THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF SCIENCE

**Important notes for outgoing exchange/visiting students (2024-25)**

I.  **Application arrangements for leave of absence and transfer of credits**

Application for a leave of absence and transfer of credits (optional) for exchange/visiting study should be submitted through the "Online Credit Transfer Application System" (OCTAS). The application period for the academic year 2024-25 will commence on July 2, 2024.

**Online Credit Transfer Application System (OCTAS)**

| **Login & password:** | Your HKU Portal login & password |
| --- | --- |
| **System URL :** | https://webapp.science.hku.hk/intranet/exchange.html |
| **User manual:** | OCTAS student guideline |

**Leave of absence**

Students are required to apply for a leave of absence through the OCTAS **by August 10, 2024 (for the 1ˢᵗ semester and full-year exchange/visiting study) or by December 15, 2024 (for the 2ⁿᵈ semester exchange/visiting study)**. If your exchange study plan and course mapping have not yet been finalized, please complete Step 1 "Input Information of host institution" in OCTAS first. Please make sure you do not enroll in any course(s) at HKU for the semester(s) when you are on leave of absence for exchange/visiting study.

*Note: An official letter regarding the Dean's approval for your leave of absence will be sent to you in late August/ early September 2024 (for the 1ˢᵗ semester and full year exchange study) and in early/mid-January 2025 (for the 2ⁿᵈ semester exchange study). You do NOT need to send any email to the Faculty for applying for leave of absence.*

**Credit transfer (optional)**

Credit transfer applications should be submitted to the Faculty through OCTAS **at least one month before the start date of your exchange/visiting study at the host institution**. Submissions after the exchange/visiting study will not be accepted. Credits **cannot** be transferred for courses without prior approval, even if you have successfully completed the course(s) during your exchange/visiting study.

(a) You may consult the Departmental Course Selection Adviser or Director/Interim Director/Head/Interim Head of Department/School on the courses to be selected at the host institution for the fulfillment of the major requirements.

(b) Once you have finalized your exchange study plan, please complete Step 2 "Apply for credit transfer" in OCTAS. You are required to upload the following documents:

  (i)  supporting documents [with source link] from the host institution proving the details;
     (Please **highlight** the relevant parts on the documents for our easy reference.)

  (ii) updated syllabuses and carried credits of the courses (including reserve courses) [with source link] to be selected at the host institution.

  *Note: Applications without sufficient information will not be considered.*

(c) You should not change the applied list of course(s) for credit transfer and the applied equivalent course(s) at HKU afterwards **UNLESS** you cannot take such course(s) eventually at your host institution. In such case, you should inform the Faculty by email (sci.ug.el@hku.hk) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE *(by the end of the add/drop period at your host institution for any changes of your applied list of course(s))* [including applying

new course(s) for credit transfer, dropping applied course(s) and change of equivalent course(s) at HKU for applied course(s)] for approval by the Dean. Any changes on credit transfer applications after 1 month of the commencement of exchange semester will **NOT** be considered.

(d) You should identify equivalent course(s) at HKU for credit transfer as far as practicable. The Faculty will then send the application to the relevant course offering Department(s)/School(s)/office(s) for consideration. If the equivalent course(s) cannot be identified eventually or such discipline is not available in HKU, you may apply for transferring the course(s) as free elective(s), the Faculty will then determine whether free elective credits can be granted based on the nature and workload of the course(s).

(e) It is possible for students to apply for transferring course at exchange study equivalent to capstone course at HKU such as directed studies and final year projects, provided that

   (i) students have fulfilled the pre-requisite requirement of the capstone course (e.g. year of study and advanced level courses completed in the major) before their exchange study; and

   (ii) the course to be transferred is equivalent to the relevant course at HKU in terms of workload, level, assessment, and quality of outcome.

(f) For credit transfer application of project or directed studies courses, students are required to find an internal supervisor from the corresponding Science School/Departments or the School of Biomedical Sciences. *Research proposal* has to be submitted to the internal supervisor before the approval of the credit transfer application, and the *final report* has to be submitted to the internal supervisor upon completion of the project/ directed studies in the host institution.

