University of Cologne
Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences

STAP Bachelor Application Manual

As of October 2026 (may be subject to changes)

Contact

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1. The Study Abroad Programme (STAP)

The WiSo Faculty has a wide range of partner universities around the world, which are available to Bachelor students for a term abroad within STAP.

Benefits

- No tuition fees
- One term abroad (no extensions possible)
- ERASMUS+ funding where applicable (see here)
- Credit transfer options, i. e. Studies Abroad modules, single course credit transfer and Studium Integrale (more information available here)
- Guidance by the International Relations Centre (ZIB) of the WiSo Faculty

1.1 Financial aspects

STAP incorporates the ERASMUS+ scheme. Hence, students who complete a STAP term abroad as part of an ERASMUS+ cooperation receive ERASMUS+ mobility funding without a separate application. Unless otherwise mentioned in the WEX database, all STAP partner universities within the European Union, Iceland, Norway, Türkiye and UK are part of the ERASMUS+ cooperation. Please note that the amount of ERASMUS+ funding is subject to change every academic year and might not cover your entire mobility period.

For STAP schools without an ERASMUS+ agreement, there is **no standardised funding** available – students need to cover all expenses. We strongly recommend consulting homepages/factsheets of the preferred STAP partner universities to see the expected expenses to be covered by exchange students. Applications for grants are only available after STAP selections.

1.2 STAP selection process

Since a term abroad is an optional component of our Bachelor's programmes, students compete with their peers for available placements. In previous years, we have been able to offer most of our applicants a place for a STAP term abroad. Once a student has received an offer for a STAP term abroad, no alternative option within STAP will be provided, and reapplication in subsequent selection rounds is not possible.

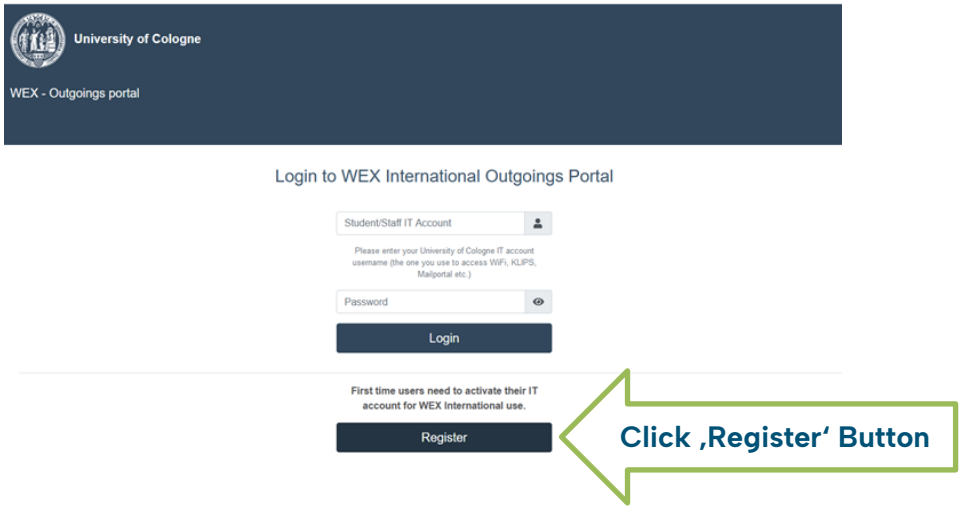
2. WEX International Database

The WiSo Exchange (WEX) Database is the central tool for organizing your STAP term abroad. Via the portal, you will look up information on the available host schools, hand in your STAP application, receive important documents and more.

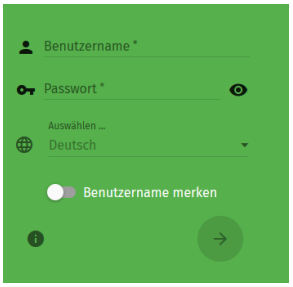
2.1 Signing up to WEX

The WEX database is only available to students of the WiSo Faculty. You can access it via your student account. For your initial registration, please follow the steps below:

Step 1: Register with your UoC student account credentials (the one you use for the KLIPS registration etc.) via the 'register' button on the right-hand side on the bottom line.

