

## **RULES FOR SENDING VILNIUS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FOR A PARTIAL STUDY PERIOD AT FOREIGN SCIENCE AND STUDY INSTITUTIONS**

### **CHAPTER I GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Rules for Sending Vilnius University Students for a Partial Study Period at Foreign Science and Study Institutions (hereinafter – Rules) shall regulate the conditions and procedures for sending Vilnius University (hereinafter – University) students for a partial study period at foreign science and study institutions (hereinafter – Institutions), as well as establish the rights and obligations of student mobility organizers and students who are being sent.

2. All the students of the University who are leaving for a partial study period at the Institutions are divided into two categories: exchange students and mobile students.

3. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is the foundation for organizing the partial studies of all students at the Institutions. The University applies the following ECTS principles and mechanisms when organizing the mobility of its students: provides a learning outcome certificate in order to inform the Institution about the academic results of the student that is being sent, coordinates the study programme of the student at the Institution under a Study Agreement, specifies the credits that the student must accumulate while studying at the Institution.

4. The mobility of University's exchange students shall be organized and coordinated by the international relations managers (hereinafter – IRD managers) of the International Relations Department of the University's Central Administration (hereinafter – International Relations Department) together with the student mobility coordinators (hereinafter – exchange coordinators) of the University's core academic units (hereinafter – Units). Mobile students shall coordinate matters related to studies abroad with an exchange coordinator of the Unit where the students are studying in accordance with the procedures established in the Unit.

5. Main terms used in these Rules:

5.1. Grant Agreement – a bilateral agreement between the exchange student and the University, defining procedures for settlement and payment of scholarship for covering the student's costs of living during his partial studies at the Institution.

5.2. Candidate – a full-time first cycle, second cycle, integrated or doctoral study programme student who has the right to participate in exchange programmes.

5.3. Mobile students – students who are sent for a partial study period at an independently selected Institution and who use their own funds to cover all their partial studies costs and costs of living abroad.

5.4. Exchange coordinator – member of the Unit's staff responsible for providing assistance to the Unit's mobile and exchange students, as well as issuing and signing documents related to the partial study period at an Institution.

5.5. Exchange students – students sent for a partial study period at partner Institutions according to the University's international bilateral agreements (hereinafter – bilateral agreements), interinstitutional Erasmus+ agreements of Units (hereinafter – Erasmus+ agreements) or other exchange programmes (Nordplus, ISEP, etc.).

5.6. Mobility period – a period intended for partial studies at an Institution.

5.7. Partner institution – foreign science and study institution with which the University signed an interinstitutional cooperation agreement according to one of the exchange programmes.

5.8. Rank – rank of students with the highest final course unit (module) grades, formed in accordance with the University's procedure for the rotation and ranking of students based on their learning outcomes.

5.9. Well performing student – a student of the University with no academic debts.

5.10. Study Agreement – trilateral study agreement concluded between the exchange student, the University and the Institution where the exchange student of the partial study programme will be studying.

5.11. IRD manager – member of staff of the International Relations Department administering the University's exchange programmes.

5.12. Other terms are used in the Rules as they are defined in the Statute of Vilnius University, Vilnius University Study Regulations, and other legal acts of the University.

## **CHAPTER II CONDITIONS FOR LEAVING FOR PARTIAL STUDIES ABROAD**

6. All well performing students of the University who are studying in a study programme of a certain cycle and who completed at least one course of the first cycle (Bachelor's) study programme or one semester of the second cycle (Master's) study programme may leave for a partial study period at Institutions if the exchange programme requirements and the internal regulations of the Unit do not provide otherwise. The legal acts of the Unit may not establish requirements lower than those provided in the exchange programme(s).

7. Additional exchange programme selection criteria established by the Units must be published on the websites of Units until the beginning of the selection process.

8. All well performing students of the University may become mobile students, if the partial study programme completed in their independently selected Institution can be recognized at the University and is coordinated with the Unit's exchange coordinator in accordance with the procedures established in the Unit.

9. Students of the last semester of all study cycles cannot be sent for a partial study period at Institutions, excluding cases when the study programme committee grants permission to leave for a partial study period on the last semester.

