



QH Supplement 5H: Requirements for international student exchanges

NTU encourages international exchanges through study at an approved partner institution.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This supplement sets out the University's formal quality assurance arrangements for courses incorporating international exchanges.
- 1.2 The supplement emphasises the need for sound planning prior to a student's departure (with particular attention to student support). It also includes requirements for credit transfer and grade conversion.

Further information

- At all times these requirements refer to the inclusion of an international exchange within an approved course, wherein the course outcomes remain unchanged and the final award for international exchange students will be the same as that for students completing the course entirely at NTU.
- NTU Global can provide examples of relevant documentation.

2. Types of exchange

- 2.1 Any NTU course that has a validated exchange period as part of the course may permit a student to undertake an international exchange provided the exchange meets the criteria set out in this supplement and the exchange is with an approved NTU partner.

- 2.2 Any exchange is undertaken as part of a course and is recorded on the student's record. However, the learning achieved during an exchange counts towards the course in different ways as follows:
- An **accredited exchange** is where a student is able to transfer the credits gained during the exchange programme to their NTU award;
 - A **non-accredited exchange** is where the credits gained during the exchange programme are not transferred to the student's NTU award but the exchange is recorded on the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)/diploma supplement. This can be incorporated into a course either as an embedded exchange semester or as a sandwich year.
- 2.3 Schools are not required to convert grades but may choose to do so. Where grades are not converted, a student's overall award outcome will be calculated on final year grades only.

3. Principles of exchange

- 3.1 For both accredited and non-accredited exchanges, students undertake modules that are relevant to their NTU course.
- 3.2 In the case of accredited exchanges, the credits undertaken at the partner university need to be equivalent to the amount of credit the student would have achieved during the same period at NTU. The course team must map the learning to be achieved during the exchange against the outcomes that would have been achieved on the 'home' NTU course. This mapping should ensure a reasonable match between the exchange learning and the NTU course outcomes.
- 3.3 Processes for credit transfer and grade conversion (if applicable) are set out early in the process of agreeing an accredited exchange.
- 3.4 Students should not undertake exchange on courses where there is a PSRB accreditation.
- 3.5 Caution must be exercised where exchange would require replacement of core modules with partner modules, to ensure that module learning outcomes will still be achieved.
- 3.6 The student support arrangements must be agreed between the course team and each student, and should normally include provision for one key contact per half year by an appropriate NTU member of staff to a student (or group of students) during their exchange.

4. Academic approval

- 4.1 Academic approval of exchange provision falls into three categories:
- Approval to offer an exchange within a particular course;
 - Approval of an exchange partner;
 - Approval of an individual student's learning agreement.
- 4.2 The requirements for approval of each of the above is detailed in the following sections.

5. Approving an exchange within a course

- 5.1 Approval for a course to offer an exchange would normally take place as part of the initial development and approval process, and form part of the approval report.
- 5.2 Where an existing course is being amended to include an exchange, the modifications to course process should be followed as set out in [Quality Handbook Supplement \(QHS\) 5A: Requirements for Approving Changes to Courses](#).
- 5.3 The definitive course information in CourseLoop is amended to include a reference to the potential for an exchange, particularly in respect of standing arrangements for groups of students, and should form part of the approval documentation presented to the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee (SASQC).
- 5.4 Where the exchange necessitates a change to the course outcomes, or to the award or course title to be conferred on a student, the major revisions to courses process should be followed as set out in [QHS 5A](#).
- 5.5 Approval of an exchange within a course must take place prior to approval of an exchange partner and of an individual student’s learning agreement.

6. Approving an exchange partner

- 6.1 In order for a specific exchange partner to be included in an offer to students as part of a course, the partner must be approved by NTU Global and all relevant SASQCs (where applicable, see the table below) through the NTU Global student and exchange approval process. Full details can be found on the [NTU Global SharePoint site](#).
- 6.2 A [exchange partner proposal form](#) needs to be completed, and signed off by NTU Global prior to academic approval.
- 6.3 The table below outlines approval requirements:

Type of arrangement	Approval Required			
	NTU Global	SET	SASQC	Student plan
Non-accredited exchange	Y	N	N	Y
Accredited exchange	Y	N	Y	Y
Exchange is part of a programme that results in a collaborative award	Follows relevant collaborative provision approval process			
Renewals	Y	N	N	N/A

- 6.4 For accredited exchange semesters, following completion of the NTU Global business approval process, the proposed partner approval form needs to be considered and approved by the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee. SASQCs are responsible the approving the comparability of the broad aims of the relevant partner courses, not individual modules that are subject to change.
- 6.5 As part of the process of approving an exchange partner, the specific arrangements for credit transfer and grade conversion should be established and agreed, where

these do not meet the normal country requirements set out in the NTU International Credit Transfer and Grade Conversion Guidelines.