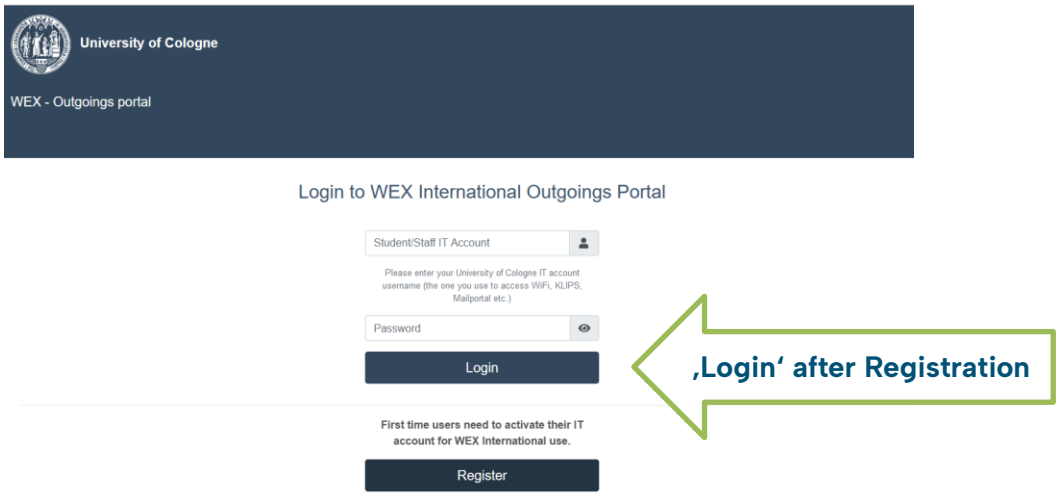


Step 2: You will receive an activation link via e-mail to your webmail account. Please activate your WEX account by clicking on the link.



Please log into your SoGo webmail account via your student e-mail address here. If you are having problems with your student email address, please contact the ITCC.

Step 3: Log in with your now active UoC student account credentials:



2.2 Finding a host school

The WiSo Faculty has many partner schools worldwide. However, not all partner schools are open for exchange for all terms/study courses. In WEX, each STAP partner university is allocated to at least one STAP applicant group. The STAP applicant groups[1] correspond with the following study programmes:

STAP Applicant Group	Bachelor Study Programme in Cologne
STAP BSc Business & Economics	**Business Administration** **Economics** **Health Economics** **Information Systems**
STAP BSc Politics & Sociology	**Social Sciences**

You can find the list of available universities under the tab *View International Options.* It only provides general information without any indication regarding the number of available places in the specific selection rounds.

You are free to select any of the universities listed in your applicant group. Apart from a link to the partner university's International Office and a PDF fact sheet, you should especially consider the following information to choose your preferred host schools:

- **Subject areas:** general focus of the courses available. If you want to make use of the full credit transfer options, keep in mind that some STAP partner universities may be restricted to a certain academic field.

[1] In addition to the STAP applicant groups, WEX lists applicant groups across degrees, such as *summer schools* and *freemover*.

- **Language requirements:** indicate if a specific school requests a higher TOEFL/IELTS score than the STAP requirement or accepts certain certificates only. If other language skills than English are required, please include this language in the STAP application form and hand in the respective proof under "language certificates".

- **Study requirements:** specific requirements may include a minimum number of ECTS at the start of the exchange or availability for certain study programmes only.

- **Term dates:** differ at each university and may overlap with the term dates of UoC (including exam periods, especially in spring term), which may lead to a reduced workload at UoC. Please consider this and the possible impact on your Cologne studies before your application.

- **Experience reports:** provide reflections on individual experiences of former STAP participants and do not represent the views of UoC.

