



# STAP STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMME

## STAP Master Business & Economics: Application Manual

*as of March 2025 (may be subject to changes)*

Dear students and participants,

Greetings from the [International Relations Center \(ZIB\) of the WiSo Faculty](#). We are glad to offer you support and help with any question on internationalisation of your studies with University of Cologne. With this application guide, we will lead you through the application process to our faculty's own Studies Abroad Programme (STAP). In case of any question on the STAP programme or any other international option, please feel free to contact:

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Phone: +49 (0)221 470 1905 (Kathrin) and -7067 (Jutta)  
In person: each Monday on campus 'advising area', close to WissPo (for appts. with [Kathrin](#) or [Jutta](#))  
Via zoom: Tuesday, Wednesdays (for appts. with [Kathrin](#) or [Jutta](#))

We are looking forward to working with you,

kind regards

Kathrin Ebel and Jutta Reusch

**Preparation**  
(early steps)

**Information**

**Application**

**Selection**

*your 1st MSc term*

*October - December*

*1 December to 15 January*

*until mid February*



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## Introduction

The WiSo Faculty is the only German member of the exclusive PIM and CEMS networks, one of very few German universities to have received the EQUIS label and has an excellent network of international partners. Within these networks renowned international business schools and universities offer exchange opportunities for master students within the STAP programme.

**STAP one term abroad** The STAP programme is designed for a single term abroad without tuition fees. Any extension beyond one term, including a whole academic year or a second STAP term abroad with a different university, is not possible. Once a student receives an offer for a STAP term abroad, they will not receive an alternative option within the STAP programme.

**STAP & ERASMUS** The ERASMUS programme is incorporated into the STAP programme and does not require a separate application. Students who complete a STAP term abroad as part of an ERASMUS cooperation receive ERASMUS mobility funding. Unless otherwise mentioned in the WEX Exchange database, all STAP partner universities within the European Union, Norway and Turkey are part of the ERASMUS network. Additional Erasmus+ funding might be available for non-European partner universities. If this is the case, you will find a note in our WEX Database via 'View International Options', button 'Funding' for the specific school'.

**STAP & financial aspects** Tuition fees of the host school are waived for a semester abroad within the STAP programme. This applies for all STAP schools within the STAP exchange network. For STAP schools without an ERASMUS agreement, there is no standardised funding available – students are expected to be able 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 will become available only after the STAP selections, and there is no guarantee one will receive a grant.

**STAP selection process** As a term abroad is a facultative part of our master studies, students compete with their classmates for a term abroad. As evidenced in [previous years](#), we have offered most of our applicants an option for a term abroad within our STAP programme. Once a student receives an offer for a STAP term abroad, they will not receive an alternative option within the STAP programme.

### STAP application required in 1<sup>st</sup> master term

STAP exchanges for master students take place within the standard period of study, i.e. during the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> master term. Therefore, master students must submit their STAP application during their 1<sup>st</sup> master term through the [WEX database](#). If a student has not been able to carry out or start their master's studies due to exceptional circumstances, such as one long-term internship (as opposed to several internships) or illness, an application in a later term may be possible in certain cases. If this applies, it is absolutely necessary to consult your ZIB WiSo coordinator as soon as possible.

## Preparation (early steps)

**English certificates:** One of the following English certificates is required for the applicant group STAP MBA/MSc Business & Economics: TOEFL, IELTS or Cambridge Certificate. For details pls see page 5. This requirement applies for all applicants regardless for which schools they will apply. We recommend starting early to prepare for the English test.

**Documentation for your CV:** As your CV will be part of the evaluation of our selection process, we recommend checking early if all reference letters/internship confirmations are available for you to include in the STAP application.

**Selection criteria:** We recommend checking the selection criteria for your STAP applicant group early on.



## Information

### Credit transfer options

Master programmes at the WiSo Faculty offer extensive possibilities for transferring credit points awarded abroad to the home degree at the University of Cologne. All master's studies open for the STAP exchange programme contain the modules 'Studies Abroad', which offer easy credit transfer in order to complete the master's studies within the standard period of study. The main contact for counselling for the modules 'Studies Abroad' is your ZIB coordinator.

