



Multi-stage draw

All students are offered the opportunity to study abroad. In practice however, the current procedures make it difficult to select students for exchange places without any risk of unintentional bias. In the current situation, students are selected on the basis of their GPA and a letter of motivation. However, a student's GPA and writing skills can be negatively impacted by their socioeconomic background, language background, family care responsibilities, health issues or other factors.

Leiden University's International Relations team is committed to removing any such barriers and eliminating the risk of unintentional bias. As a first step towards this goal, we have introduced a multi-stage draw procedure for the current selection round. However, next year, for students wishing to go on exchange from September 2025 onwards, we will switch completely to a draw system in which GPA and letters of motivation play no role in selection. An inclusive selection procedure will ensure fairer selection and thus promote diversity and equity in our outbound exchange student population.

Note

- If there are enough places available at the student's preferred destination, the student will be placed there immediately. The multi-stage draw is used only if there are more applications than places available at the partner university.
- Students will indicate their chosen destinations in order of preference (1 through 10) and will not be placed at a destination they did not choose. We will only attempt to place students at chosen destinations and whenever possible, at their first choice. If a student is not placed at their first choice via the draw process, they will have first chance of a place at their second choice.
- If a student is not placed at any of their chosen destinations via the draw procedure, they will be provided with a list of remaining exchange places from which to choose. In short, the students can still choose to go on exchange.
- Students are entitled to decline an offered exchange place at a partner university.
- The motivation letter still plays a role in the selection process. It is not used to exclude students, but is instead used to verify whether their study abroad plans are feasible and realistic, and whether their choice of institutions is well considered.

Conclusion

The above-mentioned multi-stage draw procedure is a first step in giving students a fairer chance of going on exchange, and creating more diversity in our outbound exchange student population. Ultimately, in the context of the growing importance of diversity and inclusion as thematic framework in the further development of education, a draw procedure is the most logical method for the selection of outbound exchange students.