



Stellenbosch University International
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**Stellenbosch University International
Global Engagement Centre (Hereafter referred to as 'GEC')**

Guideline Document

- **for institutions interested in setting up an Academic Semester Programme**

Academic semester programmes at Stellenbosch University:

Below is an explanation on how to go about in having an academic programme set up for your students. It sets apart the difference between an “academic programme” and “an individual Freemover” application. It provides insight into the timeline and processes at Stellenbosch University International on setting up an academic programme agreement.

1) What is an academic semester programme?

An academic semester programme is when an institution (referred to as ‘the sending institution’) would like to send a group of 10 or more students, to conduct a semester of study abroad, with the interest in the same list of courses. This means that all students register for the exact same list of pre-approved courses for a semester of study abroad. By the date of application, all applicants should have the same academic background, in order to allow the course approval consideration to be conducted for the group as a whole. The sending institution chooses the courses from our available course list, according to the academic needs for their students. The institution can choose from two streams of courses, either mainstream and/or IPSU courses.

- Defining Mainstream and IPSU courses

Mainstream courses form part of full degrees at Stellenbosch University. A semester study abroad student may register for semester courses which form part of these full degree programmes, provided they have been preapproved for the course.

IPSU (International Programmes Stellenbosch University) is an additional stream of courses which has been created for the specific needs of the semester international students, and is only attended by international students. More is explained on course options at the below paragraph about courses.

2) What courses can be chosen for an academic semester programme?

The sending institutions can choose courses for their students from the undergraduate mainstream, postgraduate mainstream and/or IPSU course offering. Course information is to be downloaded from the subsection “Course Information (general)” from the online link:

www.sun.ac.za/international/freemover

Take note, for academic semester group applications, we welcome applications from both streams of courses, undergraduate (or postgraduate) mainstream course applications and/or IPSU course applications. A course choice should be selected at Stellenbosch University on a ‘one level up’ basis from the students’ current academic background.

The following information documents are useful in selecting courses for academic programmes:

- **Undergraduate: Mainstream course summary document**
The summary document of all courses on offer in English at undergraduate level in all fields of study at Stellenbosch University. You will note the course summary neatly summed up: the left hand column indicates the first semester courses (our January to June semester) and courses summed up on the right hand column indicating courses on offer in the second semester (our July to December semester). This document is available in March for the same calendar year. This means, course applications for the January to June semester is based on the previous calendar year's course offerings. Only minor changes occur from calendar year to calendar year.
- **Postgraduate: mainstream course search guide**
The indication on how to search for postgraduate courses on offer at Stellenbosch University.
- **IPSU courses**
The IPSU course offering is repeated every semester with minor changes from semester to semester. The course choice for the upcoming semester is based on the current semester's IPSU booklet.

3) Defining the difference in the application process: an individual Freemover vs an Academic Programme

All students, whether applying as an individual Freemover or as part of a set academic programme applies online at www.sun.ac.za/international/freemovers

The difference between a group application for an "Academic Semester Programme" and an "Individual Freemover" applicant comes down to the fact that the individual Freemover takes responsibility for their own timetable compatibility, as opposed to a group application (Academic Semester Programme), where the GEC assists to ensure that the course programme (as selected by the sending institution), is timetable compatible.

The "Individual Freemover" applicant is free to choose from courses on offer in any Faculty, from any degree programme available, on a one level up basis, based on their current academic level. For interest in a field of study at Stellenbosch University in which the student can prove an academic background, they may select courses on a one level up basis. If a student is interested in a field of study in which no academic background can be proven, they can apply for such a field of course limited only to first year level.

Individual applicants prove their personal academic background by means of the supporting document as handed in with their application, i.e. the official academic transcript. The GEC handles the course approval process, in which the courses are sent out to the academic department for their consent of approval, and provide the applicant with a course approval status update.

An individual Freemover applicant takes responsibility for their own timetable compatibility of their choice of selected courses.

For the **Academic Semester Programme** application, the same procedure is followed as above, except that the sending institution applies for the group's courses at least **three months in advance to the application deadline** for individual Freemovers, and supplies an example transcript of one student which represents the whole group's academic background. Once the Academic Semester Programme is approved by the GEC, the sending institutions' students submit their applications online at www.sun.ac.za/international/freemovers (at the subsection 'how to apply') by the below stated deadline dates.

Application deadlines for Individual Freemovers:

First semester applications (for semester January to June):

15 September of the previous calendar year

Second semester applications (for semester July to December):

15 March of the same calendar year

Academic Semester Programme onset dates:

For an Academic Semester Programme to be set up for **the January to June semester**, the onset date for course requests and the example transcript to be supplied by the sending institution to the GEC is **15 June** of the previous calendar year.

Once the Academic Semester Programme is approved, the sending institution's students log their applications online by **15 September** of the previous calendar year of the January to June semester.

For an Academic Semester Programme to be set up for **the July to December semester**, the onset date for course requests and the example transcript to be supplied by the sending institution to the GEC is **15 December** of the previous calendar year.

Once the Academic Semester Programme is approved, the sending institution's students log their applications online by **15 March** of the same calendar year of July to December semester.

4) **GEC process for setting up an academic programme**

Setting up an academic programme can take up to three months to get approved. Here are the steps:

- the sending institution sends to the GEC
 - a list of courses required for their students (course codes need to be included)
 - an example transcript which states students' courses completed to date prior to the intended study abroad semester

The task of the GEC is to:

- run the approval requests for course admission for the student group with the academic departments on campus based on their academic level
- ensure that there is enough class space to accommodate the intended group to be sent to Stellenbosch University
- ensure that the combination of courses selected are mutually compatible with regards to the semester timetable at Stellenbosch University