EXCHANGE
STUDIES AT ÅAU

#ABOAKADEMI
The city was founded in the 13th century, making it the oldest city in Finland. Considered the best student city in Finland, with more than 35,000 students, Åbo offers students an exciting campus environment with a vibrant student life, an international atmosphere and memorable student traditions.

The Åbo Akademi University and the University of Turku campuses are next to each other, making it possible for exchange students to also take courses from the University of Turku.

Vasa, often called the sunniest city in Finland, is a small but vibrant university city. With six different institutions of higher education present in the city, over 13,000 students are brought together in Vasa, and every fifth person you meet in the street is a university student. The ÅAU Vasa campus “Academill” is situated by the waterside at a walking-distance from the absolute city centre, in an old mill renovated for the university’s purpose. The various subjects present on campus create a nice environment for students from different subjects to get to know each other.
Åbo Akademi University is the only multidisciplinary Swedish-language university in Finland. The university was founded in 1918 in order to provide higher education for the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland.

Åbo Akademi University has a strong international profile. Out of our total student population (7 000 students) about 1 000 students are international students, and out of these some 300 are international exchange students from all around the world. Åbo Akademi University is one of the most international universities in Finland when looking at the student population and we are happy to be able to offer an international environment for both our international and our domestic students.

Åbo Akademi University has a campus in Åbo (Turku in Finnish) and a smaller campus in Vasa (Vaasa in Finnish), 330 km:s north of Åbo. Both campuses are small and friendly with easy access to services and activities. Regardless of whether you are studying in Åbo or Vasa, you can combine your studies with an incredible cultural experience and see all that Finland has to offer.

**Why should you choose Åbo Akademi University for your exchange?**

- Åbo Akademi University has been highly rated by international students over the years
- We offer over 250 courses in English annually in 40 subjects
- You will have an opportunity to take part in an active student life with great student traditions
- Your student tutor will meet you upon arrival in Åbo or Vasa and help you settle in
- Åbo and Vasa have affordable student housing
- You can easily travel to Sweden, Russia and Estonia
- In Åbo, you can also take courses offered by the University of Turku
- By taking courses from different faculties, you can create a personal study plan that best suits your needs and interests
At the Faculty of Arts, Psychology and Theology, you can study around 20 different main subjects – languages, history, culture, psychology and theology. You can combine different courses to create a unique study plan. The faculty offers courses based on ongoing research in a genuinely multidisciplinary study and research environment.

**HUMANITIES**
- Art History
- Comparative Literature
- Comparative Religion
- Gender Studies
- History
- Musicology
- Nordic Ethnology
- Nordic Folkloristics
- Philosophy
- Logopedics
- Psychology

**LANGUAGES**
- English Language and Literature
- French Language and Literature
- German Language and Literature
- Russian Language and Literature
- Finnish Language
- Swedish Language

**THEOLOGY**
- Practical Theology
- Church History
- New Testament Exegetics
- Old Testament Exegetic and Judaic Studies
- Dogmatics
- Theological Ethics and Philosophy of Religion

For a complete list of subjects and available courses in English, please see [www.abo.fi/exchange](http://www.abo.fi/exchange).
Why did you choose Åbo Akademi for your exchange?
I wanted to come to Finland so I could travel and also because there’s four seasons, which we don’t have in Malaysia. Apart from that, the study program at Åbo Akademi is compatible with the one at my home university but also offers different and new perspectives.

How do the courses at Åbo Akademi University differ from the courses at your home university?
The education system is a lot different, as in Malaysia you have a fixed schedule for the week and you will carry it out for the whole semester, but in Finland the schedule is flexible.
The way of delivering knowledge is quite different too, as Malaysian Universities generally teach almost 80% in seminars, whereas at Åbo Akademi the focus is more on self-study.

What did you think about your experience in Finland?
Finland is incredibly fascinating! The landscape as well as the cities are just beautiful. Finland is so peaceful and quiet, but every corner hides a treasure that is waiting for you to explore. I was quite surprised by the people here because they might look cool first, but when you really know them, they are so kind and helpful.

