



International Affairs
Unit



Studying at the ZHAW? Everything you need to know



The International Affairs Unit
welcomes feedback on this guide!

IMPRINT

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I WELCOME

Dear Student,

We at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) join the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) in welcoming you to Switzerland! We sincerely hope that your stay in our country will be a rewarding experience both for your professional and personal life. We are convinced that you will benefit enormously from the quality of Switzerland's higher education system in general and of the ZHAW in particular.

Studying or working abroad during a certain period of time requires a good deal of preparation and certain steps will have to be taken before you leave your hometown. For many of you, your semester abroad will be the first extended visit to Switzerland. While living here, in a culture different from your own, you will encounter interesting study programs and exciting events. But studying abroad is not only just fun and we are aware of chal-

lenges that might occur while living abroad. This online-guide offers support in order to meet the challenges and to enjoy the excitement of studying in Switzerland. It provides information about studying at the ZHAW and living in the Greater Zurich Area. Knowledge about Swiss people, their culture and their traditions is also offered.

In order to help international exchange students with study-related issues as well as with everyday matters, the staff of Erasmus Student Network (ESN) will most gladly be at service. Don't hesitate to contact them!

As a locally rooted university with many international connections, the ZHAW welcomes foreign exchange students from all over the world every year. The ZHAW strongly values the large contributions incoming students make to cultural diversity of the university. If you are interested in an illustrated overview of the ZHAW, please

read our brochure "[We are used to crossing borders. Are you?](#)"

We are looking forward to seeing you and wish you a successful scholarly experience in one of our departments!

Best wishes,

ZHAW International Affairs Unit & ESN



II THE VALUE OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

1. Cultural Diversity: Chances and Risks

Anyone who has experienced a country different from his or her own will confirm that staying abroad enriches one's life. However, travelling in itself doesn't necessarily give insight into another culture. Only staying in the same country for a longer time period and getting involved with local society help us to understand the world and ourselves as a part of it. When studying abroad for one or two semesters, you will have the opportunity to deepen your international experience and pursue your academic career. In addition to the enlargement of your study knowledge, you will gain several important competencies: flexibility, mobility, self-motivation, communication, networking, team-mindedness and tolerance are crucial personal and social qualifications. In the future, you may work in a multinational team and therefore will interact with several different cultures at the same time. You may even work with foreign clients and be obliged to crack their social codes in order to seal the deal.

Cultural diversity is an enrichment

Cultural diversity is a feature of the global labour market and public society. It shapes peoples' opinions, their personal values and life style and propels them in innovative directions. Co-workers who perceive cultural diversity as an enrichment know how to carry out creative solutions more successfully. The most important thing is to be aware of these cultural differences. Cultures are not the same, yet they are equally valuable. The insight that cultural variety together forms the human whole has a lot to do with respect, politeness and candidness. No one expects that all parties in an intercultural encounter share the same values and conventions. Living and working abroad positions you as one half of a cultural interface. The other half – the people you meet – are working out the cultural differences as much as you are. It's often a bit like two people learning to waltz. As beginners, we

inadvertently step on each other's toes, but with practice and time the dance is mastered.

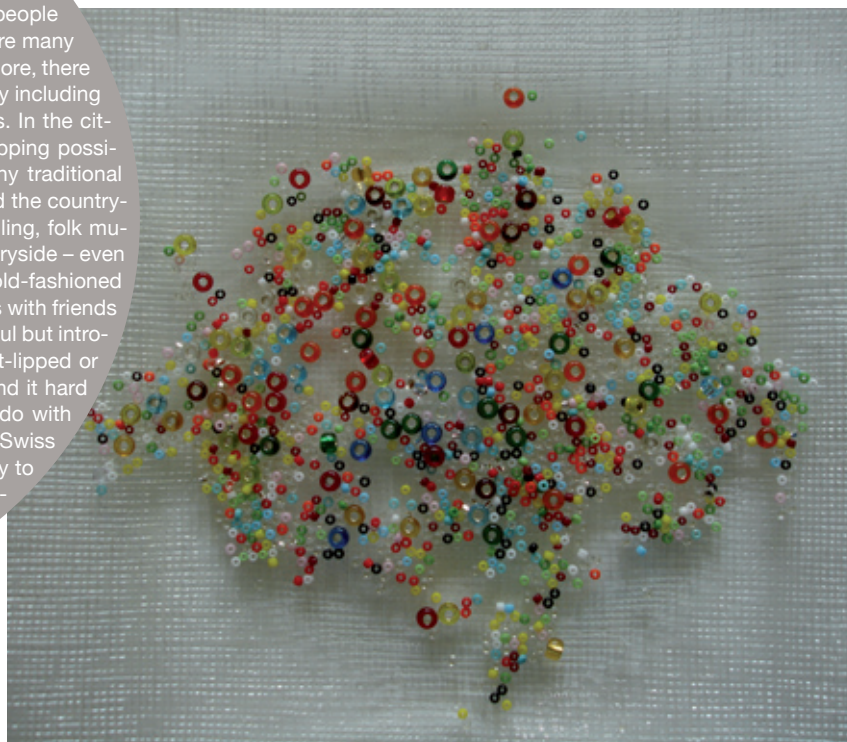
Although the step into a foreign culture mostly has a very positive influence on a student's life, it can seem quite overwhelming, especially at the beginning. Cultural differences can be so great in some areas, it can even seem shocking. You might feel disappointment and frustration caused by the fact that a culture is different from what you've expected. The word "shock" is, in our opinion, inadequate, because it dramatizes the intercultural situation, which challenges you to deal with it as it comes. Try to deal with negative emotions, such as feeling home sick or frustrated, in a proactive way.

Links

[Test your intercultural competence online](#)

Tip

Spending some time abroad is the best introduction to another culture and its citizens. Certain habits will seem very familiar to you; others less. For instance, Swiss people are crazy about open air festivals. That's why there are many popular music festivals held during summer. Furthermore, there is also a wide range of other cultural activities to enjoy including museum nights, open air theatres and historical trips. In the cities, you will find a versatile nightlife and lots of shopping possibilities. Besides the modern activities there are many traditional ones. The contrast in Switzerland between towns and the countryside is significant. Whereas lively processions, yodelling, folk music and cattle exhibitions are still popular in the countryside – even among young people –, they are often perceived as old-fashioned in urban areas. Urbanites often go into clubs and bars with friends to have a good time. Normally, Swiss people are helpful but introverted which could be interpreted as unfriendly, tight-lipped or sometimes even as arrogant by an outsider. If you find it hard to make new friends it doesn't necessarily have to do with the fact that you're an "outsider" here: sometimes Swiss people are introvert and lack openness. The best way to get to know the local population is by joining an association. This could be a sports club, gymnastics club, student organisation (such as ESN) or a choral.



2. Networking

Tip

With internet-sites such as Facebook you can get or stay in touch with people from all over the world. The site XING gives business people the opportunity to network with clients and former as well as potential partners.

Establishing and developing a network is not only important for the time while you're abroad. Today, effective communication and networking are among the most important soft skills a university graduate can have. These skills can serve you in all kinds of situations. As human resource consultants confirm, networking is the essential key to success in business world. Yet, in an intercultural context, where you aren't able to build on an already existing network of contacts, they are even more important. Make it a goal to test your networking-skills while abroad. Getting to know local citizens will help you get involved in the community. You will learn to appreciate values different from your own and will gain insight into a different lifestyle.

Learn to navigate international water

Therefore, being well prepared does not only mean being theoretically well prepared, but also getting in touch with Swiss people beforehand. They can give you the best practical information and supply you with addresses and names that will serve your needs.

The first place you can turn to is certainly the responsible person at the International Office of your ZHAW department or at your university. Also, talk to former exchange students and other Swiss students at your school. They can give you good advice and maybe even set up some contacts for you. Additionally, you probably know nationals who lived in your target country or foreigners from this country

who live in your town. Last but not least, don't forget to contact the student organisations such as the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and AIESEC which have giant networks and will help you get in touch with other students and assist you as you prepare for departure. Most universities even have "buddy systems" that bring local and exchange students together (each exchange student gets a "buddy" to whom s/he can refer).

Networking is always a give and take. As an incoming student you will learn and benefit immensely from the people you'll encounter, but be on the lookout for ways you can serve them. Networking is fundamentally about building good relationships on the solid foundation of mutual respect and genuine interest. Think long-term when you think "networking," and don't sacrifice sincerity for expediency.



3. Language

At the ZHAW, courses are held in German or, in some specific programs, in English. As an exchange student you should have sufficient language skills in both languages in order to follow the courses as well as to communicate with other students. The recommended skill level is B2+ / C1. To secure a successful study at the ZHAW, make sure you meet the language requirements before coming to Switzerland. The assessment of language ability is the responsibility of the international coordinator at your home university.

Tip

Don't forget to have a look into the book "Hoi – Your Swiss German Survival Guide" (by Sergio J. Lievano and Nicole Egger). As alternative to a language course you can look out for a Swiss tandem-partner, who wants to learn something about your language and culture and as exchange can teach you German or even Swiss German and introduce you to the Swiss culture. The International Bodensee University offers German [language Summer Schools](#).

