

Study plan guidelines

You must have completed your second year (fourth semester) in a relevant field of study related to your course choice before you qualify for a stay at ETH Zurich. ETH departments may have further requirements, particularly concerning your study background. [You must check the conditions set by the departments.](#)

Definition and purpose

- Your study plan is the list of courses you plan to take at ETH. It must adhere to the rules stipulated in this document.
- Your study plan determines to which ETH department you are applying to. The department reviews your application and decides on acceptance or rejection. However, approval of the study plan does not guarantee that you will be able to take these courses (e.g. if a course only allows a limited number of participants). You will be asked to finalise your study plan after the start of the semester.
- To ensure that your credits can be transferred, your home university must approve your provisional study plan before your stay at ETH.

Finding courses

- [Search the Course Catalogue in German or English.](#) Use various criteria such as level of study, department, or language of instruction. (Do not indicate "Mobility Students" in your search.) Read the detailed description of each course for information (in separate tabs) on content, performance assessment, prerequisites, restrictions, lecture times, etc.
- [The semester dates are published online.](#)
- Avoid course overlaps and [consider the varying lecture times depending on the venue.](#) ETH's two main sites in Zurich, Zentrum and Hönggerberg, are [connected by a free shuttle bus.](#) The weekday and time indicated in the tab "Courses" often remain the same from year to year.
- The definitive courses for the semester(s) of your planned stay are usually not yet online when you apply. Use the Course Catalogue from the previous year (e.g. the previous Autumn Semester for the upcoming Autumn Semester). The catalogue remains relatively steady from one year to another.
- Courses open to regular ETH students are usually also open to exchange students. See the detailed course description and the chapter on course restrictions below for potential exceptions.
- You can combine courses from Bachelor's and Master's levels if you have the necessary prerequisites. [Use your department's study guide\(s\) to determine whether you have the background required](#) (similar to that of regular ETH students) for the study programme in general.
- To take individual courses at the University of Zurich (UZH), you must apply online at UZH as studying at more than one university and respect the deadlines. Your departmental exchange coordinator must approve those courses. [More details are listed on our website.](#)

Course restrictions

- [Check the conditions set by the departments](#) for potential further conditions, requirements, and restrictions.
- You cannot register for any courses ending with –AAL, as these are additional required courses that usually do not involve any teaching but are self-study units.
- Restrictions are indicated in the course description (tab “Restriction”, e.g. restricted number of participants or the primary target group). Follow the instructions and / or [ask your departmental exchange coordinator](#) if you wish to participate in such a course. Note: Mobility students are not enrolled in a specific BSc or MSc programme and are thus not included in the primary target group of some courses.
- Some courses have restrictions regarding distance examinations, which will be explained below. Take this into account in your study plan.

Rules for composing your study plan

- **Two-thirds of your course credits must be offered by the department you are applying to** (e.g. 16 out of 24 ECTS credits). One-third of your credits can be taken from other departments and / or the University of Zurich. Exceptions are possible for interdisciplinary study programmes (e.g. Environmental Sciences, Earth Sciences, Health Sciences, and Technology, etc.) [when approved by the departmental exchange coordinator](#).
- **You must earn a minimum of 20 ECTS credits per semester** (meaning passing the exam, not just attending the course). Language courses do not count towards this total. Taking between 20 to 26 ECTS per semester is recommended. If you wish to take more than 30 ECTS, you must discuss this with your departmental exchange coordinator.
- **Choose courses according to your language skills, at least a B2 level in the language of instruction.**
- You may change a few courses in the first week of your mobility stay (e.g. if a course is cancelled or an overlap occurs), yet the departmental exchange coordinator must approve all changes. However, major changes to the study plan are not allowed after your initial application (e.g. taking more courses from another department).

To see which department offers a course, look at the first three digits of its course number (**xxx-xxxx-xxx**):

051-, 052-, 063- & 066-xxxx-xxx	Architecture (D-ARCH)
101-xxxx-xxx	Civil Engineering (D-BAUG)
102-xxxx-xxx	Environmental Engineering (D-BAUG)
103-xxxx-xxx	Geospatial Engineering (D-BAUG)
151-xxxx-xxx	Mechanical Engineering (D-MAVT)
227-xxxx-xxx	Information Technology and Electrical Engineering (D-ITET)
252-, 261- & 263-xxxx-xxx	Computer Science (D-INFK)
327-xxxx-xxx	Materials Science (D-MATL)
351- & 363-xxxx-xxx	Management, Technology and Economics (D-MTEC)
376-xxxx-xxx	Health Sciences and Technology (D-HEST) Courses from the Human Medicine Bachelor 377-xxxx-xxx are not open.
401-xxxx-xxx	Mathematics (D-MATH)
402-xxxx-xxx	Physics (D-PHYS)
511- & 535-xxxx-xxx	Pharmaceutical Sciences (D-CHAB)

529-xxxx-xxx	Chemistry (D-CHAB)
551-xxxx-xxx	Biology (D-BIOL)
262- & 636-00xx-xx	Biosystems Science and Engineering (D-BSSE) Note: D-BSSE is in Basel. (636-05xx-xx are offered by the University of Basel.)
651-xxxx-xxx	Earth and Climate Sciences (D-EAPS)
701-xxxx-xxx	Environmental Sciences (D-USYS)
751-xxxx-xxx	Agricultural Sciences (D-USYS)
752-xxxx-xxx	Food Sciences (D-HEST)
851-, 853-, 857-, 860- & 862-xxxx-xxx	Humanities, Social and Political Sciences (D-GESS) Electives only (max. 1/3 of chosen courses), no enrolment in this department possible

Performance assessments / examinations

ETH regulations regarding examinations and other performance assessments are strict and might differ substantially from your home university's. Familiarise yourself now with the rules, attend our information events, and observe all the deadlines you will be informed about in due time.

Types of performance assessments	Different types of exams take place at different times , as indicated in the Course Catalogue. You must respect the official examination dates and plan accordingly.
Shifting examinations (for exchange students only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange students may shift exams (through preponement or distance examination) only for academic reasons (e.g. semester start of home university). • The lecturers must approve any shifting of exams, and you must also submit an official request to the Examinations Office. • Some exams cannot be taken as distance exams, as indicated in the Course Catalogue (tab "Performance assessment"). When this is the case, only take the course if you can be present at ETH during the relevant exam period.
Missing or failing examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failing an exam is a real possibility. It happens to regular students as well. • If you fail an exam, you will usually not be able to retake it, especially if it is a session exam. Repetitions are often only allowed during the next exam period (a semester or even a year later) and sometimes only after retaking the course unit. You may only sit exams while still enrolled as a mobility student at ETH. • If you stay at ETH for two semesters, you might be able to retake a failed exam in the second semester. A failed exam can be retaken only once. • If you miss an exam (e.g. because of illness), retaking it is usually only possible during the next exam period (a semester or year later). Exception: Oral exams, for which finding an alternative date during the same exam period might be possible. Contact the Examinations Office immediately in such a case.

Assistance

[Your first contact for assistance with your study plan is your departmental exchange coordinator.](#) Any change after the initial acceptance of your study plan requires their approval.