the home institution should approve the student’s preliminary study plan and establish a learning agreement with the host institution that arranges the recognition in advance. It is common practice to list the courses realized abroad on the home institution’s final degree or diploma.

- *Credit Point and Credit Transfer Systems in Europe*

Developed by the European Commission and its ERASMUS/SOCRATES Programme, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is a system of academic credit allocation and transfer that facilitates the recognition of periods of study abroad for students by allowing them to build

a portfolio of credits. ECTS helps institutions enhance cooperation by improving access to information on foreign curricula and providing common procedures for academic recognition. The ECTS scheme as a framework for academic recognition is based on the principle of mutual trust and confidence among the participating institutions.

ECTS credits are a value allocated to course units to describe the student workload required to complete them. They reflect the quantity of work each course requires in relation to the total quantity of work required to complete a full year of academic study at the institution; that is, lectures; practical work; seminars; and private work in the laboratory, library, or at home; and examinations or other assessment activities. In ECTS, sixty credits represent one year of study (in terms of workload); normally thirty credits are given for six months (a semester) and twenty credits for a term (a trimester). ECTS credits are also allocated to practical placements and to thesis preparation when these activities form part of the regular programme of study at both the home and host institutions. ECTS credits are allocated to courses and are awarded to students who successfully complete those courses by passing the examinations or other assessments.

Examination and assessment results are usually expressed in grades. There are, however, many different grading systems in Europe. The *ECTS grading scale* has been developed to help institutions translate the grades awarded by host institutions to ECTS students. This provides additional information on the student's performance to that provided by the institution's grade, but it does not replace the local grade. Higher education institutions make their own decisions on how to apply the ECTS grading scale to their own system.

The main tools for making ECTS work are:

- o The *information package*: Institutions using ECTS produce an annually updated information package, in which they describe the courses available at the institution in great detail, including the content, the prerequisites, the mode of assessment, and the teaching and learning methods. The package also provides general information about the institution.
- o The *learning agreement* describes the programme of study abroad and is drawn up by the individual student and institutions involved before the student goes abroad.
- o The *transcript of records* shows the learning achievements of the student prior to and after the period of study abroad.

For every course taken, the transcript of records shows not only the ECTS credits but also the grade awarded according to the local as well as the ECTS grading scale.

ECTS is also increasingly used as a *credit accumulation system* for all students, not just the mobile ones. The basic principle is to complement the workload definition by the specification of level, contents, and, finally, also learning outcomes of a given unit in relation to a degree programme. This is by no means alien to the original idea of ECTS as a transfer system. Credits are not entities in themselves but always describe work completed as part of a curriculum. Hence, in a credit accumulation system, credits are accumulated within a coherent study programme, reflecting a certain amount of work successfully completed at a certain level for a recognised qualification. The use of an accumulation system in a modularised study structure allows final degrees to be awarded on the basis of continuous assessments and accumulated credits, rather than traditional final exams that can pose an artificially high risk for students. ECTS can be used for accumulation purposes without any alterations or adaptations of the basic elements of the system.

For more information on ECTS in general, see the official ECTS website at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/ects\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/ects_en.html).

- *Credit Point and Credit Transfer Systems in the United States*

In the United States, the academic year usually contains thirty-two to thirty-six weeks of classes, mostly divided into two semesters: fall semester (half/end August – December and spring semester (January-May). Many universities offer a summer semester that is not part of the regular academic year. One US credit in general equals one hour in class per week for one semester. An ordinary US full-time undergraduate student acquires around twelve to seventeen credits per semester; a graduate student on average obtains nine to twelve credits. An example of a conversion from US credit points to ECTS can be: 9-10 graduate, 12-15 undergraduate, or 10-12 mixed US credits  $\approx$  30 ECTS credit points.

The grading system in the United States goes from A (excellent) to F (fail). A significant aspect in this system is the allocation of grade points to the grade: A=4 points, B=3, C=2, D=1. These points are used to calculate the so-called Grade Point Average (GPA), which is of great importance for American students in obtaining scholarships and for admission to graduate studies. The calculation is basically the sum of grade points a student has earned, divided by the number of courses taken (for example, a student took 7 courses with 3 A and 4 B grades. In total, the student received  $3 \times 4 + 4 \times 3 = 24$  grade points: 24 grade points divided by 7 courses gives a GPA of 3.4). Straightforward GPAs assign the same weight to each course. Weighting, however, can give students additional points for their grades in advanced or honours courses, or for courses that met for more hours each week.

In music, the following norms apply:

In lecture-discussion courses, normally one hour of credit is given for one period of recitation (50 minutes) plus two hours of preparation each week of the term. In laboratory or ensemble courses, normally one hour of credit is given for two or three 50-minute recitation periods per week.

It is recommended that one credit hour be given for each three hours per week of practice, plus the necessary individual instruction, with a maximum of six credits per term allowed for the major subject in music performance. It is understood that the credit is not earned unless the final examination is satisfactorily passed. At the undergraduate level, all students in professional programmes should be required to have a minimum of one hour (60 minutes) of individual instruction per week, or a comparable equivalent arrangement of individual and/or small group instruction, in the principal performing area.