What did you enjoy most about your exchange at Åbo Akademi University?
I like the scenery at Åbo Akademi so I go wandering around the campus area when I am free. I also feel very grateful that ESN Åbo Akademi provides many chances for exchange students to travel all around European countries.

Best things with ÅAU:
+ The heartwarming staff here.
+ Åbo Akademi has a helpful tutor system. These local students help you settle in and you can basically ask them everything.
+ The campus is located in a beautiful area. I love the peaceful and quiet surrounding.
At the Faculty of Science and Technology you can study everything from cellular functions, chemistry, physics and preparation of medicines to designing factories, computer systems and even the earth we live on. The research is internationally recognized with dynamic relations to industries, research institutes and universities nationally as well as internationally.

BIOSCIENCES
- Biochemistry
- Bioscience, specialisation in pharmacy
- Cell and Molecular Bioscience
- Cell Biology
- Environmental and Marine Biology

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- Computer Engineering
- Computer Science

NATURAL SCIENCES
- Chemistry
- Geology and Mineralogy
- Mathematics
- Physics

MASTER’S PROGRAMMES
- Biomedical Imaging, MSc
- Chemical Engineering, MSc (Tech.)
- Information Technology, MSc (Tech.) or MSc

CHEMICAL ENGINEERING
- Analytical Chemistry
- Process Design and Systems Engineering
- Energy Technology
- Fibre and Cellulose Technology
- Physical Chemistry
- Industrial Management
- Materials Technology
- Inorganic Chemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Paper Coating and Converting
- Process Chemistry
- Process Control
- Industrial Chemistry and Reaction Engineering
- Polymer Technology
- Wood and Paper Chemistry
- Thermal and Flow Engineering

For a complete list of subjects and available courses in English, please see www.abo.fi/exchange.
Why did you choose Åbo Akademi University for your exchange?

I decided to go to Finland because the culture is so different from the French one and there are many courses offered in English at Åbo Akademi. Also, I had a friend who went here two years ago and he told me it was the best year of his life.

How do the courses at Åbo Akademi University differ from the courses at your home university?

I spend less time in lectures. Since in IT you mostly learn by really working on the topic, I think this practice-oriented way to approach IT is very smart here. What also really impressed me were the buildings, the equipment and the high quality of the courses. The lecturers are closer to the student than in France and really want to help students.

What did you think about your experience in Finland and at Åbo Akademi University?

Finland is an interesting country in a way that the culture and way of living are really different compared to France. I loved living here for nine months. Surprising to me was the distance Finns keep between them and their shyness, but once you know them they’re all really nice. What also surprised me was that there are no traffic jams in the streets and the city is so calm. I loved the way there are not so many people in the country and you always have space no matter where you are.

What did you enjoy most about your experience at Åbo Akademi?

ESN trips mostly! Also living in the student village with your floor like it’s a family and of course all of the student parties. It is great to get to know people from everywhere, which is not common in France since not as many people are able to speak English. And learning how to speak English properly - but my English is still… French ahhah.

You mostly learn by really working on the topic. I think this practice-oriented way to approach IT is very smart here.
The Faculty of Social Sciences, Business and Economics at Åbo Akademi University, joins together the central scientific fields of business, jurisprudence and social sciences. The faculty sees huge advantages within cross-boundary collaboration. Creative economics, sustainability, human rights and democracy are a few examples of current fields of research at the faculty.

**SOCIAL SCIENCES**
- Political Science
- Public Administration
- Sociology
- Information Studies

**LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS**
- International Law and Human Rights
- Commercial and Maritime Law
- Public law
- Private law

**BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**
- Accounting
- Economics
- Information Systems
- International Marketing
- Organisation and Management

**MASTER’S PROGRAMMES**
- Governance of Digitalization, MSc
- International Human Rights Law, MSSc

For a complete list of subjects and available courses in English, please see www.abo.fi/exchange.
Why did you choose Åbo Akademi University for your exchange?

