



Guide to the recognition procedure for academic achievements obtained abroad

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1 Introduction

Berlin University of Applied Sciences actively supports its students in completing part of their studies abroad – either through a study period at a partner/host university or an internship. We believe that studying abroad is an opportunity for you to develop professionally, linguistically, and personally while gaining valuable skills for your studies and future career. As a student at BHT, you may undertake one or more study and/or internship stays abroad and have the credits you earn recognized. The recognition of academic achievements and examinations completed abroad follows a structured and transparent procedure that applies equally to all students¹ and is based on the relevant legal regulations.

We recommend beginning your preparations at least one year before your planned stay abroad. In addition to applying to BHT's Office of Global Engagement and the partner university or internship institution, important steps include securing financial support, and making other organizational arrangements. A key part of your preparation is also the **recognition of credits earned abroad**. This guide explains the procedure used at BHT in accordance with the BHT Framework Study and Examination Regulations (RSPO 2016), the Lisbon Convention², and the State Higher Education Act (BerlHG, particularly §23a³).

2 Recognition requirements

2.1 General overview

If you want the academic achievements you earned abroad to be recognized at BHT, you must provide appropriate documentation. This means submitting complete and accurate information. For study-related credits, this is usually done with a **Transcript of Records (ToR)**, issued by the partner or host university, which lists the courses you completed and the credits awarded. For internships, an internship certificate issued by the host organization serves as proof.

Students who study at one of BHT's partner universities must sign a **Learning Agreement (LA)** with both BHT and the partner university before beginning their

¹ Art. III.1 (2) of the Lisbon Convention states that there shall be no discrimination in the assessment on the basis of sex, race, color, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, membership of a national minority, property, birth or other status, or on other grounds (...) not related to the values of the qualification for which recognition is sought.

² The Lisbon Convention is the benchmark for the recognition of academic achievements and examinations completed in one of the signatory states. See [Bundesgesetzblatt Teil 2, Nr. 15 \(kmk.org\)](https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/pdf/ZAB/Konventionen_und_Uebereinkommen_von_Europarat_UNESCO/Lissabonkonvention.pdf) (bzw. https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/pdf/ZAB/Konventionen_und_Uebereinkommen_von_Europarat_UNESCO/Lissabonkonvention.pdf, letzter Zugriff: 05.09.2023).

³ BerlHG § 23a: Academic achievements and examinations results obtained at state or state-recognized universities in the Federal Republic of Germany or at foreign universities within the scope of the Agreement on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the European Region of April 11, 1997 (BGBl. 2007 II p. 712, 713) shall be recognized, provided that there are no significant differences in the acquired competencies (learning outcomes). (translated from German)

stay abroad. For semester-long stays at partner universities in European countries (EU member states and Norway, Liechtenstein and Turkey), students must complete an **Erasmus+ Learning Agreement**, or – for internships funded through Erasmus+, an **Erasmus+ Learning Agreement for Traineeships**. Learning agreements must be coordinated with the **international coordinators** of the respective department or degree program. The next section outlines this procedure step by step.

If you plan to study abroad independently as a so called “**Free Mover**,” a Learning Agreement can also be useful to ensure that the credits you earn abroad can be recognized later on.

2.2 Coordination of the Learning Agreement with the international coordinators

Before the mobility

1. Research the modules at the host university

As mentioned above, if you are applying to one of our partner universities, you must sign a Learning Agreement together with the international coordinator of your program or department and the partner university. Start by checking the partner university’s website to see whether it offers suitable modules for your degree program. Then select the appropriate modules and upload them as ‘wish list’ in your Mobility Online application.

NOTE: You should only finalize the Learning Agreement after being nominated by the Office of Global Engagement and accepted by the partner university.

Free movers: If you would like the credits you earn abroad to be recognized by BHT, it is advisable to sign a Learning Agreement before your stay. Once you have been accepted by the host university, you can register on Mobility Online and complete the Learning Agreement there.

2. Contact your international coordinator

Before creating your Learning Agreement in Mobility Online, discuss possible module choices and recognition options with your international coordinator. Make sure to save the module descriptions for the courses you are considering and arrange a meeting to go over them together. You can still make updates and changes later.

