



## Guidelines for Incoming exchange students in the **Autumn** semester 2024/25

Updated 9 April 2024

### PRIMARY CONTACT FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS:

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### ACADEMIC CALENDAR Autumn 2024

<b>Bachelor level calendar:</b>	
<b>AUTUMN Orientation sessions mandatory</b>	29/08-30/08/2024 (on-campus)
<b>Module 1</b> (classes + exams)	02/09/24-11/10/24
<b>Module 2</b> (classes + exams)	14/10/24-22/11/24
<b>Module 3</b> (classes + exams)	25/11/24-17/01/25
<b>SPRING Orientation day mandatory</b>	
Module 4 (classes + exams)	17/01/25 (on-campus)
Module 5 (classes + exams)	20/01/25-28/03/25
Module 6 (classes + exams)	03/03/25-12/04/25
Module 6 (classes + exams)	14/04/25-23/05/24
<b>Closing bachelor level exchange semester - departure</b>	<b>26/05/25-30/05/25</b>
<b>Masters level calendar:</b>	
<b>Semester 1 / LLM Introductory month</b> <i>Foundation Course / Legal Research / Legal English</i> (each subject 3 ECTS)	<b>05/09/24-27/09/24</b> half of class sessions take place in-person on-campus, the other half – online, includes evenings and one Saturday per month It is possible for Erasmus students to take IntroMonth courses
<b>Semester 1 / two study periods</b> Course classes + exams take place Courses <b>up to 12 ECTS</b> available for exchange students not to risk class overlaps. If student takes Introductory month's subjects, then additional ECTS.	<b>03/10/24-31/10/24</b> and <b>07/11/24-16/12/24</b> half of class sessions in each course take place in-person on-campus, the other half – online, includes evenings and one Saturday per month.
<b>Semester 2 / three study periods</b> Course classes + exams take place Courses <b>up to 18 ECTS</b> available in Semester 2 on Masters level for exchange students not to risk class overlaps.	<b>09/01/25-31/01/25</b> and <b>06/02/25-28/02/25,</b> and <b>06/03/25-28/03/25</b> half of class sessions in each course take place in-person on-campus, the other half – online, includes evenings and one Saturday per month.

## ERASMUS student ONLINE REGISTRATION:

**After your nomination, please register online from 1 April till 1 June.** Registration is open only for students planning to study in the Autumn semester or Full academic year 2024/25, and only if you have been officially nominated by your university to RGSL. You can proceed with your

from **1 April till 1 June** application [online](#)

Attachments to online application:

- mandatory - **academic transcript in English** from your home university
- mandatory - copy of **passport or EU national ID card**,
- mandatory - **official style photograph** - passport size, this will be used for printing your student ID and library card at RGSL, and for student group lists, make sure to choose a high quality, official style picture,
  
- **language requirements:** we do not require Erasmus students to submit any English language test, because we trust your university selection procedure. Recommended minimum level is B2. We **strongly advise** you to **strengthen your legal English** language skills – both written and oral – before the arrival.

## ACCEPTANCE LETTER

Acceptance letter as e-mail message will be sent by 15 June latest.

## VISA / IMMIGRATION

If you are not a citizen or resident of EU/EEA country and will need Latvian visa to enter the country, please contact **by 15 May** RGSL ERASMUS coordinator [ulla@rgsl.edu.lv](mailto:ulla@rgsl.edu.lv) to consult individually on further documentation and steps for processing immigration !!!

Students who need to apply for Latvian entry visa, must obtain a **signed Learning Agreement** beforehand, and have to book accommodation to obtain residence address in Riga.

## ORIENTATION DAYS

- ❖ Orientation days (mandatory) for 1st semester exchange students are planned for **29-30 August**. The format: in-class on-campus.
- ❖ Exception: If you plan to start studies only in October with Masters level courses that begin after “LLM Introductory Month of September”, brief individual or small-group orientation session will be organized at the beginning of October.

