



MONASH
University

MONASH
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

EXCHANGE AND STUDY ABROAD STUDY PLAN GUIDE

MONASH BUSINESS SCHOOL STUDENT SERVICES

2026

INTRODUCTION

This Guide is designed to help Monash Business School students studying courses at Monash Australia Campuses navigate the academic requirements of a semester exchange or independent study abroad (ISA). We'll refer to these as EXSA throughout this document.

It applies to semester-length exchange programs with partner institutions and ISA semester-length study with non-partners. It does not apply to the Global Intercampus Program or the Global Summer or Global Winter Programs.

It does not apply to students studying courses from Monash Malaysia or Monash Indonesia.

While every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this guide, the information is subject to change without notice. In instances where information conflicts, the information published on a Monash website or advice provided by Monash staff takes precedence.

Acknowledgement of AI Assistance

This document was developed by the Monash Business School with assistance from Gemini Flash 3.5 and Thinking 3.5, large language models developed by Google and accessed via the Monash Google Education license. Specifically, Gemini was used as a brainstorming and editing assistant to refine the structure, tone, and clarity of this guide. All final content, policy interpretations, and structural requirements were reviewed, verified, and approved by Monash Business School staff.

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USING AI IN YOUR EXSA RESEARCH

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the way we live, learn, and conduct research. Provided you understand the risks and limitations, and comply with our guidelines on the [responsible and ethical use of AI](#), these tools can be highly effective as a "brainstorming partner" or "research assistant" to help you explore your EXSA options. For example, you can use generative AI to research different countries, generate summaries of host institution information or even use it to check your host syllabi content against our syllabi content requirements. Used strategically, it can support your EXSA research, application and study plan. But used irresponsibly, it can cause stress and frustration. Offloading your critical thinking to AI results in a superficial understanding of your options, which can lead to flawed destination or unit selections.

While AI can assist with structuring your thoughts, the actual work of your EXSA experience must be uniquely yours. Monash has published [comprehensive guidelines](#) to help you understand and develop your skills in using AI, and you have likely applied these skills during your studies. Consider this as an opportunity to apply your AI skills critically and to gain further experience in how you can apply AI to real-world situations.

Ultimately, you are entirely responsible for your overseas study application. While AI can assist you, it cannot "understand" your Monash course and it doesn't "know" the specific requirements for your EXSA destination. You can use AI for guidance, but you must ensure that you critically evaluate the information it provides for applicability, currency and accuracy. This includes not only critically reviewing the content and any linked primary sources, but also ensuring you cross-reference them against the information published on Monash websites and/or against any exchange-specific resources published by the potential host institutions.+

APPROPRIATE USE OF AI

When it is appropriate	When it is not appropriate
When comparing and brainstorming destinations: Use AI to generate a shortlist of host institutions based on broad criteria, such as global regions, campus styles, or general subject offerings.	When determining if you meet particular requirements (e.g. Visa, study load, EXSA minimum eligibility): Do not use AI to inform you of what requirements you need to meet or to check if you meet published requirements. You must source this information directly from Monash or through sources provided by Monash.
When trying to find launch point or sources for your research: Use AI to augment your search for host institution information. AI can help you translate Monash terminology into host institution-specific terms to use when you begin independently exploring a host institution's course and unit information.	When sourcing documentation and information: Do not rely on information provided directly by an AI tool, as it is frequently outdated, not relevant to EXSA students, or even entirely fabricated (hallucinated). You must independently locate and verify any information AI provides.
When checking if host institution syllabi provides the required unit outline information: Use AI to quickly check if the host institution syllabi has the required content as outlined in our unit outline requirements. While the AI response is not authoritative, we have found it is generally accurate at determining if your document has the required information.	When verifying unit accuracy and equivalence: Do not use AI to confirm if a host university unit matches a Monash unit, or to check if it fits your course. AI is not a source of truth for your course or unit requirements and it cannot guarantee that a unit's syllabus meets our credit requirements. Avoid being misled and use AI only to check if the syllabi has the required information and not to check if the unit is equivalent to a Monash unit.