3. Complete the Learning Agreement in Mobility Online

After receiving positive feedback from the international coordinator, create the Learning Agreement in the Mobility Online system and “sign” it. This electronic signature is required by the platform. Once you sign it, the Learning Agreement is automatically forwarded to your international coordinator.

4. Approval of the Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement will then be officially approved or rejected by the international coordinator and subsequently by the partner university.

NOTE: Once you have created and signed the Learning Agreement in Mobility Online, you can no longer edit it. You can only edit it again after it has been rejected.

Example 1:

If the international coordinator rejects the Learning Agreement, you can revise it and submit it again. If the reasons for the rejection are not adequately explained in the email from the system, contact your international coordinator as soon as possible. Ask why the Learning Agreement was rejected and what you need to change. In most cases, the email already provides the necessary information. After making the required adjustments, create the Learning Agreement again in Mobility Online and “sign” it once more.

Example 2:

The international coordinator has approved the Learning Agreement, but the partner university rejects it, you must revise **the LA again**.

In some cases, the partner university may not yet be able to confirm the Learning Agreement online via Mobility Online. If this happens, print the version approved by your international coordinator as PDF from Mobility Online and obtain the partner university’s signature directly on this PDF.

Note: After each revision, the Learning Agreement must be confirmed again by the international coordinator and then by the partner university.

Why might the international coordinator reject the learning agreement?

The international coordinator may reject the Learning Agreement if there is a *significant difference in the skills acquired* compared to the corresponding module at BHT. A significant difference that could prevent the recognition of academic credits from abroad only exists if recognition would jeopardize your academic success at BHT. This is the case if the skills required according to BHT's study regulations cannot be obtained through the course completed abroad. For this reason, it is essential that you discuss your study plan with your international coordinator and provide the relevant module descriptions.

The international coordinator may also reject the Learning Agreement if the selected modules amount to less than 20 ECTS credits.

NOTE: The Learning Agreement (LA) represents a „preliminary recognition.“ This means it ensures that the courses agreed upon in the LA can be recognized at BHT after your stay abroad, provided that you formally apply for recognition. The

procedure for applying for recognition after your semester abroad is described below.

Why do you have to submit an application for recognition after your stay, even if you signed a Learning Agreement?

The courses listed in the Learning Agreement are not automatically recognized. Recognition at BHT is only granted upon application. This means that recognition cannot be imposed – you can choose whether or not to apply. You may apply to have all credits earned abroad recognized, or only a selection. However, only successfully completed modules can be recognized, as evidenced by the Transcript of Records issued by your host university.

Why might the partner university reject the learning agreement?

The partner university may reject the LA if you have chosen modules that are not offered during your semester abroad or do not meet the university's requirements. For example, many partner universities do not allow bachelor's students to take master's courses. In some cases, only courses from certain departments or degree programs are available to exchange students. If your module selection does not comply with these rules, the partner university must reject the Learning Agreement, and you will need to revise it.

NOTE: The Learning Agreement can only be revised after being rejected by the international coordinator or the partner university. Each revision requires renewed approval. To avoid delays, it is strongly recommended that you discuss your module selection with your international coordinator before creating the Learning Agreement in Mobility Online.

During the Mobility

Even after the start of your stay abroad, changes to your Learning Agreement may still be necessary. For example, a module may no longer be offered at short notice, or you may want to replace one module with another. In this case, indicate in the “During the mobility” section of your Mobility Online workflow that you wish to make changes to your Learning Agreement. The system will then guide you through the steps for revising and coordinating the Learning Agreement. Any changes must also be confirmed by your international coordinator.

NOTE: Changes to the Learning Agreement can be made after the original agreement has been confirmed.

After the Mobility

Once all requirements for recognition have been met, you can submit an application for recognition of the credits earned abroad. (For details, see section 3.4 Submitting an application for recognition.)

Below is an overview of the steps you need to take to have your credits earned abroad officially recognized at BHT.