*Students should bring **laptop / tablet/ ipad** to the orientation session in order to access study portal and e-systems used at RGSL. Smart phone is not sufficient.*

The study process is **highly intensive** from the very beginning of study period/module.

**Orientation days** are aimed at introducing incoming students with the study process, academic requirements and administrative procedures, and to settle practical matters. During the first days student Buddies will also provide assistance, if needed, in obtaining Riga city public transportation e-card for student discount.

## Courses and Online Learning Agreement

RGSL kindly asks **to wait with selection of courses** and preparation of learning agreements **until June** when updated yearly course lists 2024/25 will be published [on the website](#) - we expect changes in course offer in comparison to Autumn 2023, and the yearly programme is in the approval process.

- ❖ Note that registration as an exchange student with RGSL (online application deadline by 1st June) requires different documents and can be done without submission of Learning Agreement.

RGSL uses Online Learning Agreement and signs incoming student learning agreements **digitally** through 'Erasmus Without Paper' dashboard e-system. Ask your home exchange coordinator for advice. Learning agreements at RGSL will not be printed, stamped or signed on paper (exception if student requires immigration visa).

### Data for Online Learning Agreement:

Rīgas Juridiskā augstskola (Riga Graduate School of Law)

Erasmus code: LV RIGA34

Contact / responsible person Ulla Zumente-Steele, Erasmus coordinator

Email [ulla@rgsl.edu.lv](mailto:ulla@rgsl.edu.lv)

**Note that your OLA is not yet actual registration for courses at RGSL.** That will be done just before each 6-week study module by the study department staff (Erasmus coordinator will send a short questionnaire before each module). By mid-August RGSL will ask all incoming students to inform about their planned arrival dates and study Module 1 courses **via special pre-arrival online questionnaire**.

## How to choose Bachelor level courses

Updated Bachelor "Law & Diplomacy" and "Law & Business" **yearly course** lists will become available [on the website](#) by June. However, the individual class schedules at RGSL are finalized approximately 2 weeks before classes begin. Therefore, in order **to reduce risks of class overlaps** – using updated course lists in June, we kindly ask to follow instruction steps for course selection.

**When choosing Bachelor courses**, and **to avoid class overlaps** with other subjects, we suggest to:

- 1) stay during each 6-week module with **one study programme only** - either Law and Business, or Law and Diplomacy,
- 2) look for courses within **each particular module** (6-week study period)

<b>Module 1</b> (classes + exams)	02/09/24-11/10/24
<b>Module 2</b> (classes + exams)	14/10/24-22/11/24
<b>Module 3</b> (classes + exams)	25/11/24-17/01/25

- 3) choose **one study year within that particular 6-week module** (Y2 or Y3), it is possible to choose Y2 "mandatory" subjects in Module 1 and then switch to Y3 subjects in Module 2 or Module 3.
- 4) from the list of "B Restrictive Elective" courses **limitation is only one** subject per module because B course student groups have limited number of seats, (RGSL full

degree students also can take only one subject during each 6-weeks from this category). In addition, B category course classes are scheduled in parallel.