1. GETTING STARTED

Before diving into your study plan, ensure you have completed the following:

- **Monash Abroad Essentials:** Attended or watched a recording online of an information session and read the relevant pages on the [Monash Abroad](#) website.
- **Course Progression Check:** You must request a course progression check as this will help inform your study plan. Your request should include:
 - Specify that it is for an exchange or independent study abroad program. If you are in a double degree, you must get a course progression check for both degrees.
 - Indicate which year and semester(s) you plan to study exchange.
 - Where needed for your course, include your planned major/specialisation if you haven't declared it on WES or are planning to change it.
 - You should also let us know any other information that might impact your exchange. For example:
 - If you are planning to apply for a Course Transfer.
 - If you are planning to take an Alternative Exit.

2. YOUR COURSE AND YOUR OVERSEAS STUDY

Understanding your degree structure is the foundation of a successful study plan. All of the units you study on EXSA must contribute to both your course credit point requirements and your specific course requirements, i.e. they must be both equivalent to a unit required for your degree and your overall overseas study must equal or exceed the equivalent Monash credit points.

IDENTIFYING YOUR ELECTIVE SPACE

Single Degree: Typically has 8 **free electives**.

Double Degree with another Faculty: Generally have **no** free elective space, but may utilise 'replacement units'; these are units where content overlaps between your two degrees (e.g. Commercial Law is replaced with a Commerce Elective in L3005 Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Bachelor of Commerce). Check your handbook and course map carefully and check with your Course Advisor if you are unsure.

Double Degree within Monash Business School: May utilise 'replacement units'; these are units where content overlaps between your two business degrees (e.g., Accounting and Business Law). These replacement units are considered free electives and can be from any faculty. Refer to your course progression check to confirm if you have any replacement units.

Warning: If you completed the Global Immersion Guarantee (GIG), it's likely you used an elective or two. You must request a new course progression to confirm to which part of your course GIG will be counted.

WHAT YOU CANNOT STUDY ON EXSA

Certain units must be completed at Monash:

- **Capstone Units**
- **Professional Accreditation Units:** e.g. Accounting, Actuarial Studies or other units needed for [Professional recognition](#)
- **Jurisdiction-specific units:** Units governed by Australian legal or regulatory frameworks (e.g. our Taxation Law or Business/Commerce Law units) cannot be substituted with international equivalents. Foreign legislation will not match the specific Australian-context curriculum required by Monash.
- **Credit Limits:** As outlined in the Credit Procedure, a certain amount of your study must be completed at Monash for you to earn a Monash degree. So the maximum amount of credit you can receive toward your course is limited.

WHAT YOU CAN STUDY ON EXSA

- **Core units:** where the unit at the host institution has a sufficient overlap (usually 80% or more) in academic level, learning outcomes, content and assessment.
 - This includes the *Specified business elective* in B2000 - Bachelor of Business and the *Specified commerce elective* in B2001 - Bachelor of Commerce.
 - Note: While you may study first year core units on exchange, you may have limited options for other host units as you have not yet met the prerequisites. You are also at greater risk of unit cancellations disrupting your exchange plans.
- **Specialisation or major units:**
 - Specified units in a specialisation or major may be completed at a host institution provided there is sufficient overlap in academic level, learning outcomes, content and assessment.
 - Specialisation or major electives may be completed at a host institution provided the unit studied is at an appropriate academic level and contributes meaningfully to the specialisation or major. As a guide, it should approach the discipline from a similar angle as the list of specialisation/major electives in the Monash Handbook.
- **Electives:**
 - **Free electives** which can include any unit delivered at a suitable level, covering a topic suitable for academic credit and is taught to an appropriate standard.
 - **Replacement units** must be delivered at a suitable level and standard, and be in a subject area taught by the Monash Business School.

YEAR LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

Ensure your plan is mindful of the maximum and minimum numbers of units you can do at the different year levels (e.g. for single degree undergraduate courses, a maximum of 10 x Level 1 units and minimum of 6 x Level 3 units overall).

STUDY LOAD REQUIREMENTS

You must enrol in the equivalent Monash credit points as specified on the host institution brochure page, or as specified by Monash Abroad for ISA, regardless of unit approvals for specific credit. On EXSA, credit points for approved units can be combined to achieve the required Monash equivalent credit point total, including across your specified credit and electives if needed.