I wanted to come to the north of Europe and I was thinking about Finland, Sweden and Norway. For me Finland was the most interesting - and considering living costs the cheapest - country out of these. My home university had a partnership program with Åbo Akademi in Finland, so I came here.

And I think it was the best option for me. The Finnish culture is so different, I actually enjoy the cold here, and there are a lot of opportunities to travel.

How do the courses at Åbo Akademi University differ from the courses at your home university?

First of all, there are less lectures. You have to work more by yourself, not just go to class. At my home university we have class from 9am to 1pm and you just sit in class, listen, take notes and after you have to study.

Here, they make you think about everything. You have to be critical, learn by doing your own research and come up with your own thoughts and conclusions. You learn the theory but you make up your own ideas about it. You learn by doing, not by just going to class and I think that's the best way to learn because afterwards you remember everything you did. So I really like that.

What did you enjoy most about your exchange at Åbo Akademi University?

It's very interesting when you work with Finnish students and it's a great way to learn about the culture of the country. You really gain a new perspective.

I also liked the guest lectures where people from companies come to Åbo Akademi and explain how they work. They also talk about the theory but from the perspective of how it applies to the working reality and I think this insight is really important when studying business.

But going abroad is not just about taking courses in a different country. I enjoyed studying here so much because you learn how to adapt to a different culture, a different lifestyle. And you get to meet so many people and travel.

"I liked that there are a lot of guest lectures with people from companies."

Best things with ÅAU:

✚ The library system. You don't have to buy course books.
✚ You can get cheap meals in the student cafeterias (for under 3€).
✚ The flexibility of the teachers. They support the students and adapt to situations.

STUDENT STORIES: DIANDRA

Name: Diandra Márquez Romero
Home university: Universidad de Cantabria, Spain
Field of study at ÅAU: Business & Economics
Faculty of Education and Welfare studies – VASA campus

Åbo Akademi University – Vasa campus hosts around 2 000 students, most of whom major in applied education. Education in Vasa can be studied on a theoretical level as well as on a very practical level. Exchange students can take part in the teacher training practice for teacher students, which provides practice in addition to theory, and also helps students develop their professional skills.

STUDY PROGRAMMES:
- Health Sciences
- Social Sciences
- General and Adult Education
- Pre-school Teachers
- Class teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Subject Teachers

MASTER’S PROGRAMMES
- Peace, Mediation and Conflict Research, MSSc

For a complete list of subjects and available courses in English, please see www.abo.fi/exchange.
STUDENT STORIES: JAKUB

Name: Jakub Karol Adamczewski
Home university: Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Field of study at ÅAU: School Psychology

Finland is known for its educational system being the best in the world so I thought … Jakub, why not to learn from the best! I want to be a good psychologist and studies at Åbo Akademi will help me with their fresher ideas.

What did you think about your experience in Finland?

I had a wonderful time in Finland! I love fresh air and the beautiful nature. People are not as shy as you might think and their inner courage to do everything „sisu” suprised me the most. I wish we could have that in Poland too! I met wonderful people from around the world. The location and small town Vasa just won my heart!

How do the courses at Åbo Akademi University differ from the courses at your home university?

The course list seemed to be very innovative and totally different from courses in Poland. We still have some similarities but the opportunity to study in English or Swedish is giving me a chance to beef up my language skills.

Best things with ÅAU:
• The international coordinator as she was always here to help. Thanks to her, I could organize an International Student Conference in Education on our campus in Vasa.
• Piano rooms for everyone on campus in Vasa
• Beautiful location of the campus
• Teaching practice and supportive teachers

"The course list seemed to be very innovative and totally different from courses in Poland,"

STUDENT STORIES: NOÉMIE

Name: Noémie Bécart
Home university: Université d’Artois, Arras, France
Field of study at ÅAU: Education and Welfare studies

I chose to go to Finland for my Erasmus experience because I wanted to live at least once in my life in a Nordic country. And what an experience!

How do the courses at Åbo Akademi University differ from the courses at your home university?