10. Prior to leaving for a partial study period, first cycle, second cycle and integrated study programme students of the University must submit a request of an established form to the Department of Studies of their Unit (doctoral students – to the Office of Doctoral and Postdoctoral Studies of the Department of Science and Innovation of the University's Central Administration) regarding being sent for a partial study period abroad, which must be coordinated with the Unit's exchange coordinator, the major and minor (if any) study programme committee and the IRD manager. Mobile students must coordinate their request regarding being sent for a partial study period abroad with the Unit's exchange coordinator and the major and minor (if any) study programme committee.

11. Students studying in a vocational study programme cannot be sent to Institutions for a partial study period.

12. The total duration of partial studies at an Institution cannot exceed 50 percent of the total duration of studies of the student in one study cycle. The total mobility period according to the Erasmus+ exchange programme in one study cycle cannot exceed 12 months (24 months in integrated studies).

## **CHAPTER III SELECTION OF STUDENTS SENT FOR PARTIAL STUDIES**

13. Information on student exchange programmes and participation conditions is published on the website of the University and/or on the websites of Units.

14. Student selection according to the University's bilateral agreements is carried out by the International Relations Department who shall organize a competition 2 times per year, prepare information material about the selection process, establish selection criteria, consult students on the administrative matters of participating in bilateral exchanges, and nominate selected candidates for partner Institutions on behalf of the University.

15. Selection of students for Erasmus+ studies at Institutions shall be carried out by the exchange coordinators of Units according to the predetermined and published student selection criteria. The Unit's exchange coordinator shall provide the IRD manager with a copy of the selection protocol based on which selected students are nominated to Institutions.

16. The selection processes of exchange students according to state, foreign, fund and other exchange programmes may be administered and implemented by institutions providing scholarships or their authorized International Relations Department with Unit exchange coordinators.

17. Students who participated in the Erasmus+ programme selection process have the right to appeal to the International Relations Department to review their selection competition results within 3 (three) working days after the results are published. The filed appeal shall be examined within 5 (five) working days from its receipt by the Appeal Committee which is formed under the order of the Rector of the University or his authorized person. The Appeal Committee is comprised of 2 Unit representatives who did not participate in the initial selection committee, IRD manager and representative of the University Students Representation.

18. The Appeal Committee shall submit its reply to the student's appeal to review the selection competition results to the e-mail address indicated in the student's appeal. A reply to the appeal of the student is considered to be delivered on the next day of its submission.

#### **CHAPTER IV IMPLEMENTATION OF PARTIAL STUDIES ABROAD**

19. In addition to other obligations described in the Rules, students sent for partial studies to Institutions shall also have the following obligations:

19.1. familiarize themselves with publicly available information about the organization of partial studies at Institutions;

19.2. provide the necessary documents to the IRD manager, Unit's exchange coordinators and the Institution's exchange coordinator according to the terms and procedures established in the legal acts regulating the partial studies;

19.3. fulfil all the obligations provided in these Rules and agreements concluded between the University and the Institution;

19.4. make sure that any changes in the Study Agreement are immediately coordinated in writing with the Unit's and Institution's exchange coordinators;

19.5. inform the IRD manager and the Unit's and Institution's exchange coordinators in writing within one month after the student selection results are published on the IRD website, if the student decides to refuse to participate in the exchange programme. If a student fails to comply with this requirement, he shall lose the right to participate in the exchange programme student selection process for one year, excluding cases when the student refuses to participate in the exchange programme due to objective reasons (health issues, loss of a family member, etc.) or due to circumstances of force majeure abroad;

19.6. Stay in the institution for the entire provided study period, including the period of the final assessment of study achievements. A student who wishes to terminate or shorten the partial studies period at the Institution must appeal to the Unit's exchange coordinator and IRD manager who shall inform the student about further actions and consequences related to the termination or shortening of partial studies at the Institution;

19.7. follow the rules and procedures established at the Institution;

19.8. take care of accommodation abroad, travel tickets, insurance, other documents necessary for the trip and travel formalities;

19.9. exchange students returning after their partial study period abroad must provide a report on their studies at the Institution, if this is provided in the requirements of an appropriate exchange programme;

19.10. if the Institution requires this, students leaving for partial studies must inform the Institution about their academic results at the University by providing a certificate of their learning outcomes in English issued in accordance with the procedures established in the Unit.