3. PLANNING WHEN TO GO

Monash Abroad has published [Entry requirements](#) but those are only the first hurdle. The specific timing of your overseas study is critical for your study plan and your course progression. Here are our suggestions on when you should plan to go on exchange. Remember, applications are submitted 12 months in advance, so you should be researching and planning your exchange up to 18 months before you plan to depart.

- **Undergraduate Single Degree:** Ideally Semester 2 of Year 2, or Semester 1 of Year 3. This ensures you have decided on your major and completed core prerequisites. You could go in your final semester but see below for potential risks associated with that.
- **Undergraduate Double Degree:** The exact timing of your exchange depends on your second degree. Please consult with our partner faculty for confirmation on the best time to go on exchange. Please remember that not all host institutions are like Monash with a wide array of course and unit offerings. You should research host institutions carefully as you may be limited to only completing units on one side of your course during your exchange.
- **Postgraduate:** Timing depends on your entry point:
 - **Continuing Monash Students:** You can go in your second semester if you apply during the final semester of your Monash undergraduate degree in a cognate discipline.
 - **New/External Students:** Your timing will be limited by Monash Abroad's entry requirements. You must be an enrolled Monash student before you can apply.
 - Please note: Your exchange options may be limited by credit for prior studies or your entry level.

FINAL SEMESTER RISKS

You *can* go in your final semester, but be aware:

- **Delayed Graduation:** Results from host institutions often arrive later, which could delay the completion of your course and your graduation. This in turn might delay commencing full-time work or post-graduate study.
- **Unit Availability or Failure Risk:** If you fail a unit or otherwise can't complete your course requirements while on exchange, you must return to Monash to complete your course. We are not responsible for any additional costs you incur if you're required to return to Australia and extend your studies to complete your degree.

Commonwealth Supported Students, please note that OS-HELP is not available for studies completed in your final semester.

4. RESEARCHING HOST INSTITUTIONS

Not every partner is fit for every degree. Researching potential host institutions is your responsibility.

FINDING A MATCH

Check the Monash Abroad [Program Search](#) web page for host institution brochure pages where you can find the:

- **Exchange Availability:** Look for the "Traffic Light" system to see which partner institutions are competitive.
- **Study Level:** Ensure they offer undergraduate (UG) or postgraduate (PG) units as required.
- **Subject Areas:** Confirm they offer enough units in your study area to meet the minimum exchange requirement (e.g., some hosts only offer specific areas of study). Note: these lists aren't always extensive. You should check the host unit information directly to determine if there are enough suitable units for your exchange.
- **Host Information:** Monash Abroad provides comprehensive brochures for each host.
- **Academic Eligibility:** Some hosts have higher academic requirements than the minimum exchange requirements. You can preference an institution for which you don't currently meet requirements, provided you achieve this by the time of results release in the semester of which you apply; e.g. if a host requires a 2.75 GPA and you have a 2.70 GPA, but you are confident you can meet the 2.75 GPA with your current semester's results. Contact Monash Abroad if you have any questions about your application or the host.

CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR HOST SELECTION

When reviewing potential host institutions, ensure you evaluate the following:

- **Unit availability:** Compare the units required for your course to the units available at the host institution.
- **Semester Dates:** Academic calendars vary significantly by region. You should check the host's semester dates and plan your exchange and Monash enrolment accordingly.
- **Language of Instruction:** Confirm that the units you intend to take are taught in English (unless you speak the local language well enough to study in it and can meet the host's specific language prerequisites).
- **Unit Syllabi:** Start from the brochure page on the Monash Abroad website (see above), locate the host's equivalent of the Monash Handbook, where relevant. In the brochure for each host institution, Monash Abroad have done much of the leg work for you. Only after reviewing the brochure pages for your preferences, should you use external resources (e.g. Google/other search engines or responsible AI use) Many hosts restrict EXSA enrolment to specific units and you may miss vital information if you access the wrong information. If you have searched the partner institution website, including their equivalent of the Handbook, and searched externally for the unit description and can't find anything, you can request help from Monash Abroad by writing 'MONASH ABROAD ASSISTANCE REQUESTED' here.
- **WAM Requirements:** Some partners have strict minimum WAM requirements (e.g., Trinity College Dublin requires a GPA of 3.1). You may still apply for these hosts, but you must meet the minimum requirement by the time your results are released for the semester in which you submit your application.
- **Visas:** Research the student visa requirements for the host country early, as some jurisdictions have specific health or financial evidence requirements. Note: Some hosts do not allow citizens of their country to study with them on EXSA. This will be noted on the brochure page, where relevant..