➔ For more information on the credit transfer options available for your master study course, please see the Information sheet on credit transfer available on [the homepage of the WiSo Credit Transfer Center](#)

Additionally, it is possible to apply for a single course credit transfer. For more information on credit transfer, please visit the WiSo Credit Transfer Center <https://www.ctc.uni-koeln.de/en/> and consult the leaflet for credit transfer options for master students (see right side of this page: <https://ctc.uni-koeln.de/de/antragsarten/studies-abroad> )

### STAP partner universities – general definition

Within the STAP programme, renowned international business schools and universities offer exchange opportunities for students. However, not all partner schools are open for exchange at the master level or for all terms/study courses.

Details for the applicant group 'STAP MBA/MSc Business & Economics' are provided in the WEX International Exchange database, section 'View International Options'.

### STAP partner universities for students with special needs

We encourage students with special needs to apply for a term abroad within the STAP programme. In order to find right 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.

### STAP applicant group 'MBA/MSc Business & Economics' open for master study courses

The STAP applicant group 'MBA/MSc Business & Economics' is available for the following study courses at Master level:

STAP applicant group	master study courses
STAP MBA/MSc Business & Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business Administration</li><li>• Business Analytics &amp; Econometrics</li><li>• Economics</li><li>• Economic Research</li><li>• Health Economics</li><li>• Information Systems</li><li>• Wirtschaftspädagogik</li></ul>



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## STAP MBA/MSc Business & Economics and specific information

The applicant group 'STAP MBA/MSc Business & Economics' lists the whole offer for 'Business & Economics' which includes

- ➔ **MSc schools:** a typical course offer includes a broad selection of courses or specialisations available for all students who hold a bachelor degree in management, economics or related areas. MSc schools do not require work experience.
- ➔ **MBA schools:** a typical course will focus on management practices and will include visiting academics/managers with high-level career background. A strong focus is put on in-class discussions and group work. Students at MBA schools come from a variety of professional backgrounds; therefore, exchange students are required to have work experience as well. The standard pre-requisite for work experience is defined as 6 months full-time work experience gained during/after the bachelor studies. A subject-related vocational training completed prior to university studies, in addition to further internships may also be taken into consideration. Some MBA schools expect more experience than 6 months. *Please see the list of MBA und MSc schools [here](#).*

### MSc Business Analytics & Econometrics, MSc Economics, MSc Information Systems, MSc Economic Research

You are free to select any of the universities listed in the STAP MBA/MSc Business & Economics (incl. MBA schools if you meet the work experience requirements). If you want to make use of the full credit transfer options, keep in mind that:

- ➔ some STAP universities offer programmes specifically in Business Analytics & Econometrics / Economics / Information Systems. Therefore, please pay special attention to the academic field (subject course) of courses available for exchange students [here](#).

### MSc Wirtschaftspädagogik

The STAP programme is only available for MSc Wirtschaftspädagogik who follow the Studienrichtung II, Betriebliches Profil and thus who will make use of the modules 'studies abroad' in their supplementary section. We strongly recommend a counselling session with your ZIB coordinator.

## English skills and required certificates for STAP applications

For the STAP applicant group 'MBA/MSc Business & Economics', 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.

STAP applicant group	Accepted English certificates for STAP application
STAP MBA/MSc Business & Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TOEFL* (iBT, minimum of 87)</li> <li>• IELTS* academic (minimum of 6.0)</li> <li>• Cambridge Certificate (minimum FCE)</li> <li>• Bachelor's degree fully completed in English</li> </ul>
<p><b>* For TOEFL iBT, IELTS academic:</b></p> <p><b>TOEFL iBT or IELTS academic certificates older than 2 years:</b> 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 iBT or IELTS after the result of the STAP application has been communicated (mid February).</p>	



**TOEFL iBT:** For the TOEFL, our institutional code is TOEFL ID B297. There is no obligation to use our institutional code. All STAP applicants need to include a proof of their English 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 begin of January will have the preliminary results available on time, to be included as screenshot in the application document 'personal data' until 15 January = application deadline.

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

**WEX – WiSo exchange international database**

The WiSo Exchange International database is designed for students of the WiSo Faculty and offers a broad range of information on exchange opportunities. The selection process and the studies abroad programme are managed via this platform. The login can be found here:

<https://wex-outgoings-wiso.uni-koeln.de/login/auth>

**WEX: registration for first time users**

**First-time users** to the WEX Exchange International database must first register using the lower registration button (see below).