When institutions offer programmes and courses for abbreviated time periods, or in independent study, they must ensure that students completing such programmes or *courses acquire levels of knowledge, competence, and understanding comparable to* that expected of students completing work in the standard time period. For example, in order to earn one hour of credit during a summer session, students must attend approximately the same number of class hours and make the same amount of preparation as they would in attending a one-hour-per-week course for one term during the regular academic year.

## **2. The Recognition of Qualifications for Further Study or to Gain Access to the Labour Market**

The recognition of qualifications will be important to students who have finished the first cycle (Bachelor's) or second cycle (Master's) and want to continue their studies in a second cycle (Master's) or third cycle (Doctorate) course. In such cases, it will be up to the individual institution to decide how to deal with the previously obtained degree of the applicant. In institutions for professional music training, entrance examinations will be held to accept students into a second- or third-cycle course. A student with a Bachelor's is eligible, but not necessarily entitled, to get accepted in a Master's degree course, and much depends on the admission standards of the institutions in the decision of whether the student will be accepted or not.

In relation to gaining access to the labour market, students who have completed a full degree course abroad will need recognition of their qualification and title for their professional career. Even in the discipline of music, these are important issues: in most countries, for example, 'classroom music teacher' and 'instrumental teacher' are regulated professions that cannot be performed without the relevant qualification. More information on the international recognition of qualifications in the field of music, including an overview of regulated profession per country and information on the Diploma Supplement, can be found in the document '[\*The International Recognition of Qualifications in the Field of Music\*](#)', produced by the Music Study, Mobility, and Accountability Project and available within this website.

## **HEALTH AND INSURANCE MATTERS**

### **Health Issues**

All international students have to deal with increased health risks. For both home and host institutions, this means the responsibility of information provision, gathering of resources, and liability arrangements. A lot of detailed information on the matters described below can be found in NAFSA's *Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators*, pp. 217-232, and in NAFSA's *Guide to International Student Recruitment*, pp. 240-254 (*see resources list below*).

The following issues are of relevance:

- *Medical reports*: many institutions may ask a student to complete a (confidential) medical report or health information form after acceptance. When sending out students, it is important to know beforehand whether a physician's signature is mandatory and if there are language requirements. When hosting students, it may also be important to know about specific medical conditions such as diabetes, asthma, or required medication.
- *Immunisations*: when sending out students to regions where immunisations are recommended or required, it may be helpful to work together with your local health clinic to provide information, support, and the immunisations.
- *Pre-existing medical problems*: students with ongoing medical problems, such as allergies or diabetes, or a physical handicap, should anticipate how the new environment, and the increased stress of study abroad, will impact their health. There are organisations that can supply services for disabled students, such as Mobility International (<http://www.miusa.org/>).

- *Alcohol and drugs use or abuse*: information about the use of alcohol and other drugs in the host country should be provided beforehand. The use of alcohol and drugs socially and culturally, as well as the legal rules, may be very different from that in the host country.
- *Emotional and mental problems*: even the most secure students can experience culture shock or homesickness when studying abroad with—mostly predictable—psychological and social dimensions. In almost all cases, students can be prepared through proper pre-departure orientation. The international student coordinator should be aware of these issues and know how to prevent them and what to do if they occur.
- *Foreign medical practice*: there are cultural and medical differences in health care practices in different countries. Differences will occur in hospital treatment (the medical treatment itself may be different, or meals may not be included in the treatment); medicine prescriptions (doctors may be more reluctant/willing to prescribe medicines or may prescribe different medicines); technology; costs (also see ‘Insurance Matters’ below); and use of language. Information (and translations in case of emergency) can normally be obtained through the embassy or consulate in the host country.

Detailed information on all the above mentioned issues and more can be found in the NAFSA publications *NAFSA’s Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators* and *The Guide to Successful Short-Term Programmes Abroad* (see resources list below).

- Health information by country: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/destinat.htm>
- International travel and health, World Health Organisation: <http://www.who.int/ith/>
- Tips for students: <http://travel.state.gov/studentinfo.html>

## **Insurance Matters**

- *Medical and accident insurance*: students should not be allowed to travel abroad without sufficient health and accident insurance and should be required to produce evidence prior to departure. Many insurance agencies sell insurance policies designed especially for education abroad.
- *International Students Insurance Services (ISIS)*: many institutions require the ISIS, international travel insurance for students, for all international students. The card covers the basic health and accident insurance coverage, as well as medical evacuation and repatriation of remains, but it only covers a small portion of expenses for major accidents or illness. It should be viewed as supplemental and not primary insurance coverage. For more information and application guidelines see <http://www.isis-ins.com/>.
- *Musical instrument insurance*: students need to check whether it is necessary to take out extra insurance for their instrument or other objects of great value for the journey and stay abroad.
- *Liability issues*: institutions are not able to eliminate all liable situations. Some issues can be avoided through clear procedures and documents, by adding a disclaimer to publicity and promotional materials, and by carefully informing students about any potential risks.

Detailed information on all the issues mentioned above and more can be found in the NAFSA Publications *NAFSA’s Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators* and *The Guide to*

*Successful Short-Term Programmes Abroad*, also with examples of liability waivers (see resources list below).