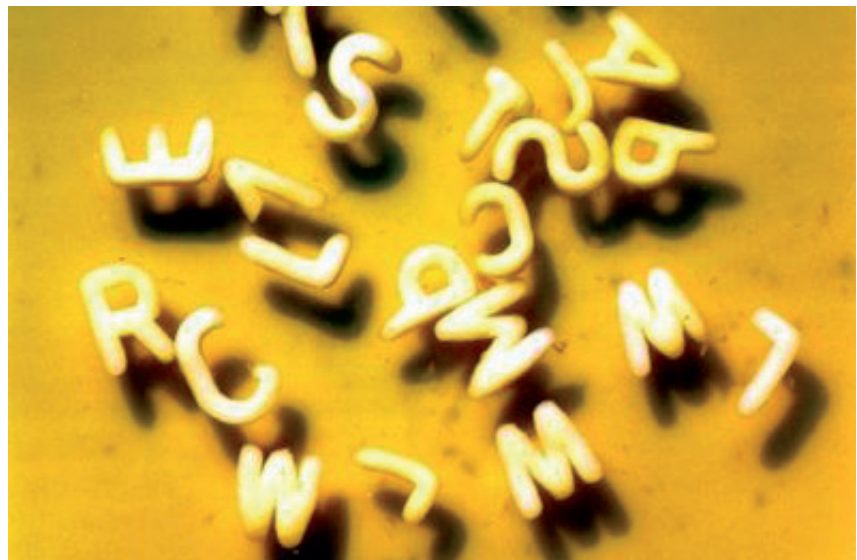
Learn a new language – develop intercultural understanding

Besides learning the official language, German, you will face the task of understanding the local dialect, Züritütsch. Be aware that even if the written words are quite the same as in German, the pronunciation differs a lot and it is not easy to understand at first. A simple task like going to the supermarket becomes a learning experience. When it comes to speaking German, Swiss people are in general not very helpful. They prefer speaking their dialect and commonly expect foreigners to understand very quickly. They tend to forget that exchange students

are present and will chatter on in dialect. Don't let yourself get discouraged by initial misunderstandings. At first, you might not be able to contribute much to discussions or may not even get the point of a simple conversation between locals. Yet, simply being surrounded by another language helps you absorb more than you might notice. By daily interaction with native speakers you will soon pick up the authentic accent and pronunciation and soon be able to understand jokes, stories and local phrases you would have never learned at language school.

Links

<http://writeon.swissinfo.ch> (funny blog about life in Switzerland)
www.dialang.org



III ZHAW CAMPUSES

1. Overview

In 2007, four independent institutions merged into the ZHAW. The merge to one of the largest multidisciplinary Universities of Applied Science in Switzerland enables the ZHAW to offer a broad range of study programs and to promote interdisciplinary contact between lecturers, researchers

and students. ZHAW differs from other universities in the canton of Zurich through guidance by practice orientation, which makes graduates outstandingly well prepared for their professional future. Furthermore, the ZHAW is committed to the concept of Lifelong Learning and offers a wide

range of education and continuing education programs and promotes research. Nowadays, the ZHAW is home to about 7.000 students. However, by having different campuses, the number of students is manageable to the professors and you can be sure to get as much guidance and mentoring from them as you need. The ZHAW comprises eight Schools: Architecture and Civil Engineering, Health Profession, Applied Linguistics, Life Sciences and Facility Management, Applied Psychology, Social Work, Engineering, as well as Management and Law.

Info

The Canton of Zurich is situated north of the Alps in the northeast of Switzerland. With a population of 364.500, its capital Zurich is the largest city in Switzerland. Close to a million people live in the Greater Zurich Area. The Zurich dialect of German is called "Züritüütsch" and it is the primary spoken language in the canton. All locals understand German and many understand English and French as well. The city of Zurich is surrounded by many small towns and picturesque villages. The forests, hills and small lakes in the area offer ample opportunity to hike, swim, and participate in other outdoor activities.

Links

www.zhaw.ch
www.zhaw.ch/en

2. Locations, Departments, Programs

A Winterthur

Five of eight ZHAW schools are situated in Winterthur. First, the School of

Architecture, Design and Civil Engineering as well as the School of Engineering grew out of the Winterthur Polytechnic Institute, which itself

dates back to the Technikum founded in 1874. Then, the School of Applied Linguistics has its roots in the Zurich School for Translation and Interpretation (1946), while the School of Management & Law originates from the School of Economics and Business Administration (1968). The School of Health Professions was established in 2006, introducing a completely new field of study to the university. Last but not least, the President's Office and the central administrative offices are also located in Winterthur.

Many Swiss still associate Winterthur with "industry." In the nineteenth century the Industrial Revolution powered the city's rapid growth. Later on, Winterthurer architects and engineers visited England in mid-century to study building-design for factories and workers' housing, and brought back English ideas for the huge new factories going up to serve Winterthurs' booming textile and railway engineering industries. Winterthur, the second largest city of the canton is only 20 minutes away from Zurich. It used to be an industrial city, yet over the years it has increasingly become a cultural centre with museums, the Casino Theatre and the Technorama Science Centre. Winterthur is an educational centre of growing importance. More-



Info

Since July 2008 the international association Club of Rome is located in Winterthur. Founded in 1968, when a small group of professionals from different fields met in a quiet villa in Rome to discuss the dilemma of short-term thinking in international affairs, the Club promotes system-thinking in order to understand why things are as they are and to be able to make reasonable assumptions on long term issues such as global warming and the independency of environment and economics. The Club now performs high-level work and has advanced the global agenda in the fields of education, welfare and environment.

For further information visit: www.clubofrome.org

over, as an attractive small town it offers its residents good quality of life. In the old part of the city, you will find many shops, street cafés, bars, clubs and discos. The region around “Winti” is ideal for cycling, hiking, and all kinds of water-sports as well as wine tasting.

Info

ESN Winterthur is an extremely active section, with members not only working on local, but also on national and international levels. The goal of ESN Winterthur is to make the study period in Switzerland the best time in an exchange student’s life. We help foreign students to settle in Winterthur, introduce them to Swiss culture (including the buddy system and fondue) and organise various events, ranging from sports activities to pub tours, ski and snow weekends, city trips, salsa crash courses and so on. Hearing-impaired students are supported. For further information check: www.esn.ch/winterthur

Links

www.stadt.winterthur.ch
www.standort-winterthur.ch
www.winterthur-tourismus.ch

Departments

Department	BA	MA
School of Architecture, Design and Civil Engineering (A)	Architecture	Architecture
	Civil Engineering	
School of Health Professions (G)	Midwifery	
	Nursing	
	Occupational Therapy	
	Physiotherapy	
School of Applied Linguistics (L)	Communication: Specialization in Journalism / Organizational Communication	
	Language and Communication: Specialization in Multilingual Communication	
	Language and Communication: Specialization in Technical Communication	
		Interpreting (postgraduate)
School of Engineering (T)	Engineering	Engineering
	Aviation	
	Computer Science	
	Electrical Engineering	
	Engineering and Management with specializations in Industrial Engineering and Business Mathematics	
	Enterprise Computing	
	Mechanical Engineering	
	Mechanical Design and Engineering	
	Mechanical Engineering Informatics	
	Materials and Process Engineering	
	System Engineering/ Mechatronics	
	Transportation Systems	
	School of Management and Law (SoM / SoR)	Business Administration
International Management		
Business Law		
		MA of Science in Banking and Finance

B Zurich

Two of the ZHAW's Schools are located in Zurich and Duebendorf. The School of Applied Psychology developed out of the IAP Institute of Applied Psychology, which was founded in 1923 and is Switzerland's leading institution for consulting and continuing education in this field. It is centrally located in Zurich, only a few minutes' walk from Stadelhofen station. The School of Social Work, located in Due-

Do as the Swiss do

bendorf, has an even longer history stretching back to 1908. Since its foundation, it has been committed to finding solutions for social problems.

The small yet cosmopolitan City of Zu-
rich is divided into twelve districts which are called "Chrais" (engl. Circle)

and are numbered 1–12. Each district has its very own lifestyle. Most locals are proud of belonging to their own Chrais.

To tourists, Zurich might seem like a pleasant little city, well-known for its shopping street, the Bahnhofstrasse and its old town, the Dörfli, where one can wander on cobbled streets and eat Fondue just like the Swiss do. Granted, the view on the crystal-blue lake of Zurich with its snowy Alps in the background looks very much like the front-site of a picturesque postcard. But there is a lot more to Zurich than that: If you are not too much of a tourist, rather exciting enticements await you. Besides various points of historical interest, Zurich offers a wide range of leisure activities.



Links

www.zuerich.com

www.zuerich.ch

www.zh.ch

Departments

Department	BA	MA
School of Applied Psychology (P)	Applied Psychology	Applied Psychology
School of Social Works (S)	Social Work	Social Work

C Waedenswil

In 1942, over sixty years ago, fruit-juice producers founded their own

educational institution in Waedenswil. This college went on to turn its attention to other professionally related fields, and by the time it was accred-

ited as a Higher Technical College (HTL) in 1970, it had become the School of Engineering Waedenswil. Transformed into the University of Applied Sciences Waedenswil in 1998, it is now the ZHAW's School of Life Sciences and Facility Management, offering degree programs in biotechnology, chemistry, food technology, natural resource sciences and facility management. The School's main campus has an idyllic location above the Zurich lake.



Waedenswil is a small town in the suburbs near Zurich. The range of leisure time facilities is huge. During the summer, you can go for a swim, go hiking, biking or just relax on the beaches of Waedenswil. There is a cinema, a tennis court, an indoor swimming-pool, several fitness centres and many more things to do. Plus, from Waedenswil it takes only about one hour to get to the

mountains for a ski-weekend. If you feel like clubbing or enjoying big parties until the early morning, you can get to Zurich in less than 20 minutes. If you want to stay in Waedenswil, you will find different bars and several pleasant restaurants serving international food.

