

**Frequently Asked Questions:  
Teachers Interested in a Transatlantic Exchange**

**1. Why should I go on an exchange?**

There are many reasons why an international teaching exchange could benefit you as a teacher. As a tool for staff and curriculum development, an international exchange broadens horizons and gives new insights into different teaching methods and approaches to professional music life. In addition, you could use the exchange to promote your class or department by launching student exchanges and/or setting up regular teacher exchanges and/or specific cooperation projects. An exchange can also be part of continuing professional development or a research assignment for the teacher. Sometimes an exchange can even solve the problem that develops for institutions when a teacher is on tour, as an exchange teacher might take his/her place during the absence.

**2. With which institutions abroad does my institution have contacts?**

Most institutions have a list of international institutions with which exchanges are organized. Your international office/contact person can inform you about the possibilities and advise you about which institutions could be available to you. Some of your colleagues may already have been on an exchange; ask them about their experiences. If you would like to have more information about a specific institution, most institutions have extensive websites; you can find links to the websites of more than 850 US and European institutions for professional music training on the websites of the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC: [www.aecinfo.org](http://www.aecinfo.org)) or the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM: <http://nasm.arts-accredit.org>).

**3. What is a bilateral exchange programme?**

A bilateral exchange programme is an agreement between two institutions to cooperate on exchanges and possibly on other types of collaborative activities. Many professional music-training institutions have bilateral exchange programmes with one or more institutions abroad.

**4. What is a multilateral exchange programme?**

A multilateral exchange programme involves a group of institutions that have made arrangements for cooperative activities as a network. This means that the members of the network are able to collaborate with more institutions than in a bilateral exchange programme. Examples of such a multilateral exchange programme have not been found in professional music training, but several of such networks exist in the university sector in general, such as the exchange programme of MAUI (Mid-America Universities International) and the Utrecht Network.

**5. How do I go about organising an exchange?**

Usually the first contact regarding a teacher's exchange is set up by the international offices/contact persons of both institutions. In some cases you are asked to contact the teacher or department concerned yourself to discuss the possibilities for a visit.

**6. How long should I go for and when?**

The most common exchange arrangement is a performance faculty exchange for one to two weeks, for which the home institution pays the travel costs and the host institution the lodging costs. This way, no fees are exchanged. A visit should not take place when other important projects are scheduled or during an examination period. Semester-long exchanges (for example, for sabbaticals) exist as well, but they tend to need a lot of preparation. Housing is usually a big issue.

**7. How many students will I teach?**

The number of students taught is decided between you and the host institution.

**8. Should I perform a concert?**

You and the host institution decide whether you will perform a concert, but why not offer this possibility? If possible, it is advisable to perform a concert at the beginning of the visit. With a concert you could promote your visit and students will be more inclined to register for a lesson.

**9. What practical issues do I have to organize? Where will I stay?**

You should provide the host institution with your curriculum vitae and, if possible, any recordings you have made. The practical issues such as travel tickets, finances, hotel, etc. should be arranged by the host institution, in cooperation with the international office/contact person at your home institution. Ask beforehand if somebody from the host institution will pick you up on arrival and bring you to the hotel or school.

**10. Do I get an additional teaching fee to do an exchange?**

It is important to realise that many exchange programmes do not pay teaching fees; often only travel and accommodation costs are covered. You just do your work in another place, so you take your salary with you. Teaching visits should be approached as an investment in your teaching: it is a tool for staff development, information exchanges, developing new professional and personal contacts, and promotion.

**11. What can I do in addition to teaching?**

It is advisable to visit some classes and school performances to meet with teachers and get a better idea of the host institution, its educational methods, and its culture. You could provide your international office/contact persons with important information and develop some ideas for future cooperation. Remember that if you just do your classes and nothing else, your visit could be perceived as a promotional or recruitment trip.

**12. What is the difference between a university and a college in the United States?**

Colleges generally only offer four-year undergraduate programmes, whereas universities also offer graduate programmes. There is no relationship between name and quality.

**13. What is the difference between state and private colleges and universities in the United States?**

State universities are founded and subsidized by state governments to provide low-cost education for state residents. The fees are lower than those at private universities. State universities are usually large. Private universities in the United States vary in size, academic level, and philosophy. They include research universities, women's universities, religious universities, and experimental universities. There is no relationship between type of support and quality. Useful links for information about studying in the United States are <http://chronicle.com> and [www.studyusa.com](http://www.studyusa.com).

**14. What are the differences between conservatoires, music academies, music colleges, and Musikhochschulen in Europe?**

In the various European countries, there are many differences in systems for professional music training. The different use of terminology is confusing, too: conservatoire, conservatory, school of music, music academy, Musikhochschule, music university. If you want to have more information about a system in a particular European country, you could visit the descriptions developed by this project of national systems for professional music training in Europe, which can be found at [www.aecinfo.org/bologna/gendescription](http://www.aecinfo.org/bologna/gendescription).