

Information for incoming
exchange students

UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, PORTUGAL YOUR STUDY ABROAD DESTINATION



A LEADING INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA (UC) is a Portuguese public higher education institution with more than 700 years of experience in education, training and research. The first and the only Portuguese-speaking university until the early 20th century, UC has affirmed its position over the years with a unique mix of tradition, modernity and innovation.

UC is classified as World Heritage by the UNESCO for its unique tangible (historical buildings) and intangible (knowledge and culture) heritage, a key part of the history of European and global scientific culture.

UC offers education and research in all study levels and in nearly all subject areas. Collaborative research, business partnerships and student exchanges are all part of the internationalisation programme designed to enhance the academic and cultural experience for all. The majority of the education and research activities take place within the framework of a large network of contacts and partnerships with higher education institutions from all over the world, from Europe to Africa, North and South America, Asia, Middle East and Australia. International cooperation networks and associations play a significant role in conveying successful collaborations with different geographical regions.

Main exchange programmes

- › Erasmus
- › Erasmus Mundus
- › MAUI (USA)
- › AEN (Australia)
- › Santander mobility programme (Latin America and Portuguese-speaking countries)
- › Bilateral exchange with universities in Brazil, Japan, China and 100 other countries
- › Co-tutelle and Double/Joint degrees



› Proposals for new exchange agreements should be sent by Departmental or Institutional Coordinators to: dri@uc.pt

Free mover students

Students coming from a non-partner institution can apply for an exchange period of studies at the University of Coimbra as free mover students. Applicable fees vary according to the course units selected by the applicant.

Key education and research programmes and consortia

- › Carnegie Mellon-Portugal (information and communication technologies)
- › Harvard-Portugal Clinical Scholars Research Training Program (clinical research)
- › MIT-Portugal (bioengineering, sustainable energy, transportation systems)
- › UT Austin Portugal (digital media, advanced computing and mathematics, university enterprise networking)
- › Ageing@Coimbra
- › Coimbra Health
- › M8 Alliance

Strategic university networks

- › CG – Coimbra Group
- › EUA – European University Association
- › UN – Utrecht Network
- › GCUB – Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities
- › AULP – Association of Portuguese Language Universities
- › FORGES – Portuguese-speaking Higher Education Forum
- › AUIP – Ibero-American University Association for Post-graduate studies
- › SUN – The Silk-road Universities Network
- › SYLFF – Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund

AN OUTSTANDING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

A PORTUGUESE PIONEER INSTITUTION in developing international student exchange programmes, UC has been part of the Erasmus programme since its beginning in 1987 and its student body includes nationals from 90 different countries, creating a cosmopolitan atmosphere both on campus and around the city. With more than 1000 Erasmus institutional agreements with several European universities and about 200 bilateral agreements with higher education institutions from other countries, UC receives around 2000 exchange students every year. It holds the StudyPortals Award for Outstanding International Student Satisfaction with a score of at least 9.5 out of 10. This result is based on thousands of student reviews submitted on www.stexx.eu – the world's largest database of international student experiences.

The UC is thrilled by these results and delighted that our students enjoy their time in Coimbra so much.



STUDY OFFER

UC IS A COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY offering education and research in nearly all subject areas.

Undergraduate, Master, PhD and non-degree courses are delivered in three campuses by the following ten academic units:

- > Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FLUC)
- > Faculty of Law (FDUC)
- > Faculty of Medicine (FMUC)
- > Faculty Sciences and Technology (FCTUC)
- > Faculty of Pharmacy (FFUC)
- > Faculty of Economics (FEUC)
- > Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences (FPCEUC)
- > Faculty of Sport Sciences and Physical Education (FCDEFUC)
- > Institute of Interdisciplinary Research (IIIUC)
- > College of Arts (CAUC)

Most study programmes are taught in Portuguese. Several course units and some international full programmes are taught in English and other foreign languages.

Exchange students can find the course units they need to set up the Learning Agreement in our **ECTS Course Catalogue** available at uc.pt/en/ects/catalogo





LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

SINCE THE MAJORITY OF COURSE UNITS are conducted in Portuguese, Erasmus students are strongly advised to take the OLS preparation course available online (access is provided by the home institution). Non-Portuguese speakers can also take the “Portuguese Language Erasmus” semester course, as long as they include it in their Learning Agreement when applying for mobility. They can also attend the Intensive Language Preparation Course at the beginning of each semester, in September and February (enrolment subject to fees). Details about these courses can be found at:

uc.pt/fluc/ensino/cpe/cursos_intensivos

A number of course units is also offered in English and, in most cases, exchange students can make arrangements with lecturers in order to be allowed to do examinations or submit assignments in English (or other language, if both parts know it). Modern Language studies are usually half taught in Portuguese, English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish and Italian.