Info

ESN Waedenswil is a small but familiar section. The section organises various events during the semester. The goal of ESN Waedenswil is that newcomers find Swiss friends quickly. There is a Buddy System in place. On average, there are between 10 and 15 foreign exchange students at the ZHAW Waedenswil each semester. For further information check: www.esn.ch/waedenswil

Links

www.zuerich.com
www.zuerich.ch
www.zh.ch

Departments

Department	BA	MA
School of Life Sciences und Facility Management (N)		Life Sciences
	Biotechnology	
	Chemistry	
	Food Technology	
	Environmental Engineering	
	Facility Management	

3. Organising Your Exchange

A Gathering Information and Selection Procedure

Going abroad requires a lot of planning and organizing in advance. Administrative issues take a lot of time. If you're planning on studying a semester or two at the ZHAW, start gathering information early. If you leave it for the last minute, you may run out of time and miss application deadlines.

Ask yourself the following questions: How is the ZHAW organized? Are the courses offered similar to the ones at your home university? Can you expect library resources, Internet access and tutor availabilities? Further, consider extra-curricular factors such as language requirements and costs. But the essential question really is, if your home institution has a bilateral agreement with the ZHAW. If they don't have such an agreement, the exchange will be much more difficult to plan. Sour-

ces of information about the ZHAW include the International Office at your school, the ESN or former ZHAW exchange students. Individual departments and institutes also provide useful information on the Internet. Discuss your intention to study abroad with the exchange coordinator at your home university. The decision about your exchange is up to the university and it is possible that you will have to go through a selection procedure.

Planning: The earlier, the better

Links

www.study-in-europe.org
www.esn.ch/winterthur
http://www.eda.admin.ch/washington/Studying_in_Switzerland

B Learning Agreement and Application

On your study abroad application form you will be asked to provide information about your academic performance (grades, point average, type of courses you have already passed), your personal selling points and talents (what you think about yourself),

language skills, your official university transcript to date as well as information about your hobbies and interests. Further, you will have to write a short essay regarding your motivation for studying abroad. Together with the International Office at your department you will prepare a learning agreement according to the courses offered at the ZHAW department you're planning

to join. It should contain equivalent or similar courses to the ones you miss at your home university. The International Office sends your complete application documentation to the ZHAW. A few weeks after that, they will be contacted by the ZHAW. Later, you will receive a letter of acceptance and possibly further information about the ZHAW.

C Finances

Switzerland requires from Non-EU exchange students proof of self-sufficiency while abroad. This is in order to ensure you can cover your needs while living here without having to ask the country to provide you with monetary assistance. Non-EU students must deliver a financial statement (CHF 9.000/semester), that has to be issued by a bank, which is either a Swiss bank or a bank domiciled in Switzerland. Regarding academic expenses, you don't have to worry too much. If your home university has an agreement with the ZHAW, you won't have to pay tuition fees and, depending on the type of agreement, you may even be entitled to a scholarship (CHF 200 to 250/month for an Erasmus grant). For partner schools of the ZHAW, refer to: <http://www.zhaw.ch/en/zhaw/about-the-zhaw/international-affairs/global-zhaw/partner-universities.html>

info

Switzerland's currency is the Swiss franc. The smaller denomination, which is worth a hundredth of a franc, is called "Rappen". The Euro Paper Money is also widely accepted in Switzerland (change is often in Swiss franc coins and with a bad exchange rate). If you want to open a bank account, you have – in the country of banks, naturally – a lot of options. The largest banks are UBS [www.ubs.ch] and Credit Suisse, but there are many other financial institutes, too. However, the easiest bank to open an account is the Postfinance [www.postfinance.ch]. Banks usually are open from 9 am to 5 pm. Automatic teller machines (ATMs) can be found almost everywhere.

Links

Scholarship:

http://www.sbf.admin.ch/htm/themen/bildung/stipendien/eskas_en.html

Job-sites:

<http://www.marktplatz.uzh.ch/index.cgi>

Overview of costs

What	Costs
Tuition Fee	CHF 0 – 110
Rent	CHF 400 – 600
Food	CHF 400 – 600
Clothing	CHF 100 – 120
Travel	CHF 50 – 100
Course Material	CHF 50 – 100
Total CHF	CHF 1000 – 1630
Total EU	EU 730 – 1070

D Visa, Entry and Residence Permit

If you are an EU-citizen you don't have to apply for a visa and an entry permit. You will be registered upon arrival. For Non-EU citizens: you have to apply for a visa and an entry permit at Switzerland's embassy in your country. Do not enter Switzerland with a tourist visa. If you do, you will not be able to apply for a residence permit. Once you're here, the tourist visa can't be transformed into a student visa. Therefore, you will have to leave the country and reapply for the permit.

To live in Switzerland, you need a residence permit. Everyone who stays in Switzerland longer than 3 months must obtain a residence permit. If you live in Zurich, you have to register and apply for your permit at the appropriate district office (Kreisbüro in Zurich) or the municipal administration office (Gemeindeverwaltung) within 8 days of arrival. Ask your buddy, flatmate or landlord where the office is located. Just a few weeks later, you will receive a letter asking you to pick up your residence permit. Once it expires, do not forget to apply for extension. For Erasmus students the extension is free of charge (for everyone else: CHF 65).



Checklist

Bring with you to the district office / municipal administration office:

- ✓ Valid passport / ID card
- ✓ University registration
- ✓ Confirmation of enrolment from the student exchange office
- ✓ 2 passport photographs
- ✓ Rental contract for your accommodation
- ✓ Proof of financial security
- ✓ Proof of health insurance (students from EU: European health insurance card)

Tip

Located in the heart of Europe, Switzerland is an ideal starting point for discovering other European countries and cities including London, Paris, Rome and Vienna.

E Travel Documents

Just like any other country, Switzerland has its own special requirements for entry

based on your citizenship, purpose of visit and length of stay. Find out which document you will have to provide and plan in advance; obtaining documents from embassies or consulates can take several months. There are several

points you should consider before leaving home:

Passport	Your passport is your most important document. Remember that you need a current passport that is valid beyond the time your program ends. Further, it would be good to bring your Birth Certificate and your Social Security Number with you, since you might lose your passport.
Letter of acceptance	It is always good to have the official letter that invites you to study at the ZHAW with you.
Proof of insurance	In cases of illness or accident, you should have an insurance card or other document verifying that you have a health and travel insurance to cover you for the entire time abroad.
Proof of financial funds	Non-EU students must deliver a financial statement (CHF 9000 per semester) issued by a bank which is either a Swiss bank or a bank domiciled in Switzerland.
Travel tickets and dates	Before booking your flight, check the academic calendar of the ZHAW as well as the one of your home university. Be sure not to miss any important dates, such as exam dates.
Prescriptions	If you require prescription medications while abroad, make sure to verify this requirement with a doctors' note and get it translated into German. Since medications aren't necessarily named the same in all countries, you should tell your doctor about your stay in Switzerland. He or she will be able to provide you with the appropriate documentation you need.
International Student Card	Consider purchasing an International Student ID Card. It helps you verify your purpose of travel and includes a limited amount of insurance and 24-hour assistance. Further, it provides discounts.
Copy of travel documents	Bring a copy of your travel documents with you and keep them in a separate place apart from the original documents. Leave another copy of your travel documents with your contact at home.
Power of attorney	It is wise to allow a person you trust to control your personal assets and other personal information, since you never know what will happen. Power of attorney enables the person you designate to deposit money for you and sign your checks.
Paying Bills	Make sure that you can cover running costs (for example the rent) at home from abroad – perhaps through online banking by asking a person you trust if he or she is willing to send in your payments for you.

F Work Permit

As an exchange student with a valid residence permit you are allowed to work 15 hours per week during the semester and 42 hours per week during semester break. It is not easy to find an employer who is willing to apply for a work permit for you, yet if you start looking early enough you have a good chance of finding a student job. Many student jobs require multi-lingual fluency.

There are several ways of finding a job: You can contact one of the ESN working-mobility agencies or you can

search on your own. Start by checking the University online classifieds (markt- platz) for job listings. Several job mobility agencies can also help you find work placement in Switzerland. For

the German speaking part, there is StudEx. Temporary staffing agencies such as Kelly Services and Adecco also have offices and recruit for jobs in Switzerland.

info

EURESinfo Switzerland provides specific information to people interested in living and working in Switzerland. EU and EFTA nationals still need to obtain a work permit to work in Switzerland, but they have the same opportunities on the labour market as Swiss nationals. Other citizenships are subject to separate provisions.

Checklist

The standard application form in Switzerland consists of a cover letter, indicating your career goals, professional interests and your potential contribution to the company, CV (with photo), copies of school degrees, diplomas and recommendations from former employers (if possible). Further, make sure to include a certificate or other proof that shows that your language skills suffice the job requirements. Resumé or CV conventions vary from country to country. Take time to google the correct layout for Switzerland so that you don't frustrate a potential employer before they even read your CV! You can expect an answer within two weeks. After two weeks with no answer, feel free to contact the employer by phone.