Login to WEX International Outgoings Portal

Student/Staff IT Account 

Please enter your University of Cologne IT account username (the one you use to access WiFi, KLIPS, Mailportal etc.)

Password 

Login

First time users need to activate their IT account for WEX International use.

Register 

**WEX: 'view international options' and how to read the sections**

Within the 'View International Options' feature, the WEX International database offers detailed information on each partner university. This includes the term dates, subject areas and, if available, a PDF factsheet with general information and facts about the partner university. Please pay special attention to the following points when selecting the preferred universities for the STAP application.

**work experiences:** MBA schools require work experience. As a general rule, MSc students may apply for MBA schools if they have obtained at least 6 months of full-time work experience.

If an MBA school asks for more work experience, this will be listed in the field 'work experiences', and in this case, a guidance session with the ZIB WiSo coordinator is highly recommended.



**language requirements:** indicates if there are language requirements other than English. In this case, please include a self-evaluation for this language with the STAP application (see application documents '*further proof of language skills*'). If a specific school requests a higher TOEFL/IELTS score, this will be listed in this section.

**term dates:** For some of our partner universities, term dates may overlap with UoCologne term dates (including exam periods). This may lead to a reduced workload at the University of Cologne. (Some students take an internship prior to their exchange term.)

**conversion rate into Cologne credits:** This only applies for over-seas universities that do not use the ECTS system.

**experience reports:** This section provides reflections on individual experiences of former STAP participants and does not represent the views of the University of Cologne. Please, pay special attention to the term (fall or spring) to which each report is referring.

**factsheets:** These give an overview of the data provided by the school abroad, such as time schedules, expected expenses, etc.

**funding:** Information whether this is an ERASMUS cooperation, leading to an ERASMUS mobility grant.

## Application

### STAP application required in 1st master term:

Master students will apply for a STAP term abroad in their 1<sup>st</sup> study term. So that they can make use of the full selection of partner schools/applicant group. Applications take place within the WEX database.

### STAP application/selection rounds – key dates

#### STAP Main selection round: 1 December – 15 January

The main selection includes full selection of partner schools and offers STAP exchange opportunities:

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

Students need to decide on their preferred term/study period and may submit one application only. They should list up to 5 universities.

#### STAP Secondary selection round: 1 May – 15 June

The secondary selection round is not available every year (tba in April) and only offers a reduced selection of partner schools. The secondary round only offers STAP exchange opportunities for:

- spring (*of next year*)

Students may submit one application and may list up to 5 universities.



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### STAP Master – main selection round (fall term and spring term)



\* Alternative offer: if no offer can be given at one of the five preferred universities and if slots at other universities are available.

\*\* End of main selection round. In case any exchange slots become available after 15 March, these slots will be made available in a secondary selection round.

### STAP Master – secondary selection round (for spring term only)

Please note: there is no guarantee that a secondary selection round will take place every year, nor should a wide range of exchange opportunities be expected.



\* Deadline for handing in of TOEFLS/IELTS results: 15 June. \*\* Alternative offer: if no offer can be given at one of the five preferred universities and if slots at other universities are available.

### Time frame to upload the application documents

Between the start and end of each selection round, students will see their applicant group and the offered list of universities 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 is done through the 'submit' button. We only accept applications which include all required application documents. Once an application is submitted no alterations can be made.

### Application for which term (fall or spring)?

Applications will only be accepted for one term, either fall or spring (only applies for STAP main selection round). Before deciding on the term, term dates of the preferred schools should be carefully checked. For most schools, fall term offer better matches with Cologne term dates. Therefore, we tend to receive more applications for fall than for spring. We try to accommodate as many students as possible for the fall term, but some schools (typically those with a higher number of slots) request that we send students for spring term as well. (The experience reports uploaded in the WEX database give you an overview of which schools request that we divide between fall and spring). The secondary selection round (if offered at all) only offers options for spring.

### Application for how many universities?

Students can select their top five universities by prioritising from 1 to 5. We strongly recommend making full use of these options. Only students who have listed 5 preferred universities will remain in the STAP process in case none of their preferred universities could be offered to them.

