



# STAP STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMME

*where will your next adventure take you?*

## Master Politics & Sociology: Application Manual

*As of November 2023 (may be subject to changes)*

Dear students and applicants,

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 us:

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Advising: In person each Monday in WiSSPo B, via Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
please register for an appointment [here](#)

We are looking forward to working with you,

Kind regards

Your outgoing coordinators  
([wiso-outgoings@uni-koeln.de](mailto:wiso-outgoings@uni-koeln.de))

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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 this network 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 one 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. Please see “STAP Terms and Conditions” attached to this document.

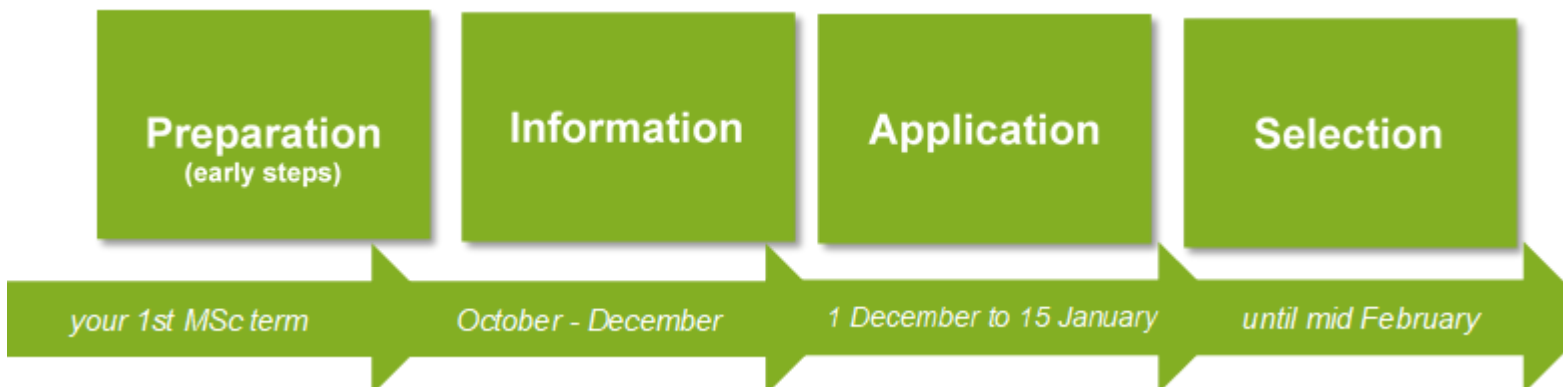
**STAP & ERASMUS:** The ERASMUS+ programme is incorporated into the STAP programme and does not require a separate application. Students who complete a STAP term abroad as part of an ERASMUS partnership receive ERASMUS+ mobility funding. Unless otherwise mentioned in the WEX Exchange database, all STAP partner universities within the European Union, Norway, and Turkey are part of the ERASMUS+ network.

### For MSc students Sociology: STAP and/or Utrecht Sociology Short Programme:

Cologne sociology students can participate in a specially designed exchange programme in collaboration with the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands, enabling them to attend courses in Utrecht over a period of six weeks during September and October. The application process is the same as for a regular exchange semester and students have to upload their documents via WEX. It is possible to apply for both, a STAP exchange semester and the Utrecht Short Programme simultaneously but applicants have to decide for one option, in case of receiving offers for both and conflicting programme times. Also, please note that participants of the Utrecht Short Programme are not eligible for Erasmus+ funding in contrast to a regular STAP exchange to a partner within the European Union.

**Financial support:** Financial support is available for certain universities through the ERASMUS or DAAD-ISAP programmes. For all STAP partner schools no tuition fee will apply.

**STAP selection process:** As a term abroad is a facultative part of our master studies, students compete with their classmates for a term abroad. There is no guarantee for a term abroad; however, 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.



## Preparation (early steps)

### Preparation (early steps)

**English certificates:** please check the information on English tests required for your STAP applicant group. We recommend to start early preparing for the English test.

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

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

## Information

### Credit transfer options

Master programmes at the WiSo Faculty offer possibilities for transferring credit points awarded abroad to your 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' will be your ZIB coordinator.

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

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

### STAP partner universities

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

Each STAP partner university is allocated to at least one STAP applicant group; details are provided in the WEX International Exchange database. Please be aware that the number of STAP partner universities varies significantly among the study courses.