2.3 Credit transfer options

Bachelor programmes at the WiSo Faculty offer extensive possibilities for transferring credit points from abroad to the home degree at UoC. All Bachelor's studies contain the modules 'Studies Abroad', which offer easy credit transfer to complete the Bachelor's programmes within the standard period of study. The main contact for counselling for the modules 'Studies Abroad' is your ZIB coordinator.

For more information, please see the information sheet on credit transfer

Additionally, it is possible to use Studium Integrale or apply for single course credit transfer. For more information on credit transfer, please visit the WiSo Credit Transfer Center website and consult above mentioned info sheet.

2.4 Students with special needs

We encourage students with special needs to apply for a term abroad within the STAP programme. To find fitting STAP schools with the necessary supporting structures in place, students with special needs should contact the ZIB outgoing coordinators well ahead of the STAP application deadline.

3. STAP application

Please read the following information on your STAP application process carefully.

3.1 Key dates

There is one main selection round per year. We recommend applying in the second or third semester of your studies:

STAP application/selection round – key dates

STAP selection round open: 1 December – 15 January

The selection round includes full selection of partner schools for

- either fall (of next year)
- **or** spring (of the year after next)

Students need to decide on their preferred term and may submit **one application only**, listing up to five universities.

3.2 Application requirements

- ✓ Enrolment in a Bachelor's programme at the WiSo Faculty
- ✓ An average of at least 15 credit points per completed term
- ✓ Proof of sufficient English skills (min. B2)

3.3 Timeframe for application

During the application period, students see their applicant group and the list of universities offered per term. Students can start their application and leave it open for changes (just quit and re-enter the WEX database) until the closure of the selection round. Final submission of the application by clicking 'submit' button. Only applications including all required application documents are accepted. No changes possible after submission.

3.4 Choosing a term

Applications are accepted for **one term only** (fall or spring) in the STAP selection round. Check term dates of preferred schools before deciding. The fall term usually aligns better with Cologne's schedule, so we receive more applications for fall. We try to accommodate as many students as possible for the fall term, but some schools request that we send students for spring term as well. (check experience reports on WEX for distribution between terms).

In case of overlapping terms, many students complete an internship before departure. As STAP results are announced in February, there is enough time to organise this.

3.5 Number of preferences

Students may list up to **five universities** in order of preference. Only those listing five options remain in the STAP process if none of their initial choices are available.

3.6 Application documents

Follow the provided guidelines carefully. You must submit your application in English and may submit one application for up to five universities. Combine documents into **one PDF per section** (max. 1.5 MB each) and rename files according to the WEX document titles before uploading:

WEX category	What you need to upload	Description
Personal Data	Structured application form (in English)	Complete the structured application form provided by the ZIB. It records your language skills in tabular form and contains your letter of motivation. Upload it as a single PDF. Only valid with signature.
	CV (in English)	Your CV should list the essential information in tabular form. Please put special emphasis on your main study focus, internships and extracurricular activities.
	Proof of English Language skills	An English language certificate of at least B2 level is required for the STAP application. **See accepted certificates below ("3.6.1. Language skills and required certificates").**
	Proof of further foreign language skills (where required)	For courses in languages other than English (see WEX database, *Language Requirements*) include additional certificates (see **3.6.1. Language skills and required certificates**)
Study Details	Current transcript of records of your Bachelor's degree	You can download your current transcript of records from KLIPS. You **do not** need to get your transcript stamped/signed by the WiSo Examinations Office.

3.6.1 Language skills and required certificates

For STAP Bachelor, an internationally accepted English certificate is required and must be submitted with the STAP application.

Be aware that some partner schools request higher language skills (as seen in the respective factsheet, or in the WEX database, section 'View International Options'). Furthermore, some countries may need higher English scores due to visa requirements.