Links

www.marktplatz.unizh.ch
www.arbeitsvermittlung.unizh.ch
www.jobpilot.ch
www.jobs.ch
www.monster.ch

G Health, Accident and Liability Insurances

In Switzerland, it is mandatory to have a valid health insurance. In general, exchange students can fulfil this requirement by presenting confirmation of coverage from their health insurance at home. If you are from an EU country, you can present your European Insurance Card. Your card has to be valid for the entire extent of your stay. If you are from a Non-EU country, you must have your insurer fill in the Foreign Insurers Confirmation (Form B: students). Students who are unable to provide proof of health insurance coverage have to take out basic health insurance at their own expense from a Swiss insurer; their health insurance

must cover the entire duration of their stay. The cost is about CHF 100 per month. The insurance covers many treatments. However, unlike some other countries, dental care is not covered. Beyond, the ZHAW recommends to check if your accident insurance is also valid in Switzerland.

Liability insurance covers damages to other persons and property caused by the policy holder. Liability insurance is

not legally required. However, it is recommended that exchange students are insured for such incidents. Before departure from your home country, you should check with your insurer whether the insurance covers liability during stays abroad. Students wishing to take out liability insurance coverage in Switzerland can do so for CHF 100 to CHF 150 a year. [More details to insurance issues.](#)

info

On the Erasmus Grand Contract you will have to confirm that you have been informed that you are responsible for taking care of all insurance matters including accident, health and liability insurance. The ZHAW cannot be held liable in any case.

H Accommodation

Where you live will be the main place of your cultural interaction while abroad. Where you choose to live will determine to what level you will immerse in the Swiss culture. Not in the classroom, but rather at “home” you will experience the most intense and personal form of culture sharing. The ZHAW does not have on-campus housing. Even though the ZHAW doesn't guarantee housing for you, contact the responsible person at the International Office of your ZHAW department. He or she will be able to give you advice on housing options. [More information on housing.](#)



Living Swiss culture

Most students organize themselves in flat-sharing; they live in a Wohngemeinschaft (called simply a WG). The advantage of this form of living is that the rent and additional costs are shared. As an incoming student with few or even no acquaintances in Switzerland, it can be difficult to find a WG.

Try to organize housing in advance (come several weeks before the semester begins). When it comes to finding housing, the most important thing to remember is to be patient. It may take a while until you find the perfect roommate(s). It can be done, but it is particularly difficult to arrange housing in Switzerland from abroad without the opportunity to meet the flatmates (or even landlords) face to face. Most WGs will want to meet you before considering you as roommate, since you will become their new “family” just as they will become yours. Moving in with people one hardly

knows is always an adjustment, whether at home or abroad.

If you find an advertisement for a WG you are interested in joining, contact the people by email or phone. They will generally schedule an “open house” style showing of the flat on a given day, and if you are interested you must show up for that. They will pick a flatmate after having met the interested parties.

info

The student housing service [SWOW!](#) rents out furnished and unfurnished rooms in student houses in Winterthur. Another housing service in Winterthur is [Dachlade](#). Conditions: you have to be younger than 25. Another option would be to rent a room in a Swiss host family.

Links

www.wgzimmer.ch
www.marktplatz.unizh.ch
www.students.ch
www.wg24.ch
www.woko.ch (only for students studying at the Department of Applied Psychology)
<https://intra.zhaw.ch/ZHAW-Life.2.0.html> (ZHAW Intranet)

4. Studying at the ZHAW

Before the semester starts, or at the beginning of the semester, you will be invited to attend an orientation for exchange students at the ZHAW. We will assist you with formalities and requirements, and you will also get to know the ZHAW as well as other exchange students in your department.

Most students are in the same situation when they arrive

Once you arrive in Switzerland, you will be very busy: settling into your new apartment, learning your way around the campus and the city, keeping up with all the information you receive during orientation. Therefore,

the best time to prepare yourself for the move to Switzerland and for our academic system is before you arrive here.

info

The Campus Card is our ZHAW student ID Card (different from International Student ID Card). At the beginning of every semester you will have to validate the card. Validation boxes are located on your Campus. Try to validate your Campus Card as quickly as possible, otherwise you won't be able to use it. The card functions as a key to all ZHAW university facilities. You can load money on to your Campus Card and then not only pay cashless in the cafeterias, but also at the copy machines and printers. Your Campus Card also entitles you to student discounts.

Checklist

After arriving:

- ✓ Register at the Registrar's Office / International Office of the ZHAW
- ✓ Register at the city district office
- ✓ Organize a health insurance (if you don't have one)
- ✓ Register for your courses

A Academic Calendar

The academic year at the ZHAW is organized by Calendar Weeks (CW). The Fall Semester lasts from September to January, beginning at CW 38. The Spring Semester lasts from February to June, beginning at CW 8. Each Semester lasts 18 weeks, divided into 14 weeks of regular studies, 2 weeks of exam preparation (Lesewoche) and the last 2 weeks of exams. You will possibly be asked to hand homework to be graded during the semester.

info

Even though you will be given time to prepare yourself for the exams, you have to study a great deal during the semester to meet study requirements. A good way of learning is to put together a weekly study-plan at the beginning of the semester. If you don't like studying alone, form a study-group with other students.

Academic Calendar	Spring	Fall
Application due	October	May
Learning Agreement due	November	June
Semester begin	CW 08	CW 38
Preparation week	CW 22	CW 52
Examinations	CW 24	CW 03
Semester Break	CW 26	CW 05

Variations from this plan are possible, depending on the department you join. For exact dates refer to your department website.

B Exams and Grading

Nearly every course has a final exam at the end of the semester. All exams are designed to assess the students' understanding of a subject. The final exam schedule will be sent to you by mail at the end of the regular semester. In some courses you will be assessed on every assignment given to you. At an advanced level of studies, examinations are less frequent and term papers are more common.

module and be rewarded with the credit points, your performance has to be graded at least with an average of 4.0. If your grade is insufficient, you will be given the opportunity to retake the test. If you fail twice, you will have to repeat the entire course in order to receive credit. At the end of your exchange semester you will receive your transcript of records from the ZHAW, which contains the Number of ECTS credits and your ECTS grade of every course you attended.

info

Grades	Meaning
6	excellent
5.5	very good
5	good
4.5	satisfactory
4	sufficient
3.5	fail

The key to academic success

In addition to the exam, or sometimes in place of it, some modules have instead homework, a presentation or group work which is graded. To pass a

info

ZHAW uses the two-tiered Bachelor-Master system according to the Bologna agreement signed by the European Ministers of Education. The Bachelor program is an undergraduate program which lasts for 6 semesters (180 credits) and is completed with a final project and leads to a Bachelor of Science (BSc) or a Bachelor of Arts (BA). The Master program is an international postgraduate degree following the Bachelor degree (90 to 120 credits). The credit system is based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). According to this system, study achievements are allocated credit points. A full workload at the ZHAW is 30 ECTS credits per semester. Each credit represents 25 - 30 hours during the 18-week semester. At the end of each semester, you will have to take final exams (in form of a test or homework).

C Course Types and Course Material

Course material for lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, etc. is either handed out to you by the lecturer or put on MOODLE, the online-learning-tool of the ZHAW. If not, the lecturer

will tell where you can purchase it. Sometimes, lecturers refer to material that is on Octopus. Octopus is a file folder which you can access on any Computer linked to the ZHAW University Network. Required books are in many cases purchased centrally. If you don't want to spend too much

money on new books, either try the "market" on Moodle for a second hand copy or borrow it from the school library.

5. Infrastructure and Information Technology

A Internet and E-mail account

Copy machines, scanners and printers are available to all students! In most campus spaces free internet access is available to all ZHAW members. If no wireless access is provided, you will be able to use the internet in one of the PC rooms. All students are assigned an e-mail account ending with @students.zhaw.ch. You will receive your username and password once you are registered as an international student (at the ZHAW). Since the ZHAW communicates only by email, you have to check your email account as often as possible. Lectur-

ers will write emails to give instructions on homework, and the Department Office will contact you if your lecturer is ill and the course is cancelled.

info

Moodle is the e-learning tool of the ZHAW. Here, you will find course material, handouts, exercises and additional material for purposes of class preparation and / or revision. At the beginning of each semester, your instructor will give you the password to enrol in the class-course on Moodle. Once you enrol to a course, you will have a student identity on Moodle, with a personal list of the courses you visit and your email-address. On Moodle, there are forums where you can communicate with other class members as well as with your course instructor.

B Libraries

All students of the ZHAW can make use of the libraries in the different departments and have access to a wide range of textbooks, reference materials, specialized journals and periodicals. The ZHAW subscribes to a wide range of online scientific journals and data-bases. If you can't find a book at the libraries, the Swiss Network of Libraries and Information Centres (NEBIS) gives you access to more than 3 million books. For further questions consult the librarian. He or she will be able to assist you with expert advice.



C Student Organization

The ZHAW Students' Association VSZHAW represents the interests of all of its members. Every student is automatically a member of the VSZHAW. The VSZHAW deals with all issues relevant to studies at the ZHAW. Topics that affect students are dis-

cussed at regular delegates' meetings, where VSZHAW representatives for the Supervisory Board and the Council of Delegates are also elected. But the VSZHAW does not only theorize: throughout the year it organizes various parties and events. If you are looking for study material or want to buy laptop computers at a reasonable

price, visit the VSZHAW Techshop. In addition, the association has a website where students can find jobs, accommodation, and more. To cover the costs of its activities, the association levies a contribution from all students each semester.

D Sports

As a balance to your studies, the ZHAW offers free training sessions and low-price special courses to all of its members. There is no registration necessary for the training lessons. Therefore, if you need an excuse to move around, stop by or contact the ZHAW Sports Secretariat for further information.