3 Recognition procedure step by step

3.1 Studying abroad

IC=International Coordinator (Auslandskoordinator*in)

RO=Recognition Officer (Anerkennungsbeauftragte)

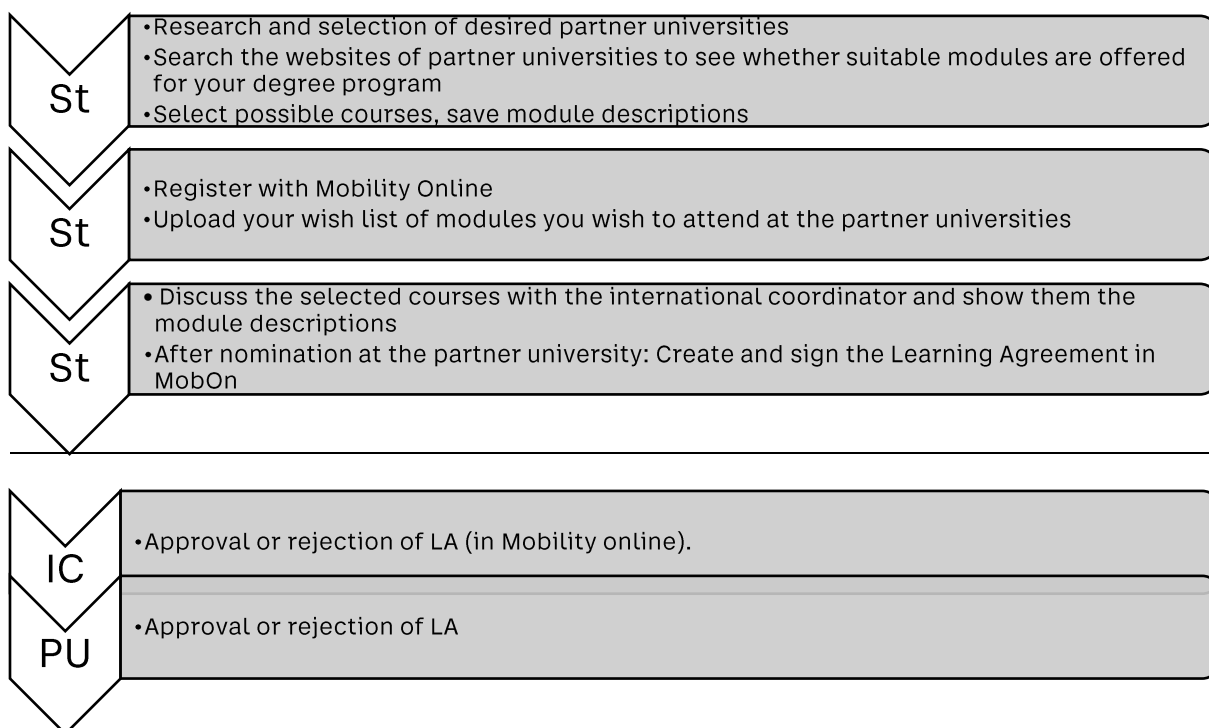
PU= Partner University

ST=Student

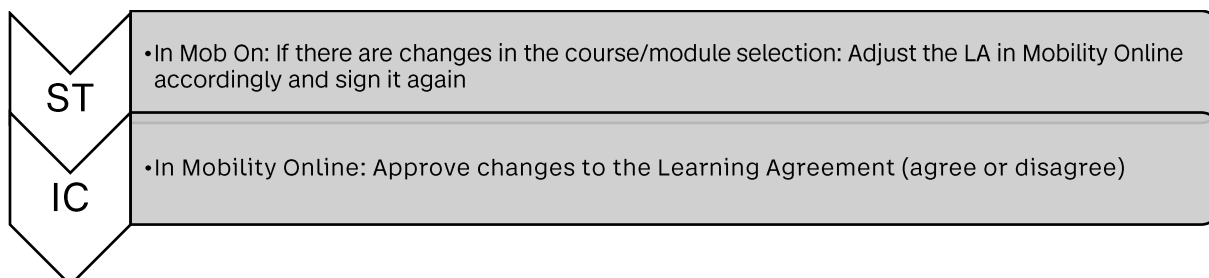
SA=Student Administration (Studienverwaltung)