- 6.6 An exchange partner must be approved before an individual student's learning agreement can be approved.
- 6.7 A formal student exchange agreement needs to be put in place between the University and the partner, prior to any students commencing an exchange.
- 6.8 NTU Global should be notified once academic approval of a new exchange partner has taken place.
- 6.9 For all exchanges the appropriate School Study Co-ordinator and the formal contact(s) for the receiving partner institution(s) need to be informed.
- 6.10 A register of all approved student/staff exchange agreements is maintained by NTU Global.
- 6.11 A record of approved exchange partners should be maintained by the School and monitored by SASQC.

7. Approving an individual student's learning agreement

- 7.1 Each individual student that undertakes an exchange has an approved learning agreement.
- 7.2 The learning agreement is completed by the student in [Mobility Online](#) and must be approved by the course team. The School is responsible for ensuring that there is appropriate oversight of approved learning agreements for all students engaged in exchange.
- 7.3 The learning agreement sets out the individual student's module choices at the exchange partner. As part of the process of development of the learning agreement, the course team ensures that the chosen modules meet the learning outcomes of the NTU course.
- 7.4 A student **must** be made aware in those cases where an accredited exchange makes a significant contribution to the classification of the NTU award, particularly where a student will be studying in a foreign language.
- 7.5 Arrangements for credit transfer, grade conversion and consequences of module failure must be made clear to students at the outset, and included in the individual learning agreement.
- 7.6 Where the exchange modules are delivered in a language other than English, a student's linguistic competence should be sufficient for study on the exchange before the student departs. This should be considered as part of the process of developing the learning agreement.
- 7.7 A learning agreement must be negotiated and approved before a student commences an exchange.
- 7.8 Students must inform the course team of any changes to their learning agreement that take place after arrival at the exchange partner to ensure that requirements are still met.

8. Credit transfer and grade conversion

- 8.1 Where credit undertaken as part of an exchange contributes to an NTU award, requirements for credit transfer and grade conversion must be established at the outset using the requirements set out in the NTU International Credit Transfer and Grade Conversion Guidelines in order to ensure transparency and consistency for students.
- 8.2 The NTU International Credit Transfer and Grade Conversion Guidelines set out credit transfer and grade conversion requirements on a country by country basis, except where a specific institution does not align with a country norm, or where there is no country norm.
- 8.3 For new exchange partners, where the credit and/or grading practices do not align to the country norm, partner specific requirements are established, and added to the NTU International Credit Transfer and Grade Conversion Guidelines. This is undertaken at the point of partner approval.
- 8.4 For European exchanges, the credit points assigned at the partner will normally conform to the tariff of the European Credit Transfer Scheme (ECTS). In such cases, ECTS credit points are doubled for the purposes of credit transfer to the NTU award.
- 8.5 All credit transfers and grade conversions must be completed in advance of the Board of Examiners.
- 8.6 The Chair of the NTU Board of Examiners and the external examiner(s) should be informed about the exchange, and the credit transfer and grade conversions used, in advance of the Board meeting so that they can seek clarification on any aspects of the exchange for progression or award purposes.

Policy owner
CADQ / NTU Global

Change history			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Sept 2016	30.09.16	01.10.16	Major revisions to clarify the approval processes for different stages of exchange arrangements
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	None
Sept 2018	12.09.18	01.10.18	Major revision to clarify requirements for credit transfer and grade conversions
Sept 2019	11.09.19	01.10.19	None
Sept 2020	16.09.20	01.10.20	Updates to reflect changes to international business evaluation processes
Oct 2021	21.10.21	21.10.21	None
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
Nov 2023	02.11.23	23.11.23	Supplement renamed and removal of references to Erasmus
Sept 2024	19.09.24	01.10.24	None
Feb 2025	06.02.25	10.02.25	Updated to reflect changes to approval process for international exchanges. Role of SASQCs also clarified.

Equality Impact Analysis		
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Sept 2016	01.09.16	CADQ