Address:
ZHAW Sports Secretariat
Opening hours:
Monday to Thursday
8.00–12.00 and 14.00–17.00
Liliana Baumann, Office TH 463,
Technikumstr. 9, Winterthur
Tel. +41 58 934 74 05
E-Mail: zhawsport@zhaw.ch

info

Hiking is one of the most popular sports activities for young and old. It lets you take a break from your usual routine and you can enjoy Switzerland's beautiful landscape. Jass is the name of a very popular card game and is sometimes considered the national game of Switzerland. Swiss Wrestling is the Swiss variant of folk wrestling and considered a Swiss national sport. Hornussen is a truly Swiss sport and is something like a cross between baseball and golf. Stone Put is a competition in throwing a heavy stone and it has been practiced among the alpine population since prehistoric times.



IV EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

This section contains an overview of the possible ways to study at the ZHAW as either an exchange or a regular student.

Links

www.kfh.ch

www.crus.ch

www.eda.admin.ch/washington/Studying_in_Switzerland

www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/Overview/OverviewByCountry>

1. Enrolment at Your Home University

A Erasmus Program

"I am a citizen of the world"

Erasmus von Rotterdam

The Erasmus program enables European students to study for one or two semesters at another university in Europe without any lengthening of studies and of paying additional tuition fees. It is a part of the EU program "Life Long Learning" promoting Student Mobility and stands for "European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students." Due to bilateral agreements Swiss students can take part in the program, even though Switzerland is not a member of the EU (Swiss Universities are so-called "silent partners"). The exchange with Erasmus takes places in all EU-countries and EFTA-states, as well as associate countries such as Turkey and Cyprus. Academic achievements are credited on the basis of the ECTS regulation. Annually, over 2.000 Swiss students participate in Erasmus Exchange programs. One big advantage of Erasmus is the enormous network of institutions and universities to which stu-

dents gain access, depending on their course of studies. The ZHAW, for instance, has in total over 200 bilateral agreements with schools set in almost every European country. Be aware that you can only visit schools with which your institute maintains bilateral agreements and at which the curriculum matches that of your home institution.

list of Erasmus partner universities of your institute and consult the exchange coordinator at your home institution before making big plans. The application form for an Erasmus-placement contains questions considering your personal data and your academic curriculum as well as on language skills and your motivation for studying abroad. You will be able to note your partner schools preferences.

Don't miss deadlines!

In general, every student can apply for a placement in the Erasmus exchange program; however, the number of exchange places per institute is limited. Besides the normal application procedure, some institutes have further conditions such as a required grade point average. Therefore, check the

Once you have a place in the Erasmus program, your international exchange coordinator will submit the application form and the learning agreement you worked out to the ZHAW. During your stay abroad, you are enrolled at your home institution and pay the regular tuition fees there. You won't have to pay any tuition fees at the ZHAW and are entitled to financial support in form of Mobility Grants from the Swiss government for your stay at the ZHAW (CHF 200 to 250 per month).

info

Desiderius Erasmus von Rotterdam (1466/1469 – 1536) was a Dutch Humanist and Catholic theologian who lived during the Reformation. He was known as an opponent to dogmatism and was committed to reform the church from within. He lived and worked in many places in Europe and expanded his knowledge and gained new insights during his travels. He is buried in Basel, Switzerland.

B Bilateral Agreement

There are many reasons why your home university probably doesn't have an Erasmus Agreement with the ZHAW (e.g. you come from overseas or from

a European country with privatized education system). However, under certain conditions it is still possible to sign a Bilateral Agreement. Contact the staff at your International Office and ask to explore the possibilities.

You won't receive any scholarship, but you wouldn't have to pay any additional tuition fees.

2. Enrolment at the ZHAW

A Fee Paying with Bilateral Agreement

The ZHAW also maintains agreements with partner universities that enable you to study at the ZHAW under the condition that you pay regular tuition fee cost at the ZHAW (CHF 680 per

semester). Whether or not you must also pay tuition fees at your home university depends on the regulations at your university. In any case, an existing agreement between universities facilitates the organisation of your exchange tremendously. With the international exchange coordinator at your

home university, you will write an individual agreement that suits your academic needs. You won't receive a scholarship here. For other financial aid, consult the representative at your International Office.

B Fee Paying without Bilateral Agreement

If your university doesn't maintain any agreement with the ZHAW, there is still the possibility of organizing your study at the ZHAW on your own. When organizing your exchange, you will have to take a lot more responsibility: you

will contact the ZHAW on your own and make an agreement with the ZHAW about the circumstances and regulations under which your exchange can take place. That means that you will have to be very flexible and willing to make some sacrifices. Later on, you and the representative from the International Office at your

home university will work out a learning agreement according to the conditions given by the ZHAW. You will have to pay regular tuition fees at the ZHAW (CHF 680 per semester) and, depending on the regulations of your home institution, perhaps there as well. Plus: you won't receive any scholarship from ZHAW.

3. Regular Studies

If you live abroad and wish to study as a regular student at the ZHAW (with the goal to eventually graduate), there are several things to keep in mind

when applying to the ZHAW. Please read carefully our leaflet for study candidates from abroad: [English Version](#) / [German version](#)

4. Internship

Many students flirt with the possibility of a future career abroad without knowing what it is like to work in a different country. There are several ways to go about testing careers abroad, including doing an internship. Internships enable you to not only live abroad, but also gather professional experience in a field of interest. In Switzerland, most internships are paid, unless you come from a field of study where an internship is obligatory; in that case the internship can count toward college credit.

At the crossroads of European cultures and languages, Switzerland offers opportunities of exchange and cooperation with numerous European countries thanks to its indirect participation in the Leonardo da Vinci program. These internships are an opportunity for young adults in training or

holders of a diploma to gain professional experience abroad and to discover new cultures and languages during 2 to 12 months. [Leonardo internships](#) are open to anyone with European vocational training, post-secondary or university-level education. For traineeships in Switzerland, candidates must be nationals of a country other than Switzerland and receive training in one of the countries participating in the Leonardo program. Traineeships can start during the training (for university student or equivalent) or post-training (for persons holding a vocational, post-secondary or univer-

sity-level diploma for less than a year). The three Leonardo placement offices in Switzerland assist candidates in their search for an in-house traineeship. Services provided are free of charge. Under certain conditions, trainees may profit from a Leonardo grant offered by the Swiss government.

Links

www.studex.ch

http://www.sbf.admin.ch/hm/themen/international_en.html

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc82_en.htm

1. What is ESN

The Erasmus Student Network (<http://www.esn.ch/de>) (ESN) is a European student organisation supporting and developing student exchange. It is composed of over 12.000 members from more than 280 local sections in 32 countries working in Higher Education Institutes (Universities, Polytechnics and University Colleges etc). ESN is organised on a local, national and international level. Our network is in contact with almost 150.000 internationally-minded students. The aims of ESN are to promote the social and personal integration of exchange students. The local ESN sections offer help, guidance and other valuable information to the exchange students hosted at their university. Newcomers

find their way in the new environment easier with the help of ESN and they can utilise their time in the best way to get as much out of their exchange as possible.

info

Main Principles of ESN

- ESN works on behalf of exchange students.
- ESN is committed to improve the social and practical integration of exchange students.
- ESN represents the needs and expectations of exchange students on the local, national and international level.
- ESN provides relevant information about academic exchange programmes and ESN resources.
- ESN works with the reintegration of homecoming students.
- ESN provides relevant information on academic exchange programmes and student mobility.

2. Levels ESN

The International Board consists of a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, a Network Administrator and a regular Board Member. The Board is the executive body of ESN. It can take decisions, except budgetary, strategic, and policy matters. The Board is supervised by CNR and AGM (see next page) while CNR represents AGM during the ESN year. The Council of National Representatives represents AGM during the ESN year. It is composed of a National Representative (NR) from each country. They meet every two months. The Council of National Delegates is an enlarged CNR meeting taking place in September every year. Every country is supposed to send beside the NR two National Delegates to this meeting.

The National Board is responsible for the communication between the sections as well as the communication

with partners and institutions outside ESN. Besides, the National Board cares for the knowledge management, the organisation of National Events and the support of the sections. The National Representative is responsible for the contact between the various ESN chapters in the country and the International level. At the National Platform the members of the different Swiss chapters meet and discuss current topics concerning ESN Switzerland. As a matter of course, these meetings are fun and social parts like

a party on Saturday night are getting their due. It's the time for Swiss ESN members to connect and make new plans.

info

National Events give exchange students (that's you!) the unique opportunity to explore the most interesting places in Switzerland as well as to connect with exchange students from other Swiss universities. National Events take place at several times during the year. Fun is guaranteed, so keep an eye out for them and mark your calendars! Information regarding these events is communicated through your chapter newsletter, as well as through your chapter's homepage and the homepage of ESN Switzerland.

3. International Events

ESN International organises many international events throughout the year. At international events you can meet members of ESN sections from the whole of Europe (and beyond!). The most important event and a highlight in the life of every active ESN member is the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM is held every March. During the AGM, sections from all ESN mem-

ber countries come together to take decisions about the future of the network. A lot of discussions, voting, presentations, excursions and parties take place during this event. At Regional Platforms the section members from a certain region come together in order to share knowledge and to learn about new developments within the network. The Cultural Medley is an an-

nual event in which a section, a city or a country presents itself culturally to the rest of ESN through many exciting events and activities.