UNDERSTANDING CREDIT POINT CONVERSIONS

Just like in Australia, different countries and institutions use different credit systems and weightings. The **minimum** study load requirement for EXSA is 18 Monash credit points. Some host institutions may have higher study load requirements.

The Monash Abroad brochure page has:

- The available study load options (18 or 24 Monash credit points)
- The host institution credit point to Monash equivalent credit point conversion

You should contact Monash Abroad if you have questions about the study load options or the credit point conversion. The Monash Business School is responsible for assessing your study plan against these requirements, we cannot approve exemptions.

Note: if you are an international student you are required to be enrolled in a sufficient study load to be able to complete your course within the duration specified on your Confirmation of Enrolment.

Example 1

The European Union has adopted the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) as the standard credit point system for all EU institutions. The ECTS to Monash credit points conversion is:

- 5 ECTS = 4 Monash CP
- 7.5 ECTS = 6 Monash CP
- 22.5 ECTS = 18 Monash CP
- 30 ECTS = 24 Monash CP (Full semester load)

You would need to complete **at least** 22.5 ECTS worth of units overseas to receive 18 Monash Credit Points, and at least 30 ECTS to receive 24 Monash credit points. At some hosts, ECTS values can differ between units, so you should think of your enrolment in terms of "Total ECTS" and "equivalent Monash credit points" rather than specific units.

Example 2

In the USA, for example, the load for semesters at the majority of host institutions is:

- 4 US credits = 6 Monash CP
- 12 US credits = 18 Monash CP
- 15 US credits = 24 Monash CP

You would need to complete **at least** 12 US credits worth of units overseas to receive 18 Monash Credit Points, and at least 15 US credits to receive 24 Monash credit points.

5. PREPARING YOUR STUDY PLAN

Your "Study Plan" is your list of approved units that you can enrol in while on EXSA. You must submit a study plan alongside your exchange application. Applications submitted without a corresponding study plan will not be considered.

KEY RULES FOR UNIT APPROVAL

1. **Level Equivalence:** You must study units at the same level as your Monash course.
 - Undergraduate students cannot take postgraduate units.
 - Postgraduate students cannot take undergraduate units.
2. **No Duplication:** You cannot complete a unit with content you have already studied at Monash.
3. **Mode of Study:** Face-to-face only. Online units are normally not approved. Exceptions are extremely rare and require prior consultation with Monash Abroad before submission.
4. **Prerequisites or other requirements:** You must meet the prerequisites and/or any other requirements listed for the host institution unit (or the Monash unit equivalent if the host institution does not require completion of prerequisites).

Remember: Some institutions restrict the units that are available for exchange students. Start your research from the Monash Abroad brochure page for your proposed host institution (find that from the Program Search page on the Monash Abroad website) on the Academic Details tab for information on how to find and select units, as well as any restrictions that might apply.

TYPES OF CREDIT

- **Specified Credit:** To get credit for a specific Monash unit, you must provide a detailed unit outline (learning outcomes, readings, assessment tasks). The unit must be substantially similar to the Monash unit (at least 80%) and meet the requirements for credit as outlined in the Credit Procedure.
- **Major/Specialisation Electives:** You must provide a detailed unit outline (learning outcomes, readings, assessment tasks). To be approved, you must have major/specialisation elective unit(s) remaining in your course progression, and the unit(s) must be relevant to the area of study.
- **Free Electives:** These are the most flexible and are assessed for general suitability and year level.

Avoid selecting units based on the title alone; check the Monash Handbook and the host curriculum carefully to ensure your proposed unit aligns with our requirements.

