



Universiteit  
Leiden

## Lottery

All students are given the opportunity to gain international experience. In practice, however, it turns out to be challenging to select, without bias, which students can and cannot go on exchange abroad with the current selection procedure, particularly when based on grade point average and a motivation letter. These criteria can have a negative impact on students with, for example, a weaker socioeconomic background, a different language background, or for students with caregiving responsibilities, health issues, or other factors that can affect grades and/or writing skills.

Leiden University's International Relations team is committed to removing these barriers and mitigating any potential unintentional bias from staff evaluations. For this reason, a weighted draw system was already implemented last year. However, as previously communicated, this year (for students wishing to go on exchange from September 2025) we will fully transition to a draw system in which GPA and motivation letters will have no influence on the selection outcomes. This inclusive selection method ensures a fairer selection process and promotes diversity and equal opportunities within the outgoing student population.

### **Nota bene**

- If there are enough places available at the student's preferred destination, the student will be placed there immediately. The lottery system is used only if there are more applications than places available at the partner university.
- Students will indicate their chosen destinations in order of preference (1 through 10) and will not be placed at a destination they did not choose. We will only attempt to place students at chosen destinations and whenever possible, at their first choice. If a student is not placed at their first choice via the draw process, they will have first chance of a place at their second choice.
- If a student is not placed at any of their chosen destinations via the draw procedure, they will be provided with a list of remaining exchange places from which to choose. In short, the students can still choose to go on exchange.
- Students are entitled to decline an offered exchange place at a partner university.
- The motivation letter still plays a role in the selection process. It is not used to exclude students, but is instead used to verify whether their study abroad plans are feasible and realistic, and whether their choice of institutions is well considered.

### **Conclusion**

By using this method, students are given a fairer chance to go on exchange through a lottery system, aiming to provide a more diverse student population with the opportunity for an international experience. In light of the growing importance of diversity and inclusion as thematic frameworks for the further development of education, a lottery is the most logical option for the selection of exchange students.