The Vasa Campus of Åbo Akademi is a great exchange destination in that it has so much to offer to those who want to become teachers. The main field of studies is education, as well as everything which goes with education, like pedagogy, welfare and psychology. Teachers are highly skilled, patient, and close to their students. It is a perfect place to study when you want to become a teacher.

The biggest difference between France and Finland in education is that Finnish teachers value their students’ points of view. The teacher in Finland behaves more as a guide than the one who has the “monopoly on speaking”, like in France for instance. The opinions of the students are important, and you feel more integrated into the class.

What did you think about your experience in Finland?

It has been amazing so far, and I am really happy to stay for a whole academic year. I met so many different people from all around the world, and that has broadened my state of mind. Since I have been in Finland, I have noticed that people do not judge. They are very tolerant and open-minded.

I also enjoyed Finnish traditions like ice swimming and the presence of saunas everywhere you go (sometimes even in night clubs!).

Best things with ÅAU:
• ÅAU in Vasa is well situated, facing the sea. Such a unique view you can admire in between two classes.
• The university offers a great deal of sports and artistic and handcraft activities specific to Finland (slöjd).
• The Fresher initiation. During that day, we were five in a team bound together by a string and had to spend the whole afternoon like that. This is how I met my best friends from Erasmus. Awesome!
Student services

Education services - International affairs
The staff at the Education services will be your main contact throughout your exchange. The staff will help you with a range of academic and practical matters such as adding or changing a course and help you with any questions related to your studies at Åbo Akademi University. They will also provide you with support prior to your arrival in Finland.

Student facilities
All course books are available at the ASA-library (Åbo) and Tritonia (Vasa) so you don't have to spend any money on course books while in Finland! The libraries also offer reading rooms and computers that you can use when studying. There are several computer rooms at the university that you will have access to.

Tutors
Before arriving in Finland you will be assigned a student tutor and a tutor group consisting of a few other exchange students. Your tutor will meet you upon your arrival in Åbo or Vasa and help you with the practical matters in the beginning, such as finding your closest food store or enrolling at the university.

Orientation
An orientation course is organized in the beginning of the semester. At the orientation course, you will get practical information and advice about living in Finland, studying at Åbo Akademi University and information about the services and facilities of the university.

“One of the best things with ÅAU is how the International Office takes care of the exchange students”
Carlos, Exchange student at ÅAU.

IT services and support
The IT support at Åbo Akademi University provides you with a student account that gives you access to the Student Portal and your university e-mail. You will also be able to use the wireless internet with access all around campus.
Finnish Student Health Services

The Student Health Centre provides basic health care during your stay at Åbo Akademi University. The Student Health Care has nurses, doctors, psychologists, and physiotherapists that can help if you get sick.

Career Service

The Career Service helps to prepare students for their transition into working life and can give you CV guidance and information about working in Finland.

Student Union

All students in Finland are members of the student union of their university. The Student Union at ÅAU works to make sure that the conditions for your studies are as good as they can be. Besides offering leisure time activities, cultural and sports events, the Student Union also gives you access to legal advice, a student Priest and a Student Ombudsman.
Åbo and Vasa are both fairly small cities and distances are short. It is easy to get around on foot or by bike. The cities offer a great variety of cultural experiences that you can discover during your stay. There are choirs, theatres, cinemas, dance theatres and performances, museums, and orchestras and bands who give concerts, as well as festivals and other cultural events.

**Student housing**

Student housing in Åbo and Vasa costs around 280–430 euros per month, or more, depending on the provider. Most exchange students in Åbo live in apartments provided by the Student Village Foundation, where Åbo Akademi University has a fixed quota of rooms for exchange students. Housing is offered in single or shared apartments. All apartments offered by the Student Village Foundation have bathrooms and access to shared kitchen facilities. Exchange students in Vasa are offered housing in student apartments in ‘Lärkan’, located 1.2 km from the campus, close to the railway station and city centre.