### If term dates do not match

Should term dates overlap, most students choose to complete an internship before leaving for their host school. As notification of the outcome of the STAP application will take place in February, there is enough time to arrange for an internship.





### Application documents

Please carefully review and follow the guidelines on how to structure your application documents as shown in the following table. Remember that you have to merge several PDFs into one file per section which should preferably not exceed 1.5 MB when uploading it [in the WEX database](#). We recommend first renaming the pdf according to the WEX document name before uploading it.

WEX document name	Item	Description
Personal data	Letter of motivation/study plan <i>(in English, one page)</i>	The letter of motivation/study plan should be intended for your preferred (first-ranked) university only.  It should mainly focus on academic aspects ie academic reputation, course offer and general subject offered and how an exchange term would further your academic ambitions. General and personal aspects may be included as well.  <i>The letter of motivation should be based on the courses available on homepages. Do not contact the schools for course information.</i>
	CV <i>(in English)</i>	The CV should list essential information in tabular form with special emphasis on main study focus, internships and extracurricular activities.
	English certificate	See: <b>English skills and required certificates</b>
	Further proof of language skills <i>(where required)</i>	For university courses in languages other than English (see the WEX database, <i>Language Requirements</i> ), please include a self-evaluation form. Click <a href="#">here</a>
Study details	Bachelor's degree certificate <i>(either in German or English)</i>	Bachelor's degree, i.e. the bachelor document showing the final grade.  For bachelor's degrees taken abroad, include the uni-assist evaluation report showing the German grade <i>(if available)</i>  <i>For pdf-size reasons, no module descriptions, nor diploma supplements</i>
	Admission test <i>(not compulsory)</i>	We accept admission tests (GMAT, GRE or TM-WiSo) either taken for admission for Master studies or taken on a voluntary basis.
	Certificate of enrolment	To be downloaded via KLIPS 2.0 – (pls <i>no scan of the student card</i> )
	Current transcript of your Master studies  <i>!! for 2nd/advanced MSc term students only !!</i>	The current transcript of records (issued within 2 weeks before application deadline) can be downloaded via KLIPS.
Professional Data	Records of internships, extracurricular activities	References for all subject-related internships, training and work experience listed in the CV. <i>Pls use the documents in the language as available.</i> For voluntary work and extracurricular activities, the organisation's website and name of a contact person, may be included



## Selection

### STAP selection criteria

Ranking of applicants is done within the corresponding applicant group, applicants for fall and spring will be ranked in the same list according to the following criteria:

Applicant group	selection criteria	
	Main selection round (for 1 <sup>st</sup> MSc term students*)	Secondary selection round (if offered)  for 2 <sup>nd</sup> /adv. MSc term students**: this also applies for main selection round
<b>STAP MBA/MSc Business &amp; Economics</b>	61% final bachelor grade 9% admission test 30% evaluation of CV <i>(internships, extracurricular activities, letter of motivation/study plan)</i>	61% current master grade 9% admission test 30% evaluation of CV <i>(internships, extracurricular activities, letter of motivation/study plan)</i>

\* Only applies for students in their first MSc term. The academic criteria of the STAP Master selections refer to the bachelor's studies/gpa. Nevertheless, once a student has been offered an exchange slot, the host university will review the MSc grades during the admission process. Please note that the host school may refuse a student should their MSc grades strongly differ from his or her bachelor grades.

\*\*Only applies for students in their 2nd/advanced MSc term for both STAP selection rounds. Only on an exceptional basis, students in their 2nd/advanced MSc term may take part in the STAP main selection round. Exceptions such as one long term internship (min. 4 months), illness or other extraordinary circumstances may allow for this exception. In case of an 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4th MSc term an appropriate number of successfully completed courses is expected. Exceptions need to be discussed and confirmed by the ZIB coordinator.

### STAP results and further processes

For the STAP main selection round, we expect to have the results ready by mid-February. 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.

### STAP terms and conditions

Each STAP applicant who receives an offer for a STAP term abroad must agree to the STAP terms and conditions (as listed in the following page) when accepting the offer.

*By accepting a place on the STAP programme, the student agrees to comply with the requirements below:*

### **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:**

*Please mark each box with a cross to indicate 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.*