## VISAS, TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, RESIDENCE PERMITS

Organising transatlantic exchanges implies involvement with visa matters. The international office/contact person will have a central role in different stages of the visa application process. To avoid unnecessary delays and complications, the international office will need to check all forms filled out by the students for completeness and correctness.

An example of an application procedure could be: the home institution sends the placement application forms of its candidate students to the host institution, which responds with admission papers and visa application forms. These application papers will be filled out and returned to the host institution (or the appropriate visa agency) by the student (after it is checked by the international relations office), after which the student receives a document with which the visa can be acquired at an embassy or consulate. The whole procedure can be quite time-consuming, and it is advisable to start with the application well in advance.

### For European Students Going to the United States

The majority of international students in the United States hold F1 (academic); J1 (exchange); or M1 (vocational) visas. These visas are provided by different agencies: the F1 and M1 are granted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) whereas the J1 must be approved by the Department of State (DOS). The procedures for obtaining these documents are very different; a detailed description of these procedures as well as of the institutional requirements and definitions of key terms can be found in *NAFSA's Guide to International Student Recruitment*, pp. 50-60 (see resources list below).

Other sources of information on visas for the United States are:

- US Department of State <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/predeparture/visas.htm>
- US Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs - Visa Services  
[http://travel.state.gov/visa\\_services.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa_services.html)
- US Visas <http://unitedstatesvisas.gov/studying.html>
- International Student Visa and Immigration Center:  
<http://www.internationalstudent.com/immigration/index.shtml>
- Edupass (student guide to studying in the United States):  
<http://www.edupass.org/immigration/visas.phtml>

### For US students Going to Europe

Residence rules and immigration legislation in Europe are a national matter, as they are for the member states of the European Union. The best way to get information on the regulations applicable to foreign students for a country of interest is to contact the American embassy or consulate in that country, or the embassy or consulate of that country in the United States.

- Find embassies via <http://www.embassyworld.com/embassy/search.htm>

- Visa requirements world-wide:  
[http://www.embassyworld.com/Visa\\_Search/Visa\\_Search.html](http://www.embassyworld.com/Visa_Search/Visa_Search.html)
- Foreign entry requirements: <http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html>

## RESOURCES

### Organisations and Websites

- ACA – Academic Cooperation Association: <http://www.aca-secretariat.be>
- ACA members list: nationally based organisations responsible for the promotion and funding of education cooperation in their countries: [http://www.aca-secretariat.be/03membership/member\\_list.htm](http://www.aca-secretariat.be/03membership/member_list.htm)
- More useful links pages at: <http://www.daad.de/partner/de/11.2.html>,  
<http://www.nuffic.nl/>,
- AEC – Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen: <http://www.aecinfo.org>
- Centre for International Studies: <http://www.center-for-international-studies.org/>
- Council on International Educational Exchange: <http://www.ciee.org/>
- EAIE – European Association for International Education: <http://www.eaie.nl/>
- Educational Advising Centres throughout the world:  
<http://educationusa.state.gov/centers.htm>
- Institute of International Education: <http://www.iie.org/>
- European Union, Education and Training:  
[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/index\\_en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/index_en.html)
- NAFSA – Association of International Educators: <http://www.nafsa.org/>
- NASM – National Association of Schools of Music: <http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp>
- US Department of Education's FIPSE – Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/fipse/index.html>

### Publications

EAIE: <http://www.eaie.nl/publications/occasional.asp>

- '*50 Years of International Cooperation and Exchange between the United States and Europe: European Views*', edited by H. de Wit, EAIE Occasional Paper 11, European Association for International Education (EAIE), Amsterdam, 1998.

NACEE basics: <http://www.nacee.nl/content.aip?language=USA&destination=NL&id=294>

- '*Undergraduate Study in the United States*', NACEE Basics Nr 1, Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange, February 2003.
- '*Financial Assistance for Study in the United States*', NACEE Basics Nr 9, Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange, September 1997.

- '*Application Procedures for Undergraduate Study in the United States*', NACEE Basics Nr 2, Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange, September 1996.
- '*Het beoordelingssysteem aan Universiteiten in de Verenigde Staten*', NACEE Basics Nr 7, Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange, October 2001.
- '*Visa ten behoeve van studie, stage en onderzoek in de Verenigde Staten*', NACEE Basics Nr 27, Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange, February 2004.

NAFSA:

<http://www.nafsa.org/content/professionalandeducationalresources/publications/study.htm>

- '*Abroad by Design*', edited by M. Lamet, NAFSA Association of International Educators, Washington D.C., 2002.
- '*NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators*', 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, edited by W. Hoffa, and J. Pearson, NAFSA Association of International Educators, Washington D.C., 1997
- '*NAFSA's Guide to International Student Recruitment*', edited by M. O'Hara, K. Raftus, and J. Stedman, NAFSA Association of International Educators, Washington D.C., 2000.
- '*The Guide to Successful Short-Term Programmes Abroad*', edited by S. Spencer, and K. Tuma, NAFSA Association of International Educators, Washington D.C., 2002.