**Student card and discounts**

It is highly recommended that you join the Student Union (approx. 60 €/term) as this will give you several student discounts and benefits. As a member of the Student Union you can order the student card, have access to the Student Health Care services, get 50% discount on long distance trains and buses, can eat a warm meal for under 3 € at the student cafeterias on campus and get general student discounts all around Finland.
Examples of a student’s monthly living expenses

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student housing</td>
<td>280–430 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>250–300 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local transportation</td>
<td>36 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>85–200 €</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>650–965 €</td>
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**Cost of living**

As an exchange student, you do not have to pay any tuition fees at Åbo Akademi University. However, you will have to pay for your housing and living expenses during your stay. The total monthly living expenses for a single student is approximately 650 euros. Depending on your personal spending habits, an additional 100–200 euros should be added per month.

“There’s so much to do in Turku! Apart from the various events organized by student associations, I enjoyed Åbo’s vibrant nightlife with its bars and nightclubs. The efficient buses also make it very easy to get around.”

Nathan Brachotte, Exchange Student ÅAU.

#ÅAkärlek
Student life

Life at Åbo Akademi University combines studies with rich cultural traditions and events organized by students, resulting in a vibrant and memorable exchange experience.

Sports

If you are a sports enthusiast, there are plenty of opportunities to join local or student sports clubs. There are several sporting and exercise facilities at the university as well as close to it. The sports office organizes a range of sports and exercise activities in both Åbo and Vasa.

Culture

Both Åbo and Vasa offer you a great opportunity to experience the beautiful nature of Finland. Just outside of Åbo is the beautiful archipelago with over 20,000 islands and outside of Vasa you will find the unique Kvarken archipelago listed on UNESCO’s world heritage list.

There are also numerous interesting tourist attractions to visit close to Åbo and Vasa as well as several cultural activities and festivals taking place throughout the year.

Friends

At Åbo Akademi University, you will experience a unique student life with around 100 different student associations and many long-standing student traditions. There are many opportunities for you to meet and make new friends, whether you prefer to meet new people over coffee, join a student association or join a sports team.

Travelling

It is easy to travel to and from Åbo and Vasa. You can easily take a bus or train to other parts of Finland. During your stay in Finland, you can visit Lapland and maybe see the northern lights, visit Scandinavia, the Baltic states or Russia.
The Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is an international student organization active in 40 countries. Its purpose is to help international students during their stay in another country. The ESN sections in Åbo and Vasa organize a wide range of activities for international students throughout the year. The sections want to make all international students feel welcome and offer them unique Finnish experiences such as skiing and skating events, sauna evenings, parties, and trips to neighbouring countries.

Name: Charlotta Wendelin
President for ESN Åbo Akademi 2017

What type of events does ESN Åbo Akademi organize throughout the year?

We organize a lot of different events so there is certainly something for everyone. These include a cottage weekend, a trip to the Åland islands, chill evenings and of course some traditional Sitz-parties and student parties, just to mention a few.

What is the most popular event ESN ÅA organizes?

I would say the Orientation Party and the Farewell Party. Exchange students also really enjoyed the cottage weekend we organized in October.

What trips does ESN organize for exchange students?

ESN organizes trips to Lapland, St. Petersburg and a Grand Russia trip. There is also the Pirates of the Baltic Sea cruise from Helsinki to Stockholm.

Why should students come to Åbo Akademi University for their exchange?

ÅAU is the only exclusively Swedish-speaking University in Finland which gives exchange students the opportunity to experience the culture of Swedish-speaking Finns. Åbo is also one of the liveliest student cities in Finland and the city center is located just next to the campus.
How do the courses at ÅAU differ from the courses at your university?

The courses are not as intensive as in the US and the schedule is laid out differently. You get to be more independent and self-reliant in your studies.

What do you think about your experience at ÅAU?

I love it! I thought why not stay and extended it for another semester. It is way more fun to be here than being back at my own college in the US.

What did you enjoy the most about your exchange at ÅAU?

Everything’s close, you can easily travel with friends on the weekend for relatively cheap and visit Stockholm for example. You can also travel to Lapland to get a chance to see the northern lights.

Best things with ÅAU:

- The professors are all great and down to earth
- The campus is beautiful, especially Arken
- Åbo is a university city, it’s multicultural even though it’s small

Why did you choose ÅAU for your exchange?