4. What the Heck is...

...Buddy System Mentoring?

ESN offers to every exchange student a “Buddy” who shows around the city, introduces the ZHAW, helps with practical matters and is a good friend. The Buddy programme is a great opportunity for exchange students to connect with locals. You can get information about the ESN Buddy System at your host university on the ESN chapter homepage or, of course, you can always just ask the ESN staff passing you in the corridor at the university.

...Tandem?

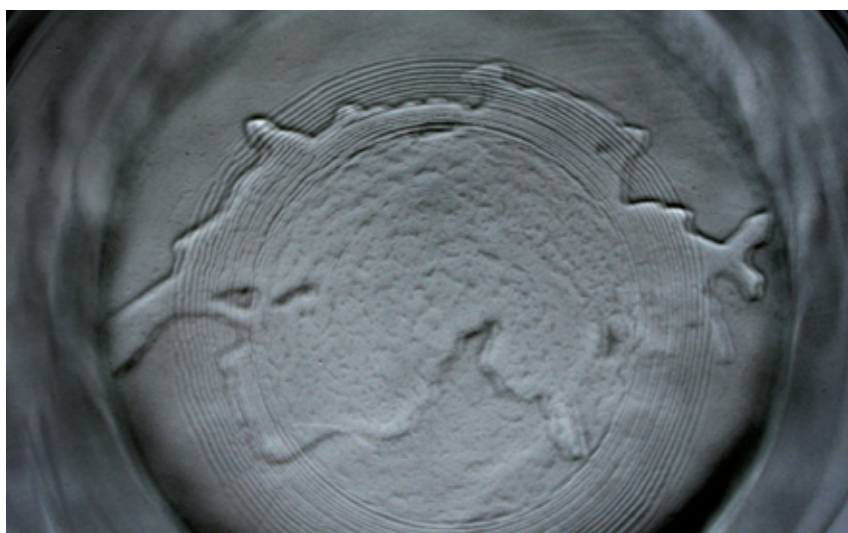
Tandem is a system of learning foreign languages with another student through one on one meetings. It’s a way to improve a foreign language for free, while helping someone learn your language in exchange. You and your partner can choose where to meet and the frequency of your meetings based on your own preferences. It is also an easy way to gain first-hand knowledge about another country. Not from books, but through a person like you.

...the ESN Card?

The ESN card is the magic ticket for many ESN activities. It gives you cheaper access to trips, parties and other activities organised by ESN sections. There are many special deals for ESN card holders. In Lausanne for example you get free entrance into clubs and cheaper drinks with your ESN card. For further details on discounts check your ESN chapter website! And have a look at the discounts from our international partners – check http://esn.org/partners/esncard_partners.php. ESN cardholders can also enjoy the benefits of the online ESN community. If you register your ESN card on the ESN international [homepage](#) you will be able to access information about career opportunities, travels and discounts in the whole of Europe. As an exchange student, you can get an ESN card from the ESN chapter at your host university for a small fee

info

Join the ESN Team! Want to keep in touch with an international community after your exchange experience is over? Then we recommend you the local ESN section when you return to your home university. If there is no ESN section in your city yet, you could found a local section with your friends and other former exchange students.



VI PRACTICAL ISSUES

1. Political System of Switzerland

Switzerland has a strong direct democracy. Therefore, Swiss citizens have quite a lot of influence in the daily political business. They are entitled to vote on referenda (50.000 citizens or parliament to initiate) and initiatives (100.000 citizens to initiate) during the legislature period and to elect the parliament (two chambers) directly every 4 years. As modern Switzerland was founded in 1848, the political structure of the government was to a great extent copied from the American one. The Federal Council (Executive branch) consists of 7 persons. The members are elected by the parliament. The Chairman (our “President”) rotates every year. Legislature is in the hands of the National Council

and the Council of States. The National Council consists of 200 members, representing the Swiss people. Cantons are represented proportionally, each canton has at least one seat.

The Council of States comprises 46 members, representing the cantons. Every canton has 2 seats; half cantons get one seat. The Federal court of Justice is the judicative force.

info

Direct democracy is a form of democracy wherein sovereignty is lodged in the assembly of all people who choose to participate. Depending on the particular system, this assembly might pass executive motions, make laws, elect or dismiss officials and conduct trials.

Links

www.admin.ch
www.parlament.ch
www.bger.ch



2. Public Transport System

Tip

Tickets are usually expensive. Depending on your needs, you might want to buy one of the following passes (they are all issued by the SBB; you can get them at most railway stations): With the Half-Fare Card (“Halbtax”) you only pay half-price on most of the public transportation systems. The card is valid for twelve months from date of purchase. If you are staying in Switzerland for several months and plan to travel longer distances by train from time to time, we highly recommend buying this card; it pays off very quickly. The Day Pass (“Tageskarte”; add-on to the Half-Fare Card) provides you with unlimited travel for one day on railway, boat and postbus lines, as well as on tram and bus networks in most Swiss cities and agglomerations. Track 7 card (“Gleis7”; add-on to the Half-Fare Card) allows you to travel for free after 7 pm. You can only buy this pass if you are between 15 and 25 (you have to buy it for a full year). With this pass you can travel very inexpensively, if you time your trips accordingly.

Public Transportation in Switzerland is generally considered to be good – you can get almost everywhere in the country without a car. Trains and buses generally run on time. Most of the rail infrastructure is maintained and operated by the state-owned SBB. Every medium-size town has a SBB railway station.

Most communities offer some bus connections. A major state-owned provider of interurban bus transportation is the “Postauto.” The cities of Zurich, Basel, Geneva and Berne have their own tramway systems. Further, there are fleets on all big Swiss lakes. Most of the fleets are used for tourism. Many smaller lakes also have boats for the public.



3. Media

A Newspaper

There are many different newspapers in Switzerland in various languages. The “Neue Zürcher Zeitung” (NZZ) is one of the most famous in the German-speaking part of the country, providing mostly objective information and accurate investigations. “Tagesanzeiger” and the francophone “24heures” are other popular newspa-

pers. If you don't want to spent money, you'll find the latest news in German in “Blick am Abend” and “20minuten” which are distributed to commuters at nearly every train station. Both papers are entertaining and only slightly informative. If you consider subscribing to a newspaper: most newspapers offer a test period of four weeks free of charge.

Links

www.blick.ch
www.letemps.ch
www.lecourrier.ch
www.zsz.ch
www.landbote.ch

B Television

Tip

Recently, internet TV is becoming more and more popular. If you don't own a TV set or want to receive a wider range of channels, you can download software from the internet that enables you to receive TV free of charge. One provider of real-TV on your pc or laptop is Zattoo. For further information go to www.zattoo.com/de

National television is largely public and digital; the channels from SF (German), TSR (French) and TSI (Italian) belong to the government. There are some other local / regional channels. News is normally well investigated. With DigitalTV you also receive many foreign TV channels

info

If you own a radio, television, laptop or any other equipment that is assumed to receive, you have to pay reception fees. They are collected by the Billag. For private individuals, the monthly fee is CHF 14.10 for radio reception and CHF 24.40 for television reception. Anyone who prepares for operation or operates equipment which is suitable for receiving radio or television programs without first registering with Billag AG will be punished by a fine of up to CHF 5000. In general WGs pay their Billag bill together. When renting a room, ask if the receiving costs are included in the monthly pay.

like Rai, ORF, France 2, RTL and so on. Don't be worried about missing your favourite shows. SF 2 broadcasts a wide range of American prime time

shows. You can even watch most of the shows in German or, if your German isn't that good yet, watch in English.

4. Services

A Telephone

Tip

It is important to know the telephone numbers for the program administration abroad and in your home country both during business hours and in case of an emergency. One reasonable way to communicate internationally is to purchase an international calling card, available through various providers and companies at home as well as abroad. Another way that is increasingly popular is through internet-based calling.

The largest telephone company of Switzerland is Swisscom. There are always at least one or two phones (sometimes ranks of them) outside post offices and at train stations. Some phone booths still accept coins, but the majority only take Swisscom

phonecards (“taxcards”), available from post offices, many hotels, newsagents, kiosks and train station ticket counters. You can also use credit cards in public phones (Visa, Mastercard, Amex, etc). Before going abroad, check if your housing has a regular telephone number.

Switzerland's largest mobile phone companies are Swisscom, Sunrise and Orange. All three of them provide a nationwide coverage with their networks. There are other providers that use the networks of the above mentioned operators, offering mobile prepaid offers at very good rates. Most of

our exchange students use Yallo or M-Budget Mobile. Just ask your local ESN section for a CHF 5 Yallo SIM-card for free or a refill prepaid card. Before you choose a mobile phone or a subscription, you should check a few offers to see which one fits your needs best – it really depends on how often and in which way you plan to use the phone. One way to investigate what kind of mobile contract is most suitable is the website of comparis.

B Mail

Switzerland has a state-owned postal service, called “die Post”. There are many postal offices throughout the

country. They are usually located in the city centre and/or near the train station. You will also find many yellow mailboxes, where you can drop your letters. The market for parcels is priva-

tised; therefore you have a choice between different companies if you want to send a package.

5. Supermarket

Migros and Coop are the two big players in the Swiss supermarket scene with a good reputation in environmental questions. Have a look at the low-budget-lines in their assortments. Aldi, Denner and Lidl are discounters with a

small product range. There is no official regulation in Switzerland regarding opening hours. In general the stores are open from 8/8.30 am till 6.30/7 pm and on Saturday until 4/6 pm. On Sundays and Monday morn-

ings stores are often closed. You can do some shopping on Sundays only in larger train stations.