(g) Upon receipt of your application and the supporting documents, they will be forwarded to the relevant course offering Department(s)/School(s)/office(s) and the Dean for consideration. **You will receive written notification of the preliminary result of your approved transfer of credits via email.** Please regularly check your HKU email account to ensure that your application is completed and that you have obtained preliminary approval for the transfer of credits from the Faculty. It is important to note that no credits can be transferred for course(s) without prior approval.

(h) No grade at the host institution will be converted and included in the calculation of GPA/CGPA; only the credits can be transferred to HKU upon your successful completion of the approved course(s) at the host institution.

(i) For students who are short of any required course(s) as prescribed in the primary major for graduation, they will be required to extend their study at HKU. **NO waiver for any required course(s) will be granted**.

(j) Your Degree honours classification will be separately determined by the Board of Examiners upon receipt of the official transcript from the host institution; only the examination results obtained from HKU will be used to determine the honours classification.

(k) More details can be found in the Credit Transfer Policy for Outgoing Exchange/Visiting Students on the Faculty's website.

## II.   Course equivalence database

Please visit the course equivalence database on our Faculty's website. This database is for your reference only. It contains information regarding the equivalency of the courses taken at different host institutions for students going out for exchange in the past three years. As there may be updates on the course content at the host institution or HKU, the equivalency of the courses approved in the past may no longer be valid. Therefore, approval for course equivalency and transferred credits will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

You are required to submit clear, updated and detailed information about the course(s) (e.g. course descriptions including topics covered, total number of contact hours, levels, recommended textbook etc.) at the time when you submit your application for transfer of credits. You may take course(s) that is/are not covered in this database, subject to the final approval from the Faculty. You should note that only the hard copy provided by

the host institution or the downloaded version from its official website will be acceptable as your supporting documents.

### III.  Official academic transcript, report & photos

(a) You have to submit your official academic transcript at host institution to the Faculty Office for confirmation of your credit transfer application. If you wish to obtain a transcript for yourself, please apply for it directly from the host institution. Only credits from the approved courses that students successfully completed will be transferred, and no credits can be transferred for failed courses. **Upon receipt of your official academic transcript from the host institution, you will receive a confirmation email for the approved transfer of credits.**

(b) Even if you do not wish to apply for transfer of credits for your exchange/visiting study, it is still required that all students on leave of absence for exchange/visiting study (1st semester, 2nd semester or full year) submit the official academic transcript from the host institution to the Faculty Office to confirm the completion of the exchange/visiting programme.

(c) You have to submit soft copies of a written report (around 1,000 words; in English) and 10 photos (with captions) taken during the exchange study to the "Outgoing Exchange Application System" (IAO) within one month of your return to Hong Kong (https://goglobal.hku.hk/outgoing/). The reports and photos may be used for the Faculty's publications or as reference materials for future exchange students.

### IV.  Safety issue during exchange/visiting study

The importance of safety must be stressed when you are abroad. You must complete your registration at the host institution upon arrival and keep yourself away from dangerous people/places. For travel insurance, please refer to the Insurance Information for Students on the Finance and Enterprises Office's website for HKU coverage. You are **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** to purchase additional travel insurance. You should ensure that you are covered by comprehensive health, accident, personal property, and travel insurance for the entire period of their trip.

HKU has engaged the Inter Partner Assistance ("IPA") to provide worldwide emergency assistance to students while they are staying overseas, such as information on nearby clinic/ pharmacy, police station, translation services or travel security advice. The IPA 24/7 Assistance Centre hotline is +852 2861 9266, and HKU membership number is "39379".  Students are strongly advised to create an account using HKU email address at IPA Registration before travelling out of Hong Kong.  A quick guideline could be downloaded at IPA Assistance Access. *IPA is NOT an insurance company to provide compensations or financial support under the insurance terms.* Subject to the terms, conditions and exclusions of HKU's Travel Insurance Policy, for request of urgent / emergency assistance which incurs a cost, students should contact AIG (the insurer) at their 24-hour Travel Guard Assistance Hotline +852 3516 8699 or +60 3 2772 5603 and quote the HKU policy number "GPP2001042". For details, please refer to the information regarding Crisis and Emergency Outside Hong Kong on the Centre of Development and Resources for Students' website.