Actually I planned to go to Sweden but that didn't work out so my home university offered me the possibility to go to Åbo Akademi. And in the end it was the best decision I could have made, since now I have the possibility to study in Finland and learn Swedish. So I get more out of it. Another reason is the good health care situation since I'm kind of dependent on that.

What did you enjoy most about your experience in Finland?

The exchange experience. You get to meet so many people from all over the world in such a short time. It's the internationality that I really enjoyed. What I like about living in Åbo is that it's a nice city, but it's not so big. I like walking along the river, it's so nice. I will never ever forget the experience here.

Best things with ÅAU:

- You get support from teachers and the international office. If there is a problem, it get's solved immediately.
- Homely atmosphere
- Discussions in class
- The organization of classes. There are assignments during the semester instead of just one big final exam. And that really helps me to gain more knowledge on the topic and develop a deeper interest.
Why did you choose ÅAU for your exchange?

I chose Åbo Akademi as I wanted the opportunity to learn Swedish. I enjoyed that Swedish is the minority language in the city, as I learned Welsh as a second language in an area where that is a minority language too. I also adore the cold, so Finland seemed like a no-brainer.

What did you think about your experience at ÅAU?

I loved the international atmosphere, as you always get different viewpoints and ideas in discussions. I think that I have become much more culturally aware, as I have met so many people with different backgrounds that I would never have met otherwise.

Best things with ÅAU:

- Friendly atmosphere
- It feels like one big happy student family
- Åbo is a good-sized city. It’s not so big that it’s intimidating, but not so small that it’s boring. There’s also good transport to other places, such as Helsinki or Stockholm.

Why did you choose ÅAU for your exchange?

Åbo Akademi is my perfect choice. It has an English department and nearly all the people in Finland can speak English. Also the Finnish education system is so popular in the world. So it is a great place for me to further my study and I can practice my English skills some more.

What did you think about your experience in Finland?

I love it here. It is quiet and people are friendly. I tried the sauna and after I jumped in to the cold water. That is the most impressive moment. And I got addicted to do that. One of the events I enjoyed the most was the rector’s Welcome Party. we got to dress up, ate delicious food together, talked and also drank some wine. For me it was like being in a movie.

Best things with ÅAU:

- The library in Åbo Akademi! It is not a modern library. But I like reading there.
- The teachers at the English department are really nice. They are always warm-hearted and they helped me a lot.
- The atmosphere in the classroom is open-minded and teachers encourage students to talk more about their opinions. This makes it easier to memorize a lot because you participate actively.

Why did you choose ÅAU for your exchange?

My goal was to learn more Swedish. Since my home university didn’t have any partner universities in Sweden, I decided to apply to Åbo Akademi instead. In the end I’m really happy it worked out this way and I got to spend my semester abroad in Finland. Apart from that Åbo Akademi offers a lot of courses to choose from in my field of studies and I decided to take a course at the University of Turku as well.

What did you enjoy the most about your experience in Finland?

Travelling, the international atmosphere, and getting to know the Finnish and the Finland Swedish culture. I also enjoyed that the Erasmus Network in Åbo is very active and there are so many events and trips for exchange students. I really love it here and decided to extend my stay for a few months.

Best things with ÅAU:

- Campus Sport!
- The staff at the International Office
- Student restaurants. There are many different cafeterias so there’s always a wide choice of meals.
- The libraries
- The tutor system. I was so happy to have someone to help me with getting settled in Åbo, especially during the first few weeks.
Are you interested in exchange studies at Åbo Akademi University?

Åbo Akademi University takes part in several exchange programmes and welcomes almost 300 exchange students from partner universities each year. If your university has an agreement with ÅAU, you can apply for exchange studies through your home university after they have nominated you for the exchange.

Nomination deadlines:
15 April for studies during the autumn or full year
1 October for studies during the spring

Please note that your home university may have another deadline for your application.

Start by contacting the International Office at your home university. The application consists of the online application form, a pre-approved study plan, a transcript of records and a certificate of English proficiency.

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