Language	Accepted language certificates for STAP application
English	• TOEFL* (iBT, min. 87/120 for tests taken before January 2026, min. 4.5/6.0 for tests taken after January 2026) • IELTS* academic (min. 6.0) • Cambridge Certificate (min. FCE) • FILTERtest (min. result of B2) • UoC Business English Course** (min. B2, completed or in progress) • A-levels fully completed in English
Spanish	• DELE Certificate • Successful completion or current participation in language class in the past two years (certificate needs to state the necessary CEFR level) • DAAD Test at University of Cologne Language Lab • German-Spanish Abitur
French	• DELF Certificate • Successful completion or current participation in language class in the past two years (certificate needs to state the necessary CEFR level) • ELAO: online test by Institut Français • German-French Abitur

*** TOEFL, IELTS:**
TOEFL/IELTS certificates older than 2 years: For STAP applications, we accept certificates older than 2 years: Should a partner university request a current English certificate, students will need to retake the TOEFL or IELTS after the result of the STAP application has been communicated (mid-February).

TOEFL iBT: There is no obligation to use our institutional code (TOEFL ID B297). All STAP applicants need to upload their TOEFL certificate with their STAP application (regardless of whether they have listed the institutional code or not).

TOEFL iBT Home Edition or IELTS academic at home testing (IELTS Indicator) or TOEFL iBT, IELTS taken in a test center?
As the previous pandemic will no longer have an impact on future exchange studies, we cannot presume if our STAP partner universities will accept at-home testing in future.
Students who have already taken the at-home English test for admission to the University of Cologne, please feel free to use this test for the STAP application.

Preliminary results: We accept preliminary results of TOEFL iBT. TOEFL tests taken in the beginning of January will have the preliminary results available on time, to be included as screenshot in the application document 'language certificates' until 15 January.

NOTICE: We do not accept the TOEFL Essentials nor the TOEFL ITP for the STAP application!

** **UoC Business English Course:**
More info and registration link here.
Completed course: Choose 'UoC Business English Course'
Course in progress: choose 'Preliminary Business English Course' → We will automatically receive results when course is finished. The following requirements have to be met, otherwise proof of English is invalid and the application will not be further considered (= *criteria not fulfilled*):

- Minimum level of B2
- Participation in min. 9/12 lessons
- Passing the final exam

3.7 Submitting your application

Please submit your application for the STAP programme through the WiSo Exchange International Database (WEX). Once access to the selection round has been made available on the website, you can start your application by clicking on *'My Application'*, entering your personal information and then selecting *'Enter/ View Application'*. Here you can choose your top five universities. Once you have started your application, you can edit your information and upload all required application documents. Your application will only be considered complete once you have clicked the *'Submit'* button within the specified deadline.

After submitting your application, you can no longer make any changes! We do not accept incomplete or late applications!

4. Selection process and criteria

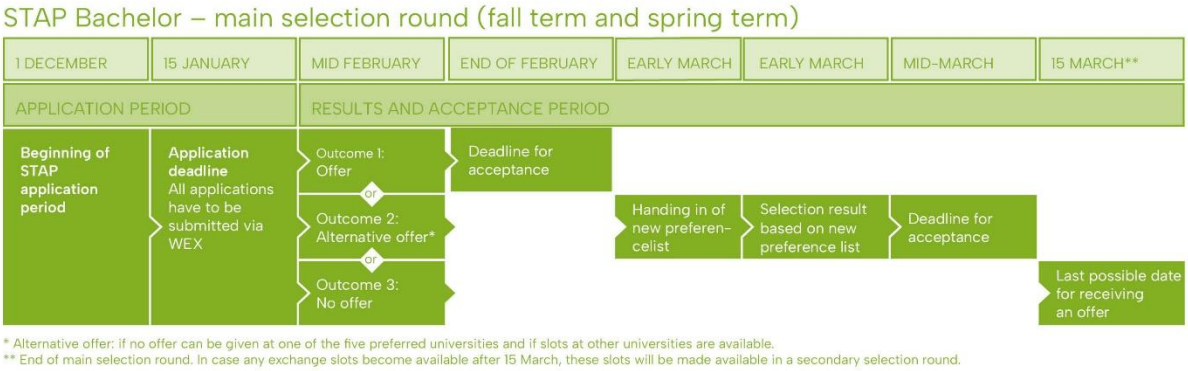
4.1 STAP selection criteria

Ranking of STAP Bachelor applicants is done according to their average grade within the corresponding applicant group. Applicants for fall and spring will be ranked in the same list

The ranking spot decides on the allocation to applicants' preferred partner university or an alternative offer. In the case of identical average grades and preferred universities between two or more applicants, the study speed decides. Where this is also identical, a decision is made by drawing lots.