Before applying and before your stay abroad

Gather information and do your research

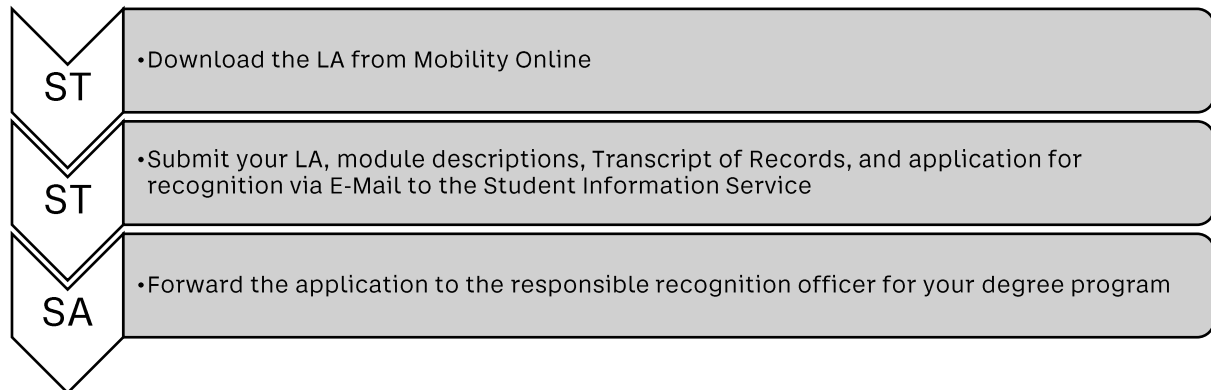


During the Mobility

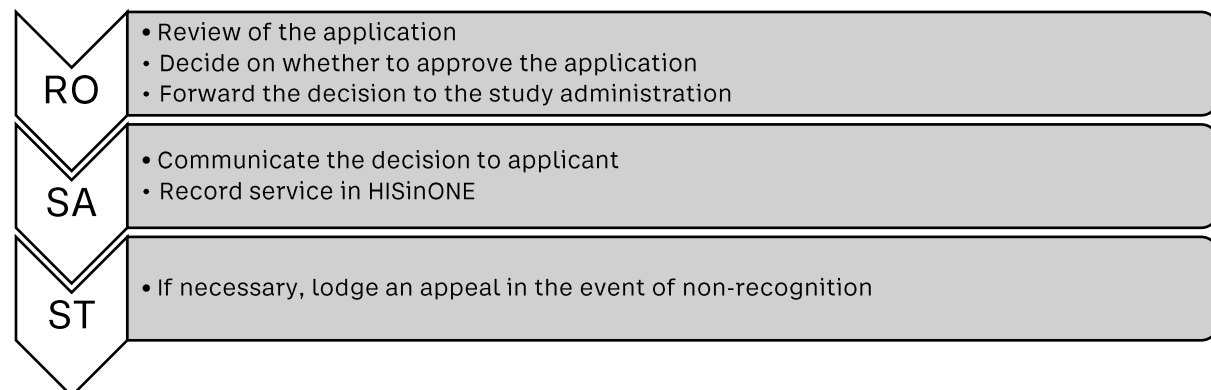


After the Mobility

Provide Learning Agreement, Transcript of Records and further information



Application review and decision on approval



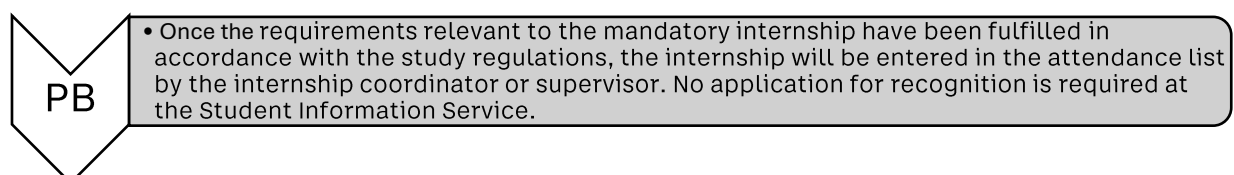
3.2 Internships abroad

Before the application and before the mobility

Gather information and do your research



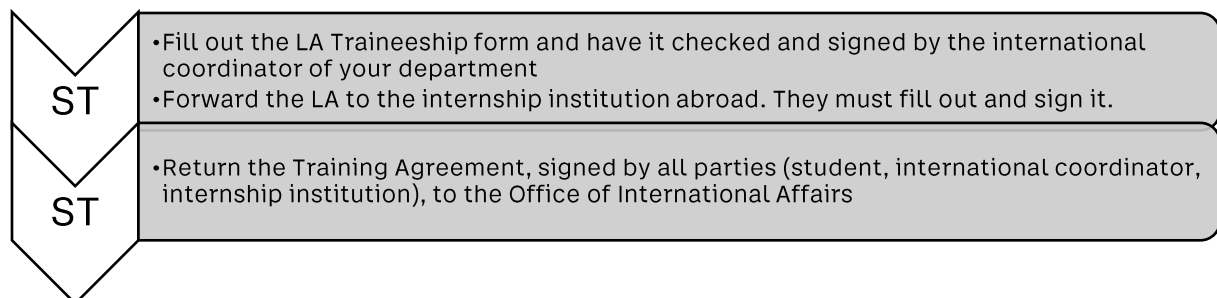
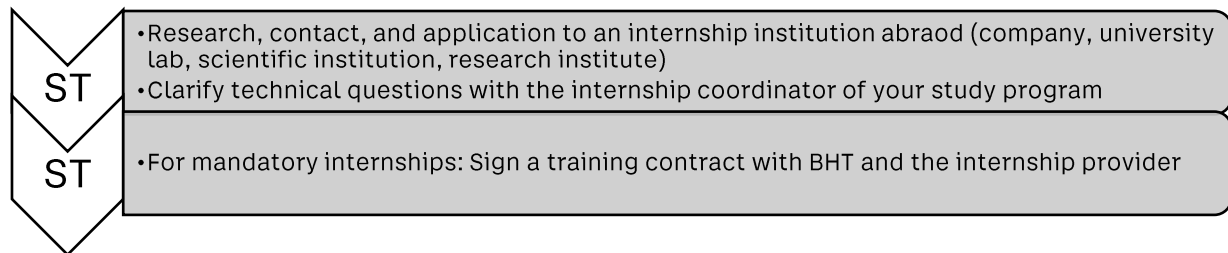
After the mobility



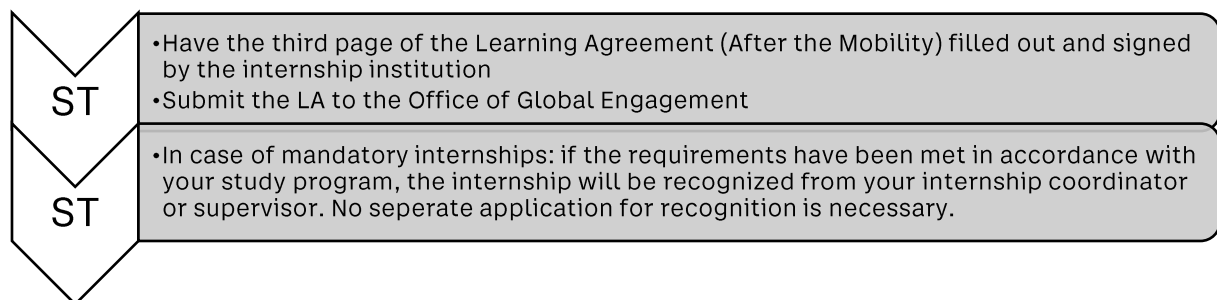
3.3 Internship with Erasmus+

Before the application and before the mobility

Gather information and do your research



After the Mobility



3.4. Applying for recognition

Credits earned abroad can be recognized at BHT upon application, provided that all requirements listed under "2. Recognition Requirements" are met. The international coordinator's signature on the Learning or Training Agreement serves as preliminary confirmation that the credits are eligible for recognition.

Since any changes to your choice of courses/modules or area of activity during the study or internship abroad must be documented in the Learning/Training Agreement, the proof you submit after your stay (Transcript of Records or internship certificate) should match the agreed-upon credits exactly. You can then submit an application to have the credits officially recognized. You may choose to apply for recognition of all or only some of the credits earned abroad.

To apply, fill out the [application form](#) with the courses you wish to have recognized.