6. Electricity and Water

Switzerland uses a three pin plug, but the socket can also take two pin plugs. Adapters can be bought at electronics shops. If you are importing any appliances, ensure that frequency (50Hz) and voltage (230 V) are compatible. In Switzerland, good clean water is not a luxury but the norm. You can drink

sink water and brush your teeth with it. In every apartment you will have a shower and in most of them a bathtub too. In most apartment buildings washing machines and driers are usually in the basement and are shared. If your apartment has a washing machine, note that heating and water

costs are extremely high (you normally pay a flat-rate with the rent: but if you use too much you have to pay more!). Washing days and times are scheduled, and heaven help you if you wash out of turn.

7. Garbage Disposal

In Switzerland there is a charge on every rubbish disposal bag. The “bag-price” varies depending on where you live, but it is everywhere rather high. You can buy garbage disposal bags at every supermarket. Ask the cashier for disposal bags (Abfallsäcke, in Zurich “Züürisäck”). Once a bag is full, you must put it in one of the communal

rubbish containers which are generally placed near your house (in walking distance). Do not put your household garbage in public trash cans: you will be fined. “Pet” bottles and empty batteries are not to be thrown in the garbage, but should be returned to the store. For glass, metal and oil there are recycling points. Ask you landlord

or your roommate(s) where to find the nearest to your house. Cardboard and newspapers can be disposed of on special dates. Bundle them and put them outside/next to your house by the road.



VII LEISURE GREATER AREA ZURICH

As the largest city of Switzerland, Zurich is with its wealth of nightlife an exciting place. You can walk on crowded, multi-ethnic streets, buy a kebab, get a drink after midnight and feel a lived-in urban buzz. There has been a massive explosion in Zurich arts and popular culture expressing itself most tangibly in a host of clubs and a thriving underground dance scene. If you are interested in conventional arts and historical issues, there

are a handful of medieval churches to take in, spectacular art galleries and plenty of independent theatre and art productions to visit.

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Zurich has the most engaging café culture in German-speaking Switzerland. People just love to sit in cafés or bars, chat, and quench their thirst with a Schale (café with milk), a Heissi Schoggi (hot chocolate) or a Panache (beer with sprite). But don't forget that Zurich is an expensive place – even a glass of tap-water can cost CHF 2.

1. Where to Go and What to See

Zurich is home to the Landesmuseum, the largest Swiss history museum, where you can also learn about the various traditions of the cantons. One of Europe's best collections of Asian

art (mainly Indian drawings) can be found at Rietberg Museum. You'll find one of the busiest and best known shopping streets in the world when you walk out of Main Station Zurich:

The Bahnhofstrasse. Here, Prada and Cartier have their shops (no wonder, since this street is the 8th most expensive street of the world). Naturally, half of the pedestrians walking this street are tourists. A stone's throw (over the Limmatbrücke) away is the Niederdorf, the old town of Zurich. This part of town offers beautiful alleys and cobbled streets full of cafés and small shops. Starting at Central it runs until Bellevue next to the river Limmat (Limmatquai) which leads to the Lake of Zurich. The heart of the old town is the Lindenhof on the top of the hill. It once was location to a Roman fort, but nowadays is a tourist attraction that affords a magnificent view of the city. Especially during summer, the lake is a beautiful place to spend the evening or the weekend. Starting from Bellevue, the boardwalk goes for about three kilometres along the lake towards Tiefenbrunnen. About halfway from Bellevue there is a meadow called Blatterwiese where you will find thousands of people on a sunny day.



Winterthur's main draw is perhaps its excellent museums; these aside, the pedestrian-friendly old town has some charm once you get off the main shopping streets – the elegant medieval city church, for example. You can enjoy the atmosphere in one of the many street cafés. If you have some extra time, visit Sulzer-Areal district, where brick-built factories are slowly being reclaimed as atmospheric theatre spaces, bars and skating arenas. Visit the Technorama, the Swiss Science Centre, and let yourself get carried away into the world of science. There,

not only can you watch spectacular phenomena, but you are invited to touch, see, hear and do science yourself. Near Winterthur there are four castles, of which three can be visited. Castle Kyburg is 7 km south of Winterthur. Dating from the tenth and eleventh centuries, it can be seen on a hilltop above the Töss river and offers plenty of opportunity for exploration, both inside the castle walls and in the surrounding countryside. In early August, the castle hosts a week of chamber music. Schloss Mörsburg is 6km northeast of town, near Stadel and

only accessible by car (via Sulz). With a lovely Romanesque chapel and excavated ramparts, the thirteenth-century castle also contains a museum of the Historical Society of Winterthur, with ceramics, handicrafts and weapons on show. Schloss Hegi is easiest to get to, 3km east of town, but is less engaging; more of a moated mansion than a castle, it dates from the fifteenth century and has much of its interior preserved. It also currently houses the city's hostel. The fourth stately home is the Wülflingen Castle, a stout sixteenth-century country house 4km

northwest of town, now a conference centre and pricey traditional restaurant. Further, Europe's largest waterfall, Rhine Falls is only 30 minutes away from Winterthur.

2. Culture, Arts and Literature

Zurich's theatre, Schauspielhaus is one of the most important theatres in the German speaking part of Europe. It once was home to Emigrants like Bertolt Brecht or Thomas Mann and World-Première-Theater for Max Frisch, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Botho Strauss or Nobel-Prize winner Elfriede Jelinek. Students can get really cheap last minute tickets (10 minutes before the show) if they show their Campus Card. One of the most exciting places to see a play is the Fabriktheater at the Rote Fabrik, an old silk factory converted to a centre of youth culture and art in the 80's. With theatre productions, concerts, expositions, a club and a restaurant it is one of the most exciting places in Zurich. As for films, there are two art-house cinemas with daily changing programmes of retrospectives and experimental movies from around the world: Xenix and

Filmpodium. Xenix, is a small art house cinema with a busy beer garden in summer ("ufem chiis"), and is a popular choice for students, bohemians, and bicycle messengers. Another good alternative to city-centre cinemas (Kitag) showing Hollywood releases is the arthouse movie theatre Riffraff with its cinema bar attracting a largely alternative crowd. The Zurich Opera house shows frequently changing productions of world famous operas. Just like at the Schauspielhaus, students get a big last-minute discounts (the best category costs 45 CHF for students). The Grossmunster sometimes has organ concerts in the evenings. Check the front door for notices. If you love hearing small bands live, visit El Lokal, which is bar, restaurant, and intimate gig venue all in one and attracts an alternative crowd. Or try out the Helsinki bar or La Catrina!

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Yodelling (the voice rapidly and repeatedly changes from the vocal chest register to the head register) was probably developed in the Swiss Alps as a means of communication between mountain peaks and became later part of the region's traditional music. Choral Singing also has a long tradition and is still popular with young people in the countryside. The instrument Schwyzerörgeli is a type of diatonic button accordion used in Swiss folk music. The Alphorn is a wind instrument, consisting of a natural wooden horn of conical bore, having a cup-shaped mouthpiece. Similar horns can be seen in other mountainous regions.



3. Sports and Outdoor Activities

Since Switzerland is famous for its snowy mountains you definitely have to go skiing. The easiest way is to go by train. During the winter months, you can buy a snow'n'rail ticket (train & ski pass) at the Main Station for a day trip: out in the morning, back in the evening. Flumserberg is the closest large ski-resort, popular with people from Zurich, with a good range of runs for beginners and experts. In summer, you can get free bikes, longboards and skates at several stops throughout the city of Zurich. On Monday evenings, skaters gather for a ride. If you have an SBB or a ZVV ticket, you can go on a boat trip on the lake Zurich for free.



Tip

The mountainous terrain of Switzerland is responsible for spectacular differences in temperature among different regions. It is very common that a cold, cloudy and rainy landscape can change to a beautiful clear blue sky with hot sun in just a few minutes. Again: a little research on what the weather in Switzerland is like will go a long way. During the winter, warm clothing, a waterproof jacket and sensible shoes are essential! When you pack, ask yourself what your travel plans and activities during your stay abroad could look like and how the climate and weather will affect them. A little planning ahead will save you from having to buy a new wardrobe or expensive extras (like mountain shoes!). You can get a detailed weather report online.



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For members of the ZHAW free training sessions, low-price special courses and various sports events are organised in cooperation with the Sports Department of the City of Winterthur and the VSZHAW. Students of the ZHAW can also join the ASVZ (Akademischer Sportverband Zurich). For a fee of CHF 25.- per semester a wide range of sport activities are offered at various locations in Zurich.

4. Events and other Musts

Sächsilüüte is a traditional spring Holiday in Zurich, celebrated in its current form since 1904. A parade of "Zünfte" (guilds) marches through the city of Zurich. The parade ends at its climax by burning the winter in form of a "Böög" (a giant snowman prepared with explosives) on the Sächilüütewiese. 1st August is the Swiss National Day. Celebrations are carried out in

many cities and towns in the evenings and fireworks are launched at night. Watch them over the lake, or if you're experienced with safely launching fireworks yourself, you can buy them in the days leading up to the national holiday and have fun. One of Europe's largest open air techno raves is the Streetparade. For this event trucks function once a year as mobile sound

systems („Love mobiles“), driving along the lake side, starting from the east at Utoquai and ending at the west at Hafen Enge. Further festivals are the Zürich Film Festival, where Hollywood films as well as smaller productions are screened. In summer, many multi-cultural street festivals take place in Zurich: the Langstrassenfest, the Caliente, to which Latino stars

from all over the world are invited to perform or the [African integration](#).