20. Prior to the beginning of their studies at the Institution, exchange students must provide the IRD manager with a Study Agreement (doctoral students – an approved work plan) signed by the student, Unit's exchange coordinator and Institution's exchange coordinator. Mobile students must coordinate the Study Agreement (mobile doctoral students – an approved work plan) with the Unit's exchange coordinator.

21. The Study Agreement must indicate the partial study programme at the Institution and credits accumulated at the Institution. Students leaving for partial studies must accumulate 60 credits within one academic year (30 credits within the semester), if the student's study programme or exchange programme rules do not provide otherwise. The number of credits provided in the Study Agreement may be adjusted based on the number of credits accumulated by the student at the University and/or requirements of the Institution.

22. All changes made in the Study Agreement must be coordinated with the exchange coordinators of the Unit and the Institution no later than within 5 weeks after the beginning of the study period at the Institution (within 2 (two) weeks after the beginning of the module at Institutions implementing modular teaching). If relevant persons are not informed about the changes or the changes are not coordinated with these persons on time, the University may not recognize the learning outcomes of studies at the Institution.

23. If the partial study period at the Institution is extended, the Study Agreement must be changed or a new Study Agreement must be concluded at least 1 (one) month prior to the end of the initial partial study period at the Institution.

24. The University shall recognize the learning outcomes of the student achieved during the partial study period at the Institution, if the student fulfils the partial study programme at the Institution which is provided and coordinated in the Study Agreement, and receives a certificate on his learning outcomes issued by the Institution.

25. Exchange students who fail to provide the required documents until the beginning of the partial study period at the Institution cannot continue to participate in the exchange programme.

## **CHAPTER V EXTENSION OF THE PARTIAL STUDY PERIOD ABROAD**

26. A student who left for partial studies at the Institution (excluding students of joint study programmes) shall have the right to extend his study period abroad, if his study period at the Institution does not exceed 50 percent of the total duration of the study cycle where the student is studying, in the following cases:

26.1. An exchange student shall have the right to extend his study period abroad upon his own initiative, i.e. by acquiring the status of a mobile student.

26.2. The exchange student's study period at the Institution may be extended, if the total duration of studies at the Institution does not exceed one academic year and is not forwarded to the next academic year. If the student's extended study period at the Institution is forwarded to the next academic year, the student must once again participate in the selection of students.

26.3. A student who was sent to an Institution according to the Erasmus+ programme may extend his partial study period, if the extension period is not forwarded to the next academic year. Erasmus+ scholarship shall not be guaranteed during the extension period.

27. To extend his study period at the Institution, a student must provide the Unit's exchange coordinator with a letter of the Institution verifying its acceptance (permission), conclude a Study Agreement for the extension period, as well as other documents if this is required by an appropriate exchange programme.

28. Prior to the beginning of the extended study period at the Institution, the exchange student must provide the Department of Studies of the Unit with a request to be sent for partial studies coordinated with the Unit's exchange coordinator, major and minor (if any) study programme committee, and the IRD manager of an appropriate exchange programme.

## **CHAPTER VI RECOGNITION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES OBTAINED DURING PARTIAL STUDIES ABROAD**

29. After returning from his partial studies at the Institution, a student must appeal to his Unit's exchange coordinator regarding recognition of his learning outcomes obtained at the Institution abroad by providing the coordinator with a certificate on his learning outcomes issued by the Institution.

30. Recognition of the student's learning outcomes at the Institution shall be carried out by the Unit's exchange coordinator in accordance with the Procedure for Recognition of Learning Outcomes at Vilnius University.

31. If the student fulfilled all the formal requirements (concluded a Study Agreement, coordinated changes of the Study Agreement on time, successfully implemented the planned study programme), all the obtained qualitative assessments of study achievements (grades) and quantitative assessments (credits) shall be recognized and included in the diploma supplement without converting the assessments of study achievement (grades) to the University's assessment system. The student's qualitative assessments of study achievements (grades) may be converted to the University's assessment system under a separate decision of the study programme committees. To convert his qualitative and quantitative assessments obtained at the Institution, a student shall have the right to apply in writing to the Unit's exchange coordinator who shall carry out the conversion of the qualitative learning outcome assessments (grades) specified by the student to the University's assessment system.