Submit the following documents by email to the Student Administration Office (Studien-Info-Service):

- ✓ The completed application form
- ✓ the finalized Learning/Training Agreement
- ✓ the Transcript of Records issued by your host university
- ✓ module descriptions, if applicable

Your application must be submitted to the Student Administration Office within one year of completing your course. The office will forward it to the relevant recognition officer, who will review and confirm recognition by signing the application. The office will then record the recognized credits in HISinOne.

Important notes:

Recognition is generally granted only upon request. This means it cannot be imposed – you can decide whether or not to apply.

Internships completed abroad are not subject to the recognition procedure described here. If you have completed a mandatory internship according to your study regulations, it will be added to your record by the internship coordinator or subject supervisor.

3.5 Information on grade conversion

BHT does not yet have a standardized procedure for converting grades from other countries. A university-wide grade conversion table is currently being developed, and you will be informed as soon as it becomes available. In the meantime, the following methods are used in various degree programs:

- Modified Bavarian formula
- Conversion tables from other universities
- Percentage ranking/relative grading

Please contact the recognition officer for your degree program to find out which method is used in your degree program.

3.6 Information on ECTS credits

Where possible, you should receive the same number of ECTS credits that you would earn at BHT for an equivalent course.

According to the *principle of substantial difference*, the number of ECTS credits or the workload does not have to be identical. If you earn more ECTS credits abroad than are awarded for the corresponding course at BHT, the credits awarded at BHT for the equivalent course will be recognized. Any additional ECTS credits may expire or, in the case of partial recognition, may be applied to another module. Differences in the calculation of required workload per ECTS credit must not negatively affect you.

3.7 Processing time

The recognition process will be completed within two to eight weeks after all documents have been submitted in full.

4 Rejection and appeal procedures

An application for recognition can only be rejected if BHT can demonstrate that the achievements earned abroad do not correspond to the learning outcomes required by the BHT course (see BerlHG § 23a and Lisbon Convention). If this occurs, the recognition officer must provide a full written explanation. The decision must include information about legal options available. It is very important that the rejection clearly explains how to appeal, including the proper channels and deadlines for doing so.

5 Legal principles

The recognition of academic achievements and examinations is governed by the following regulations:

Federal law

Law on the Agreement of April 11, 1997, on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the European Region of May 16, 2007 (Lisbon Convention)

Link: [Federal Law Gazette Part 2, No. 15 \(hrk.de\)](https://www.hrke.de/federal-law-gazette-part-2-no-15)

State law

Law on Higher Education Institutions in the State of Berlin (Berlin Higher Education Act – BerlHG) in the version dated July 26, 2011, in particular § 23a (valid since September 25, 2021). As of August 30, 2023, the latest available version of the complete edition:

(1) Academic achievements and examinations completed at state or state-recognized universities in the Federal Republic of Germany or at foreign universities within the scope of the Agreement on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the European Region of April 11, 1997 (Federal Law Gazette 2007 II p. 712, 713) shall be recognized, provided that there are no significant differences in terms of the skills acquired (learning outcomes).

In addition, achievements at foreign universities shall be recognized provided that the skills acquired are equivalent to those specified. Competencies specified in the study and examination regulations that were acquired outside the university shall be credited up to half of the credit points specified for the degree program, provided that the acquired and intended competencies are equivalent. Achievements and competencies according to sentences 1 to 3 may only be recognized or credited once in a degree program.

Link: [VIS Berlin - BerlHG | Landesnorm Berlin | Gesamtausgabe | Gesetz über die Hochschulen im Land Berlin \(Berliner Hochschulgesetz - BerlHG\) in der Fassung vom ... | gültig ab: 02.06.2011](#)

University law:

Framework and examination regulations RSPO 2016 of the Beuth University of Applied Sciences Berlin (now BHT) dated February 4, 2016. Official announcement, 37th year, No. 16.

Regulations for practical phases at the FTH (now BHT) (OPp) § 7, version dated March 31, 2005.

6 Literature

Europäische Kommission, Generaldirektion Bildung, Jugend, Sport und Kultur, *ECTS Leitfaden 2015*, Amt für Veröffentlichungen der Europäischen Union, 2015. Link: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/87353>

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