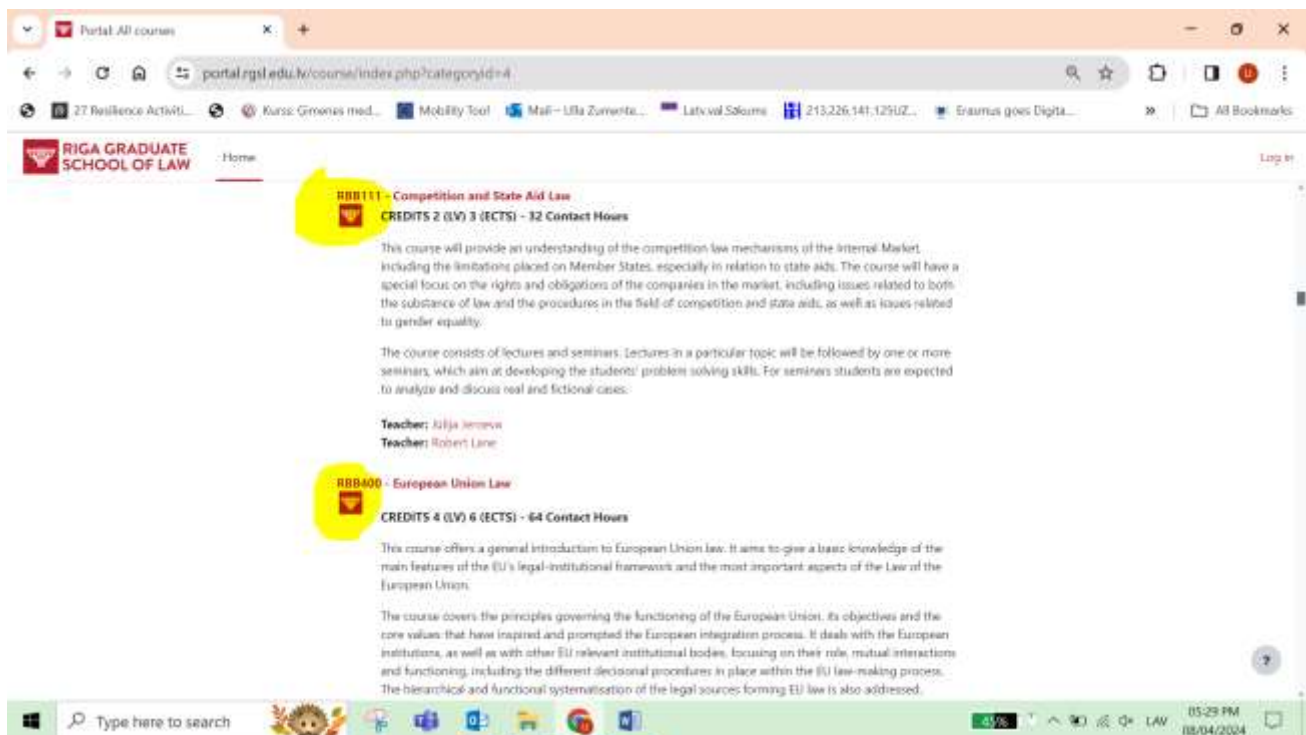
- 5) we do not advise exchange students to take Y1 classes, unless absolutely necessary for learning agreement, as Y1 schedules run in parallel with Y2, Y3 mandatory and B elective classes.
- 6) final exams take place at the end of each module.

Once you will have made for yourself a list of courses of interest, individual **course outlines** (descriptions) can be viewed without login on the study portal [here](#) (Bachelor) or [here](#) (Masters).

### ATTENTION:

**courses on the study portal are not reflecting semesters or 6-week study periods. You will need to first have a yearly course lists (updates in June), choose subjects of interest, and then go to study portal for detailed outline.**

Click on the **logo icon** by each specific course to access an outline in PDF file. If you do not find a course outline, it is in the process of being developed (as a new course), or updated, reviewed and will become available before module begins.



### Exams

Each professor sets the requirements for passing the course, exams can be written or oral, a combination of mid-term exam and final exam, some courses have mandatory seminars and presentations. Exam formats vary from a 2-hour closed-book in-class exam, or open book take-home assignment, essay or online quizz. This is reflected in the course outline.

## GRADING SYSTEM IN LATVIA; COMPARISON WITH ECTS GRADE

Latvian grade	Meaning	ECTS grade
10	with distinction	A
9	excellent	A
8	very good	B
7	good	C
6	almost good	D
5	satisfactory	E
4	almost satisfactory ( <i>the minimum passing grade</i> )	E/FX
3-1	unsatisfactory	FAIL

## ACCOMMODATION

All students have to **find their own accommodation**, as RGSL does not have its own student housing. From the feedback of previous exchange and full-degree international students we have learned that the most preferred option is to „team-up” with other international students mainly via Facebook to rent an apartment in the city. Feel free to ask RGSL Erasmus coordinator about the location and proximity of your chosen housing address.