The best and most popular of Winterthur's annual events is the [Albani-fäscht](#), a weekend of live rock music and jazz with a huge funfair held in late June. The [Kyburgiade](#) is a week-long series of chamber music concerts held

in early August in the romantic setting of Kyburg castle. At the [Musikfestwochen](#), in late August and early September, Winterthur's Old Town is taken over for live music of all kinds in the street and bars. In May, the [Eschenberg-Schwinget](#), a folksy festival of traditional wrestling is held in a nearby meadow, and Jodlersonntag, Yodel-

ling Sunday, takes place. Also in May, Whitsun is celebrated in Winterthur in an unusual fashion with [Afro-Pfingsten](#), a kind of mini-carnival of African music and food.

5. Nightlife

Go club-hopping! Zurich has proportionately the largest number of clubs per capita in Europe. To know what's going on, visit the website [usgang.ch](#) or [tillate.ch](#). On the website [students.ch](#) you will find a party agenda with extra "party for students" marked. For electronic music lovers, Zurich offers for example the [Rohstofflager](#), the [Hive Club](#) or the [Zukunft](#). For rock and Indie sound, visit [Abart](#) or [Helsinki](#). Alternative sounds (everything from guitar-based pop to the deepest drum'n'bass) you get at [Dynamo](#). Then: a really nice Jazz club called [Moods](#) is located in the Schiffbau-complex near Escher-Wyss-Platz. If you prefer bouncing to mainstream sound, go to [Xtra](#) or [Mascotte](#). For the glamour factor, [Kaufleuten](#) and [St. Germain](#) will do it. Both are fancy clubs and offer good excuses (if you need one) to get dressed up and spend your money on overpriced drinks.

As for Winterthur, nightlife can be surprisingly good too, with all-night bars around the station, lively music bars on Neumarkt, some rougher student dives along [Technikumstrasse](#) and a handful of weekend dance clubs. [Albani](#) is a smallish old town bar with a quality programme of DJs and live music – previous headliners include Pearl Jam and

Sheryl Crow. Or Gotthard, Switzerland's first-ever 24-hour bar, a young, friendly joint which is a peaceful café during the day; at night it attracts a few lowlifes but avoids the sleaze of its [Bahnhofplatz](#) neighbours. A great night out can be had at [Kraftfeld](#), an alternative artists' community featuring experimental drum'n'bass, plus occasional concerts, films and happenings. For all Irish who

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Zurich has a thriving gay and lesbian scene, probably the best established and most diverse in the country. The hotel [Goldenes Schwert](#) is the only hotel to make a selling point of its gay- and lesbian-friendliness. Handily enough, it occupies the same building as [T&M](#) and [Aaah](#). The huge [Barfüsser](#) is Europe's longest-running gay bar, established in 1956 and embracing all scenes, while [Cranberry](#) is a more relaxed, talkative meeting place for non-scene types. Lesbians must rely on a smaller scene, focused around the [Venus](#) women-only bar, and the Thursday women-only nights at the [Xenix](#) bar and cinema. [Tabu](#) (Josefstr. 142) is a lesbian-owned café-bar that attracts a lot of lesbian and gay customers.

6. Special Treats in the City of Zurich

Tip

If you are a gourmand or just love to go out for food, visit the website [www.gratisessen.ch](#), a restaurant guide to Zurich's culinary side. Besides addresses and tips, you can purchase a coupon booklet with coupons for 47 special restaurants. Spend the coupons dining out with a friend. The coupons can sometimes cover the entire cost of the cheaper menu items, and you'll dine for free!

[Corazón](#) Zähringerplatz 11, a Spanish themed bar with a good selection of wines and excellent service. Frequenting by students. Location near university Zurich, ETH as well as the ZB (Central Library) where a lot of students study.

[Hiltl](#) Sihlstrasse 28 vegetarian food. In-place.

[Bohemia](#), Kreuzplatz. Trendy place popular for its coffee during the day and an even better nightlife. Usually a popular place for college students.

[Spheres](#) Book store and restaurant in one. Wireless internet.

[Plüsch](#) Aemtlerstrasse 16, cafe bar and lounge.

[Mama Africa](#) Heinrichstrasse 239.

[Bierhalle Wolf](#) Limmatquai 132 (At the northern end of the old-town, facing the river). A lively beer hall, often with live music. In addition to the beer selection, they serve great local food.

[Rosso](#) Geroldstrasse 31. Best Pizzeria in town. In the evenings reservations are required!

[Outback Lodge](#) Bahnhof Stadelhofen. Australian in theme, drinks and food, but also well visited by the locals.

[Bubu](#) Kasernenstrasse 2. Former tramstation, excellent place for a Sunday brunch right by the Sihl!

[Widder](#) Metzggasse 9. Subculture Old Town café-bar, with long wooden tables and loud music. Exceptionally good food, well prepared and in massive portions.

VIII COMING HOME

1. Final Steps

At the end of your stay abroad or even after arriving back home, your academic advisor will be able to tell you if your credits obtained while studying abroad will transfer properly. He or she will also ask you to fill in or sign some final forms, such as the confirmation that you received your scholarship. Most departments at the ZHAW ask their students to write a short summary about their stay abroad. Even

though you might not feel like it, try to write an authentic piece of what your exchange was like. It will serve other students as orientation at some later point. Now is the time to plan for your upcoming semester at home: register for the courses you want to take and make sure to pay tuition fees. In some cases, studying abroad affects the point of view of a student more than anticipated and may lead him to con-

sider quitting current studies or switching to another subject. If you are reconsidering your studies to this degree, the best way to proceed is by talking to your academic advisor. He or she will be able to discuss options with you and help you define your future academic path.

2. Adaptation at Home

After being integrated into a culture, it might be difficult for exchange students to readapt to their own culture. He or she might be much more critical towards what is normal in his or her culture. While abroad, some people tend to idealize their home country yet discover after returning home, that reality is somewhat different. Many people ex-

pect total familiarity at home, but have to discover that things are different from how they were at departure. Under such circumstances, the foreign culture is viewed in a more favourable light. Furthermore, personal relationships have changed during the time away. One should not necessarily expect to be able to pick up from exactly where they

left. A so-called “Reverse culture shock” is as much a personal and challenging experience as cultural shock is. Like culture shock, its severity may range from feeling a little depressed to strong disapproval, disillusionment and cynicism.

3. Next International Steps

Even though your exchange at the ZHAW is over, you still want to stay in contact with new friends or other students from the ZHAW. You might even consider working in Switzerland after your degree, or at least want to work in a bilingual environment. After gradua-

tion, the personal and professional growth you underwent while abroad will show and, if you are looking for a job in an international environment or simply want to work abroad, you will certainly benefit from it. With the right presentation of your international experience,

you will be able so impress almost any employer. If you enjoyed studying at the ZHAW and would like to return for another semester, consider returning as a post-graduate. Or look for an internship in Zurich. If you still have to study for a while, but want to continue your international experience from at home you can join an international students’ organization to remain involved in the international community. As you are now aware of the challenges that come from studying abroad, you are able to help future exchange students by telling them about your own experiences at the ZHAW.



IX CONTACT ADDRESSES AND LINKS

ZHAW

Official Homepage	http://www.zhaw.ch (German) http://www.zhaw.ch/en (English)
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International Affairs Unit	http://www.zhaw.ch/international
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International Offices in the Schools

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School of Health Professions	Technikumstrasse 71 CH-8400 Winterthur Tel. +41 58 934 63 05 Contact: Marianne Bauer E-Mail: marianne.bauer@zhaw.ch Website
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School of Applied Linguistics	Theaterstrasse 15 c CH-8401 Winterthur Tel. +41 52 260 60 62 Contact: Anita Lendenmann E-Mail: anita.lendenmann@zhaw.ch Website
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School of Social Work	Auenstrasse 4 CH-8600 Dübendorf 1 Tel. +41 58 934 88 16 Contact: Lisa Müller E-Mail : lisa.mueller@zhaw.ch Website
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Further documents on studying abroad

Study in Europe	http://www.study-in-europe.org
Studying in Switzerland	http://www.eda.admin.ch/washington/Studying_in_Switzerland
Federal Commission for Scholarships for International Students	http://www.sbf.admin.ch/htm/themen/bildung/stipendien/eskas_en.html
Educa – The Swiss Education Server	http://www.educa.ch/dyn/14.asp
Erasmus Student Network	http://www.esn.ch/winterthur
AIESEC	http://www.aiesec.org/cms/aiesec/AI/Western%20Europe%20and%20North%20America/SWITZERLAND/AIESEC%20WINTERTHUR/index.html
Dialang – Online Language Test	http://www.dialang.org

Federal and Cantonal Institutions

State Secretariat for Education and Research (SBF)	http://www.sbf.admin.ch
Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET)	http://www.bbt.admin.ch
Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK)	http://www.edk.ch
Rector's Conference of Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (KFH)	http://www.kfh.ch
Information and Coordination Desk Erasmus Switzerland (IKES)	http://www.crus.ch/information-programme/erasmus.html?no_cache=1&L=2
Office of Migration of the Canton of Zurich	http://www.ma.zh.ch/internet/ds/ma/de/home.html