Language and culture courses

The Language Centre of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of UC offers a wide variety of opportunities to improve students’ language proficiency in Portuguese and other languages, from European to Asian languages. These courses are lectured by native speakers.

> Learn more at: uc.pt/fluc/cl

DEGREE SYSTEM AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

THE UC DEGREE SYSTEM is organised in three study cycles (undergraduate, master and doctoral degrees), according to the Bologna Process Model. Study programmes are organised in ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits. Students are expected to complete 60 ECTS credits per year. Usually, each trimester has 20 ECTS credits and one semester has 30 ECTS credits.

Assessment comprises written, oral and practical tests/examinations, papers, theses, projects, reports, and portfolios. All these types of assessment may take place during and/or at the end of each semester. More detailed information about assessment methods can be found in the content description of different course units of the study programmes.

The final assessment of a course unit is expressed in a numerical grading from 0 to 20, with 10 as the minimum passing grade, as well as in its equivalent ECTS grading scale (from A to E).

> Learn more at: uc.pt/en/ects/info_inst/sg-ma



STUDENT SUPPORT

UC HAS A WIDE AND EFFICIENT NETWORK of support and welfare services, ensuring the best conditions to all students: **accommodation, meals and health care** are provided at affordable prices.

The International Relations Unit (DRI) of UC facilitates the mobility of students who choose the University of Coimbra for an exchange period of studies or training, by providing them with access to a wide range of support services and relevant information.



Casa da Lusofonia

Casa da Lusofonia is the UC welcome centre for international students. This place has two important functions: it is the front-office of the International Relations Unit and the place where local and international students and their unions can meet to work or enjoy some time together at UC. Here students will receive guidance, administrative and practical information about the university, the city and the legal procedures in the country. They will also have the opportunity to meet the students that help the new international students to find their way at UC.

A desk of the Foreign Office (SEF – *Serviços de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras*) is also available twice a week.



Services

- > Before departure and arrival information (travelling to Coimbra, cost of living, accommodation, meals, medical facilities, insurance, special needs' assistance)
- > Online application for studies and placements
- > Visa and residence permit information (including direct contact with Embassies and Consulates upon request)
- > Issuing of letter of acceptance and declaration for visa request
- > Registration and enrolment in degree programmes' course units and Portuguese language courses
- > Student card, email account and password to access the wi-fi Eduroam network in all campuses
- > Welcome month (orientation, campus tour, cultural and sports' activities)
- > General support from the international Erasmus network ESN Coimbra
- > Issuing of academic Transcript of Records



Student Union

The **Academic Association of Coimbra** (AAC) is the largest and the oldest student union in the country. European champion in university sports for several times and home to 16 cultural sections and 26 sports, AAC is the central pillar of the life of the University and its students, enabling student participation in a wide range of enriching extra-curricular activities.

The AAC sports include: handball, football, volleyball, basketball, rugby, swimming, tennis, squash, fishing, nautical sports, judo, karate, different types of gymnastics, among others.

Some of its cultural sections are: the University Radio (RUC), an ecology group, a Fado sector (the traditional song of Coimbra), a philately sector, a centre of film studies, a computer centre, an experimental Yoga centre, an astronomy, astrophysics and astronautics sector, a human rights sector, a gastronomy sector and a reading and writing sector, where literary contests, old book auctions, writers' meetings and other events take place.

There are also several academic groups or autonomous bodies related to music, cinema, theatre, folk dancing, photography or choir singing.

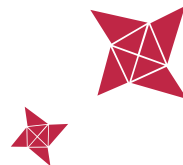


Buddy Programme

The Buddy Programme pairs new international students with current volunteer UC students who provide the friendly face, helping hand, and first newcomers' friendship that can make a world of difference upon arrival. Buddies can also offer informal linguistic support, cultural guidance and information about life at the city and the University of Coimbra.

Since its launching the Buddy Programme has helped hundreds of international students settle into the city and the University of Coimbra.