## STAP applicant groups and corresponding master study courses

The STAP applicant groups available for master students and their assigned master's programmes are listed below:

STAP applicant group	Master study courses
STAP MA Political Science	Political Science
STAP MSc Sociology Utrecht Short Stay Option	Social Research, Social and Economic Psychology

## English skills and required certificates for STAP applications

Depending on the study course and STAP applicant group, there will be different minimum requirements on the documentation of English language skills, which must be presented 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 MA Political Science STAP MSc Sociology	<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) or</li> <li>• Bachelor's degree fully completed in English.</li> <li>• a completed Business English course at the Bachelor level at our Faculty (minimum of B2- in all sub-sections)</li> <li>• or the FILTERtest (minimum of B2- in all sub-sections).</li> </ul> <p>Information on FILTERtest dates can be found on the ZIB WiSo website through this <a href="#">link</a></p>

### \* For TOEFL iBT, IELTS academic:

**TOEFL iBT or IELTS academic 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, iBT or IELTS - after the result of the STAP application has been communicated (early February).

**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 an English certificate with their application regardless of whether the test result is sent to the ZIB institutional code.

### TOEFL iBT Home Edition or IELTS academic at home testing (IELTS Indicator) or TOEFL iBT, IELTS taken in a test centre?

We recommend taking the test offered in a testing centre. We cannot presume if our STAP partner universities will accept at-home testing in the future.

Students who have already taken the at-home English test for admission with the University of Cologne, please feel free to use this test for the STAP application.

**NOTICE:** We do not accept the TOEFL Essentials or 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>

## Registration

**First-time users** to the WEX Exchange International database must register using the green registration button (located at the bottom right).


**Login to WEX International Outgoings Portal**

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



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



## 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.

**Term Dates:** For some of our partner universities, term dates may overlap with UoC term dates (including exam period). This may lead to a reduced study 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.

## Application

### Application

#### Application required in first 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 1st master term. If a student has not been able to carry out/start his/her 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 still be possible in certain cases. If this applies, it is absolutely necessary to consult with your ZIB WiSo coordinator as soon as possible.

#### STAP application/selection rounds – Key dates

There is one main selection round per year, which is targeted at first-term master students. Master students interested in a STAP term abroad are urgently advised to apply in the first term of their studies. Applications need to be uploaded through the **WEX database** section: **My application – Personal data** (please enter your personal data first) – **Enter/View applications**.

#### Key dates:

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

The main selection round 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 (*not available every year*): 15 April – 1 June

The secondary selection round offers STAP exchange opportunities for:

- spring (*of next year*)

Please note that there is no guarantee that a secondary selection round will take place every year, nor should a wide range of exchange opportunities be expected. Information on whether there will be a secondary selection round will be available from the beginning of April.

#### 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, leave and re-enter the WEX database to make changes until the deadline/end 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 your preferred term, please have a look at the term dates of your preferred schools. For most schools, fall term matches better 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).

During the secondary selection round (if offered at all) only applications for spring term will be available.

## 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 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 MB. *We recommend to first rename 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>	Your letter of motivation/study plan should be intended for your preferred (first-ranked) university only.  It should explain why you are interested in your chosen host university in terms of the courses and subjects it offers and how an exchange term would further your academic ambitions. You can also use the letter to explain in more general terms why you would like to study abroad.  <i>The letter of motivation should be based on the courses available on homepages. Do not contact the schools for course information.</i>
	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.
	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, pls include the uni-assist evaluation report showing the German grade <i>(if available)</i>  <i>Please do not include module descriptions, nor diploma supplements</i>
	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>	<i>Please upload a current transcript of records (issued within 2 weeks before application deadline – and attach the corresponding <u>TOR-O-MAT</u> file)</i>
Professional Data	Records of internships, extracurricular activities  (may be uploaded in original language)	References for all subject-related internships, training and work experience listed in the CV. For voluntary work and extracurricular activities, please include the organisation's website and, if available, name of a contact person.



## Selection

### 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 <sup>1</sup> )	Secondary selection round <i>(if offered)</i>  for 2 <sup>nd</sup> /adv. MSc term students <sup>2</sup> : this also applies for main selection round
<b>STAP MSc Sociology</b>  (probably only available in main selection round)	80% Final bachelor grade  20% Evaluation of CV <i>(internships, extracurricular activities, letter of motivation/study plan)</i>	80% Current master grade  20% Evaluation of CV <i>(internships, extracurricular activities, letter of motivation/study plan)</i>
<b>STAP MA Political Sciences</b>  (probably only available in main selection round)	80% Final bachelor grade  20% Evaluation of CV <i>(internships, extracurricular activities, letter of motivation/study plan)</i>	80% Current master grade  20% Evaluation of CV <i>(internships, extracurricular activities, letter of motivation/study plan)</i>

### Overview of the STAP master selection dates and selection structure

#### 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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. Exceptions need to be discussed and confirmed by the ZIB coordinator.

**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 TOEFLS/IELTS results (if taken until 1 June): 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.

**STAP terms and conditions**

Each STAP applicant who receives an offer for a STAP term abroad needs to 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.*