32. If an exchange student fails to fulfil his obligations provided in the Study Agreement and does not re-take the relevant examinations at the Institution, he must eliminate his debts upon returning from his partial studies in accordance with the procedures established in the University's Study Regulations.

33. An exchange student who does not agree with the results of recognition of the study period at the Institution shall have the right to contact the IRD manager no later than within 10 (ten) working days after the date of issue of the learning outcome recognition card, by filing an appeal regarding the revision of the recognition results. In this case, under the order of the Rector of the University or his authorized person, an Appeal Committee is formed comprising of 2 Unit representatives, IRD manager, representative of the Student Academic Affairs Unit of the University's Central Administration, and representative of the University's Student Representation.

34. The Appeal Committee shall provide its conclusions within 5 (five) working days from the date of submission of the request to revise the results of recognition of the study period at the Institution. Conclusions shall be sent to the e-mail specified in the request of the student.

35. None of the decisions of the management of the Unit related to the examined results of recognition of the study period at the Institution shall apply to the student until a decision is passed by the Appeal Committee.

36. The International Relations Department shall provide consultations on matters related to the recognition of learning outcomes of the study period at the Institution.

37. By considering the differences in the terms and deadlines of study periods, examination sessions and issue of learning outcome certificates at Institutions, the Unit's exchange coordinator who signed the Study Agreement must apply the terms and deadlines of the recognition of the study period so as to prevent the unjustified violation of the interests of the student returning to the University after his partial studies at the Institution.

## **CHAPTER VII**

## **PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND CONSULTATIONS TO STUDENTS**

38. The IRD manager and the Unit's exchange coordinator shall be collegially responsible for preparing and publishing informational material, organization of information seminars, and provision of consultations to students when preparing documents for partial studies at Institutions.

39. The International Relations Department and the Unit's exchange coordinator must make sure that a student is properly informed about the academic requirements of the University and the Institution prior to the beginning of the partial study period at the Institution.

40. The Unit's exchange coordinator shall be responsible for the conclusion of agreements of its Unit with Institutions regarding student exchange, selection of a suitable Institution, signing of Study Agreements and recognition of the study period at the Institution.

41. The International Relations Department coordinates the conclusion of the University's bilateral agreements and their publishing on the website of the University.

42. According to the University documentation plan, all documents of students who participated in the student selection process and were sent to Institutions must be stored for 5 years. This period shall be calculated from the beginning of the academic year during which the student was sent to an Institution for partial studies.

43. Documents of the partial studies of mobile students studying at Institutions shall be stored in Units according to the procedures established in these Units.

## **CHAPTER VIII FINANCIAL CONDITIONS OF LEAVING FOR PARTIAL STUDIES**

44. According to the procedures established in the University scholarship regulations, all students sent to Institutions for a partial study period shall be guaranteed a continuous payment of other types of scholarships and / or loans during their partial studies abroad. If the student uses his own funds to cover his costs of studies at the University, he must pay the entire cost of the University semesters whose number is equal to the duration of the student's partial studies at the Institution prior to the beginning of the partial studies at the Institution. The head of the Unit shall have the right to exempt the student who is leaving for partial studies at an Institution from paying the cost of studies at the University or reduce the size of this fee.

45. Students who are able to receive scholarships according to the exchange programme shall sign a Grant Agreement which defines the conditions for scholarship payment and settlement.

46. Scholarship sizes are published on the website of the University.

47. Exchange students shall not pay any academic fees to Institutions (fees of examinations, laboratory use, libraries, etc.) and shall receive partial financial support (scholarship) from the University or Institution if this is provided in the student exchange programme.

48. Mobile students shall pay the Institution all academic fees related to their partial studies at the Institution, as well as cover other costs of living abroad according to the requirements of the Institution.

49. Students who are leaving for partial studies to Institutions may apply to state and private funds regarding loans and other financial support in order to fund their study period abroad.

50. During the ranking of students, a student who has returned to the University after his partial study period abroad shall be ranked during the first semester after his return according to the weighted average of his learning outcomes of the last semester studied at the University. Qualitative learning outcomes of the studies abroad shall not be calculated in the diploma supplement when ranking students and calculating the distribution of the assessments (grades) of achievements of graduates.

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