Example

It is common for universities in South Korea to refer to some international macroeconomics topics as "International Finance", however Monash Finance units approach these topics from the view of the firm, not from the macroeconomic view.

It is also common for hosts to deliver subjects similar to our "Business/Corporate Finance" unit, but they might be delivered in the third year of the course or have a slightly different name. When reviewing the learning outcomes it becomes quickly apparent that the units are very similar, but it's not easily identifiable based on unit level or title alone.

It's therefore important that you review the content carefully and compare not just to the unit you plan to receive credit for, but also to similar units you've already studied in your course.

UNIT OUTLINE REQUIREMENTS

The primary reason for delays in study plan assessments is the provision of partial or incomplete unit outlines. To ensure a smooth process, your unit outline must be comprehensive and include:

- **Language:** Documents must be in English, or accompanied with a translation.
 - Note: Some hosts use a mix of their country language and English. We will accept outlines provided the content we need is in English.
- **Unit Outline Document:**
 - Links to publicly available websites are preferred.
 - Please double check your links before submitting your study plan. We will reject your unit if your link does not take us directly to your syllabi information, or if it requires a login.
 - If your link does not work, provide both the link and a PDF copy of the information.
 - The PDF can be:
 - a print to PDF copy of the website, or
 - a copy of a document provided to you by the host.
- **Unit Information:**
 - Unit code (if provided)
 - Title
 - Description
 - Host institution credit point value
- **Detailed Learning Outcomes**
- **If available:**
 - Weekly topic lists
 - Prescribed texts and reading lists
 - Assessment information
 - Our assessors may require this, or other information but it is not required unless requested specifically.

A useful self-check is to compare the host unit information with the information provided for our units in the Monash Handbook. If your host unit information contains less detail, it's definitely not sufficient. Unfortunately, your unit will be rejected if the provided unit information is insufficient for a credit assessment.

WHAT DO I DO IF I CAN'T FIND UNIT OUTLINES?

You should read the Program Page carefully as Monash Abroad often includes information on how to source unit information in the Academic Details tab. If the unit outlines are not available on the host institution website, you can try searching the internet for unit codes and/or names in quote marks. If you have exhausted all of these options, then you can request Monash Abroad assistance in the study plan form itself.

Our partners often update their information year to year. If any links aren't working on a Monash Abroad brochure page, please email monashabroad.enquiries@monash.edu to let Monash Abroad know.

6. SUBMITTING THE STUDY PLAN FORM

You submit your study plan along with your exchange application. You should contact Monash Abroad for assistance with submitting your Study Plan or to check on the status of your Exchange Application.

HOW MANY UNITS DO I NEED APPROVED?

In addition to the minimum equivalent full-time load, our recommendation is that you have the equivalent of 12-24 Monash credit points of alternative units approved. This will ensure you can simply update your enrolment if plans change, instead of facing the uncertainty of submitting another study plan.

Consider extra approved units as being your safety net if something happens and you can no longer complete an approved unit on your exchange. Remember, you must meet both ours and your hosts requirements. You may need to cancel your exchange and return to Australia if you're not able to meet the minimum enrolment requirements due to cancelled units.

STUDY PLAN UNIT INFORMATION

Form Field	Guide
Host Unit Code/Name	Format: [CODE] [NAME] Enter both the host unit code (where available) and unit name in this box. It is best to copy directly from the host information to minimise transcription errors.
Unit Outline Link	Refer back to the unit outline submission requirements and ensure your provided link (or attached PDF) meets all requirements. It is helpful to add a "PDF attached" note so we know to check the attachments.
Host Credit Points	Enter the host credit points as found in their unit information. If no information is available, check the academic details tab of the program page or contact Monash Abroad.
Credit to	Select "Australia-Faculty of Business and Economics" Double degree students: Select the faculty that manages the section of the course you want the host unit to contribute to.
Credit as	Refer to table below for explanation of options.