4.2 STAP results and further processes

We expect to have the results ready by mid-February which will be communicated via e-mail. Shortly thereafter the ZIB outgoing coordinators will organise 'meet & greet' networking options with fellow students as well as information sessions. The ZIB coordinators will offer guidance on organisational and academic questions before, during and after the term abroad.



Please note that the *alternative offer* list will only be available to STAP applicants who applied for five universities and did not receive a direct offer. Once you have refused a STAP offer or alternative offer, you will not be allowed to apply again.

5. Communication & Contact

All communication with ZIB staff and the partner university during the application process as well as the actual exchange takes place via your student account. You can arrange e-mail forwarding from your student account to another e-mail address through the UoC e-mail portal.

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Advising: please check here for current advising hours

6. STAP terms and conditions

By accepting an offer for a STAP term abroad, the STAP applicant agrees to the STAP terms and conditions as listed on the following page.

By accepting a place on the STAP, the student agrees to comply with the following requirements:

Terms and conditions for the STAP programme

As a participant on an international programme of the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences (WiSo Faculty), I hereby declare that I will take on the tasks and responsibilities involved to the best of my ability. I am aware of my role as a representative of the University and the Faculty and will ensure my behaviour, my willingness to engage in dialogue and my efforts to integrate myself while abroad are in accordance with that role. Before starting my studies abroad, I will improve my ability in the language of tuition so that I am capable of participating in seminars, discussions and presentations in an active and academically successful manner. I will be respectful towards my host institution. My behaviour while abroad will contribute positively towards the promotion and development of the international relations of the Faculty of Management, Economics and Social Sciences.

Only students who are enrolled and will continue to stay enrolled at the University of Cologne during their time away may take part in the STAP programme. A further additional term abroad with a partner university (e.g. through the STAP programme, the central International Office/Dezernat ***9***) is not possible.

I hereby agree to:
Each box marked with a cross iindicates that you have read and understood the requirement

Complete the minimum workload required by my host university during my term abroad. Should the host university not have a defined minimum workload, I hereby agree to successfully complete **at least 20 ECTS through exams,** with the focus on specialist courses. Other arrangements are only possible with the agreement of the ZIB WiSo (International Relations Center of the WiSo Faculty). ☒

Ensure that I have sufficient **insurance cover** (in particular health, travel, accident and personal liability insurance) and that I fulfil the organisational and **legal requirements of the host country** (e.g. visa and residence requirements, vaccinations). ☒

Keep to all **deadlines** for registrations and allow enough time for postal delivery, to accept the **term dates** of the host university, to complete the full term and to attend all compulsory courses and exams. Should late arrival or early departure be necessary in individual cases, the explicit agreement of both the host university and the ZIB WiSo is always required. ☒

Inform the ZIB and the host university immediately, should I not be able to start or complete the term abroad. Such notification will only be accepted on serious grounds and proof must be shown (e.g. doctor's note). An alternative term abroad is not considered an acceptable reason for cancellation. ☒

Fulfil my **contractual obligations** while aboard (e.g. leases, telephone contracts, library fines, administrative fees). This still applies, even if I cancel my stay before arrival, if it is not possible for the host university to cancel any charges that may apply. ☒

Actively **represent the University of Cologne abroad** and – if my class schedule allows – to actively participate in Educational Fairs and International Days. I will submit an experience report to the ZIB WiSo after completing my stay abroad and will – if my schedule permits – take part in international projects in Cologne and participate in information sessions. ☒

I am aware that the ZIB WiSo reserves the right to exempt me from future ZIB WiSo exchange offers if I fail to meet the above-mentioned requirements.

The study and examination regulations applicable to the student take precedence over and are in no way restricted by the requirements of these terms and conditions.