### Useful contacts for searching accommodation – based on student feedback:

- **Highly praised** for a number of years by RGSL Erasmus students are **student co-living residences** on Terbatas street, Stabu street and now also a new place on Miera street. Contacts: <https://coliving-residences.com/> Students have reported very positive feedback.
- **Valdemara Residence** <https://www.facebook.com/valdemararesidence/> - they offer shared student rooms for affordable prices, great central location, 10-minute walking distance from RGSL, exchange students have given rather positive feedback.
- **Apartments on Brivibas street 57 (City center)**. Contact person: Dace Gerasimova +371 25551441 (also Whatsapp). You have to join FB group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/821414014625602/>
- **Appeltofft-Invest** [www.stabu16.lv](http://www.stabu16.lv) RGSL students have reported renting individual rooms, however, conditions of rooms vary, so ask for details if you are booking these. General costs ~EUR 300+ with all utilities included. Contact person **Liene Jaudzema**, e-mail [appeltofftinvest@gmail.com](mailto:appeltofftinvest@gmail.com)
- **“Duck Republik”** student hotel <https://duckrepublik.eu/offer/special-offer/> this is **much farther away from the city center part where RGSL is located**, you will need to take public transportation for about 25 minutes (switch 2 trolley buses), but in the past semesters international students reported good conditions and good satisfaction with the place. They opened a few years ago, offer single and shared rooms. Feedback from students has always been quite good, but the strongest disadvantage is the distance from RGSL and the neighbourhood area where it is located.

**Housing costs** in the Old Town Riga will be generally higher than in the rest of central Riga. Shared flats and student rooms outside the Old Town are estimated on average EUR 300-400 per month for a private room (including heating costs, and the internet). **Always, always check whether the utilities - water, electricity and especially heating in the winter season** are included in the price or separate, and how much the cost is in the winter. In some buildings central heating can increase the cost by more than 30-40% in winter months. Flats further away from the centre will have lower prices but then you have to factor in time for commuting.

**Living costs:** the cost for food and daily supplies are estimated at a minimum ~ EUR 300-350 per month. For travel, cultural events, entertainment you will need additional finances.

**Public transportation (city bus, tram and trolley-bus):** upon arrival in Riga, students will be able to apply for student transportation e-card and buy monthly pass with student discount (EUR 15,00 per month unlimited rides on city buses, trams and trolley-buses). **Taxi Bolt** is available as well.

### **IMPORTANT - MEDICAL INSURANCE**

Incoming exchange students **must have the European Health Insurance Card** and/or private health insurance to cover emergency medical expenses during study period in Latvia. Additional **travel and accident insurance** with broader coverage is **strongly recommended**. If you need to visit a doctor in Riga, the cost will be around EUR 30-40 per visit. In addition, any tests (blood test, for example) is at additional cost. Same with dentistry services. In general, there are no student discounts for medical services in Latvia, and no student clinics or student hospitals.

### **STUDENT BUDDY NETWORK AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

Your name and e-mail address will be shared with RGSL Student Association's Board, in order for their coordinator of international and exchange students be able to offer you a "**Buddy network support**", social and practical assistance. You will be contacted by the student representatives with an invitation to join social media groups for RGSL exchange students. This group can also be used as a channel to search for available housing and „team-up” as room-mates. RGSL Student Association organizes regular cultural, tourist and social events, and engages incoming students in the student social life.

### **OTHER USEFUL INFO SOURCES:**

- **Erasmus Student Network** in Riga: [ESN Riga | Facebook](#) or their IG account (great opportunity to follow events, including for student trips in Latvia and abroad, to meet other exchange students in Riga)
- Study in Latvia - <http://www.studyinlatvia.lv/>
- ISIC card <http://isic.lv/en>

*We look forward to welcoming you at RGSL! Stay in touch and let us know of any questions that arise!*