“CREDIT AS” INFORMATION

Credit as option	When to use
Core unit	Use for any unit in your course that is not a free elective, or Major/Minor/Specialisation unit.
Free elective	Use for any unit you want to contribute to the “Free Elective” section of your course. Ensure you check that you have free electives available. Units will not be assessed as area of study units if marked as free elective. Use this option for replacement units if you are in a double degree where each side is managed by the Monash Business School (eg. The Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Finance).
Major unit Minor unit Specialisation	Request the unit to count towards an area of study declared on your student record in WES. We will review the unit and determine which AoS it contributes to, including as a major/specialisation elective (sometimes listed in the handbook as “additional major unit(s)”).
Technical/discipline/degree elective	Use for any elective not better described by the other options (e.g. The Specified Commerce Elective from B2001 Bachelor of Commerce Part A) Use this option for replacement units if you are in a double degree where each side is managed by different faculties (eg. The Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Arts).
Professional Future	Only relevant for students studying a double degree with the Bachelor of Arts.
Signature element	Only relevant for students studying a double degree with the Bachelor of Arts from 2020.

OUTCOMES

Once finalised, you will receive an outcome email with the following information:

Field	Description
Unit Approved	See table below
Year level equiv.	This is the equivalent Monash year level of the unit. Used for determining if you have met unit level requirements for your course as outlined in the handbook.
Discipline equiv.	Specifies the discipline of the unit. We will add details in the Notes field.
Monash credits equiv.	Specifies the equivalent Monash credit points of the unit.
Notes	Provides additional outcomes or comments. • We will enter a unit code in the notes section if a unit is approved as specified credit. • We will specify if the unit is approved as major/specialisation elective (e.g. Marketing Elective)

UNIT APPROVED OUTCOMES

Approved as a core unit	Can I study this unit on exchange?	Definition
Approved as a core unit for the specialisation	Yes*	Contributes to your course requirements at the time the study plan was reviewed. The notes section will outline how it contributes to your course.
Approved as a major unit	Yes*	Contributes to your course requirements at the time the study plan was reviewed. The notes section will outline how it contributes to your course.
Approved as a minor unit	Yes*	Contributes to your course requirements at the time the study plan was reviewed. The notes section will outline how it contributes to your course.
Approved as technical/discipline/degree elective	Yes*	Contributes to your course requirements at the time the study plan was reviewed. The notes section will outline how it contributes to your course.
Approved as a free elective	Yes*	Contributes to your course requirements at the time the study plan was reviewed. Contributes to the free elective section of your course only.
Not approved	No	Usually due to a lack of unit outline, incorrect level, or degree mismatch.
Conditionally approved	Maybe	The unit is approved pending some action from you. This may include, removing a conflicting unit from your enrolment, or revoking previously granted credit to make space in your degree. We will contact you via email and provide details of the condition in the notes section.
Invalid unit	No	
Under assessment	To be determined	We may send your other unit outcomes before all outcomes are finalised. We will contact you with a finalised outcome

*You may study these units, provided:

- You meet any requirements outlined in the “notes” section on your study plan outcome (e.g. prerequisites)
- your overall enrolment fits into the units remaining in your course.

E.g., if you have 30 ECTS (equivalent to 24 Monash credits) worth of units approved as free electives at Monash, but you only have two free electives at Monash available, you may only complete 15 ECTS worth of free electives, and must ensure you have other units approved that fit with other units in your course.

Your Study Plan outcome might be invalidated if you change your future enrolment after we send you the Study Plan outcome. It is your responsibility to ensure that the units you enrol in at the host institution will count towards your course.

7. YOUR STUDY PLAN IS DONE, WHAT NOW?

The Study Plan is just one aspect of your EXSA application and experience. It is very important that you research the financial and other requirements of your overseas study. Monash Abroad provides a wide range of resources to support you, including resources to help you estimate the cost of your overseas study. Remember, you will be living in another country for the entirety of your overseas study and you will be responsible for all of the associated costs while there. It's important that you do your research, review the Monash Abroad website carefully (including completing all steps of the application process) and follow their advice. You should contact Monash Abroad if you have any questions about EXSA.

APPENDIX

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Description of changes
1.1	27 July 2026	Added information on using AI to assist with EXSA research and processes. Minor wording changes to other sections.
1.0	30 June 2026	Original version



Further information

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South Wing

Clayton

Monash Peninsula

Building D, Level 3,

McMahons Road

Frankston

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