Exchange Program General Policies

Application

1. The exchange program is an opportunity for eligible students to go on exchange.

2. Interested students must officially apply online and submit a completed application with a CV and the necessary supporting documents during the relevant periods. Late applications are not accepted.

3. Students can rank up to 10 exchange university choices in their application.

4. Only students in the relevant years of study can apply and have access to the application form. More details posted in the Exchange Application on the exchange website.

5. Students can only choose to exchange in the semesters indicated below and can only apply during the time periods indicated below:

   4Y Program Students:
   - Fall of 3rd Year – application period Dec – Jan at the end of 2nd Year Fall
   - Spring of 3rd Year – application period May – June at the end of 2nd Year Spring
   - Fall of 4th Year – application period Dec – Jan at the end of 3rd Year Fall

   *Students cannot exchange-out in their final semester of study before graduation.
   (i.e. Students must complete one final regular semester at HKUST after the exchange)
   **Applies to China & Summer Exchange as well*

6. The CGA requirement for exchange is 2.55 or above. More details posted in the CGA Requirement section on the exchange website.

7. Students with misconduct or other sanctions at the time of application are not eligible to apply for SBM regular exchange in the affected semester(s).

8. Students can only go on one-semester exchange to either overseas OR China universities, but not to both (except in specified business majors where 2-semester exchange is allowed).

9. Students who are successful in the SBM exchange program are NOT allowed to go abroad through any other School before or afterwards. Students who do not comply with will be withdrawn immediately from the SBM exchange program (except for students in specified business majors where 2-semester exchange is allowed).

Interview

10. Only students meeting the CGA requirement with no misconduct or other sanctions, who have officially applied for exchange or students who have exchange specified in their programs, will be short-listed for interviews.

11. Only students meeting the CGA requirement who have officially applied for exchange or students who have exchange specified in their programs, will be short-listed for interviews.

12. Short-listed students must be interviewed for exchange. The interview will be in a group format with at least 2 interviewers. Students who are late for the interview may be automatically considered as giving up the exchange opportunity. Mobile phones must be switched off during interviews. Students with phones ringing during interview will be disqualified for exchange.

13. Early interview will only be available for student applying for the Spring semester batch. Students who would like to apply for the early interviews must present us with a valid reason (such as internship) together with a proof. There would NOT be any early interview for the Fall semester batch since the interviews will be held during normal academic dates.

Selection Process

14. Selection of students to go on exchange is largely based on academic results, online application and interview performance. In general, applicants will be placed to a university based on total score ranking and their top choice of university (in order of priority) which has availability, providing that the student also meets the host university requirements. More details are posted online in the Selection Criteria section.

    (For the Mainland Exchange Program, no interview is required. Ranking will be entirely derived from the online application submitted by students.)

15. A student may be interviewed for exchange but there is no guarantee that they will go on exchange. This will depend on the applicant's total score ranking, host university requirements, and availability of spaces.

16. Scoring on any particular applicant is confidential and will not be disclosed to any student. SBM reserved the right for final selection of students for exchange. Once the exchange result is released, no changes will be considered at the request of a student.

17. Students cannot contact host universities during the application and selection process. If they do so, they will be disqualified from the exchange program.

Decline/Withdrawal

18. If students decline an offer or choose to withdraw from the exchange program after they have been interviewed and selected, 20% of the total score will be deducted if they apply for any exchange program in the future. This also applies to students eligible for SBM exchange from AIS or Joint-School programs who received exchange offers from other Schools.

Clearing Round

19. If there are any universities with quota available which the system has not allocated to students for exchange, then SBM will allow students who meet a minimum score mark (to be strictly determined on a semester basis by SBM), who did not get an offer in the 1st round to choose from these schools in a final 'clearing round'. This will not include schools that students have rejected or withdrawn from exchange.

20. Students with no offer meeting minimum score marks that are eligible to participate in the Clearing Round will have the option to participate or skip the clearing round based on the available schools. Students who participate will be subject to the same acceptance policies and penalties. More details of this arrangement will be provided to the relevant students during the allocation process.

    (Point 17 & 18 on Clearing Round is not applicable to the Mainland Exchange Program due to the limited amount of China quota.)

Exchange Deposit / Sponsorship

21. To secure an exchange offer, students must submit an HK$1,000 exchange deposit to the SBM UG Programs Office. The deposit can be refunded after the exchange when the exchange report and an official transcript is received with no failed courses.

Suspension/Termination

22. When circumstances arise that compromise an exchange program, HKUST may make the decision to suspend a program. This could occur before the start or during the program. Students must abide by the advising/instructions set forth from the University.

23. Pandemics, natural disasters, political instability, or etc. may impact global mobility and changes can occur rapidly. Therefore, HKUST's mobility programs are subject to changes based on prevailing global/ local health and travel advisories. In addition, participating students are required to abide by University's decisions. Students' patience and understanding under such situations are appreciated.

Credit Transfer

24. A minimum of 50% of Major Required Course credit must be completed at HKUST, effective from 2026-27 admitted cohort. Please refer to the Program Catalog for the exact credit requirements.

Virtual Courses and Credits

25. Students are only allowed to take ONE virtual course concurrently with their courses in a semester, regardless of credit load.

26. Students who are on outbound exchange program or study leave in the term cannot join the virtual study programs.

27. Students are responsible to seek their pre-major advisor or major department for appropriate advising before enrollment into virtual courses.

28. Students cannot study FINA-related virtual courses and cannot transfer credits.

(Last Updated: August 2026)