Typical "buddy" activities might include showing international students around campus, locating banks and grocery stores near the University, helping with an apartment search, or simply chatting over a cup of coffee.





PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Academic calendar

1st Semester: from September to December

Christmas Break: last two weeks of December to first week of January

Examination Period -1st Semester: first week of January to first week of February

2nd Semester: from February to June

Easter Break: one week in the Easter month

Student Festivity “Queima das Fitas”: one week in May

Examination Period – 2nd Semester: June to July

Resit Examination Period: July

Summer Holidays: 1 to 31 August

Applications

Deadlines

Academic year/ 1st semester: March to July

2nd semester: September to December

Application procedure

Free mover students and students selected for a period of studies/placement at the University of Coimbra within the framework of the Erasmus or other Mobility Programmes are advised to read carefully the application guide before applying.

> The online application system is available at:

uc.pt/en/driic/estudantesIN/CandidatIN

Visa and residence permit information

Non-EU students have to apply for a study visa at the Portuguese consulate/embassy in their home country, before arrival.

> Further information available at

euraxess.pt/incoming/visas

Accommodation

Exchange students can book their own accommodation at student residences or private lodging by using the online accommodation platform of the University of Coimbra available at uc.pt/go/accommodation



> Additional private housing options in Coimbra can be found at [uniplaces.com/accommodation](https://www.uniplaces.com/accommodation)

Insurance and medical care

Students who are European Union citizens must bring the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for medical assistance. Students who are not European citizens must make a contract with a private insurance company. Once in Coimbra, students shall register at the health care centre of their residence area.

When students register at the University of Coimbra, they will also be covered by school insurance valid within the University Campuses during research/ classes' time. They will also benefit from medical consultations at reduced prices at the University medical services. In town, there are other health care facilities, namely public and private hospitals, health centres and clinics.

Location and transports

Coimbra is a district capital, the largest city of the Centre Region of Portugal with around 150,000 inhabitants. Located on the banks of the Mondego River, the city is near to both the mountains and the sea and can be easily reached by train or bus. It is about one hour and a half away from the nearest airports located in Lisbon and Porto, with flights from and to all European capital cities and other parts of the world. International trains from and to Madrid and Paris also stop at Coimbra.

> Check [uc.pt/en/ects/info_caracter_geral/acaminho](https://www.uc.pt/en/ects/info_caracter_geral/acaminho) to see how to reach Coimbra by train, bus or car from Lisbon or Porto.

Coimbra and its suburban area are served by a bus network (SMTUC – Coimbra Urban Transport Network). Students travelling often by bus can buy a monthly bus card or other rechargeable bus cards with different numbers of rides, according to their needs. Single ride tickets can be bought inside the buses, but they are cheaper at the SMTUC shops or at the kiosks.

Taxis are available in central locations and near bus stops and train stations Coimbra A (New Train Station) and Coimbra-B (Old Train Station).

Buses to the University campuses:

University/ Campus I (CASA DA LUSOFONIA/ International Office, Faculty of Arts, Mathematics and Natural Sciences' Departments, University Residences): **103, 28, 34**

University/ Campus II (Engineering Campus, University Residences): **34 and 38**

University/ Campus III (Health Sciences Campus, University Hospital, University Residences): **6, 7, 71, 29 and 37**

Bus 34 commutes between Campuses I and II. The ride takes about 30 minutes.

> Website of the Coimbra Urban Transport Network:

[smtuc.pt](https://www.smtuc.pt)

> Website of the Portuguese Railways: [cp.pt](https://www.cp.pt)

Living costs

Coimbra offers students high-quality life at reasonable costs, when compared with other European cities. On average the monthly living costs are 600 EUR, including accommodation, school materials (books, office supplies, etc.), public transportation (monthly pass for students), meals and other expenses (personal and leisure expenses).

> Learn more at: [uc.pt/international-applicants/estudar-viver-coimbra/custos](https://www.uc.pt/international-applicants/estudar-viver-coimbra/custos)

Further information

Detailed information about what you have to do before, during and after your mobility is available at [uc.pt/en/driic/mobilidade/in](https://www.uc.pt/en/driic/mobilidade/in)



Information about the city, the university and the country can be found in the Welcome Guide of the University of Coimbra at [uc.pt/international-applicants/welcome-guide](https://www.uc.pt/international-applicants/welcome-guide)


COIMBRA

Contacts

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



University of Coimbra – Alta and Sofia
inscribed on the World Heritage
List in 2013