SOMSAS Student User Manual
Overseas Short Term Programs

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What is SOMSAS?

SOMSAS (Student Outbound Mobility Subject Approval System) is an online system that allows study plan applications for outbound exchange and overseas short-term programs to be entered, submitted and approved for credit electronically. This system takes the place of the previous paper-based 'Outbound Exchange Study Plan' and 'Overseas Short Program Form' (Sections 1C and 1D).
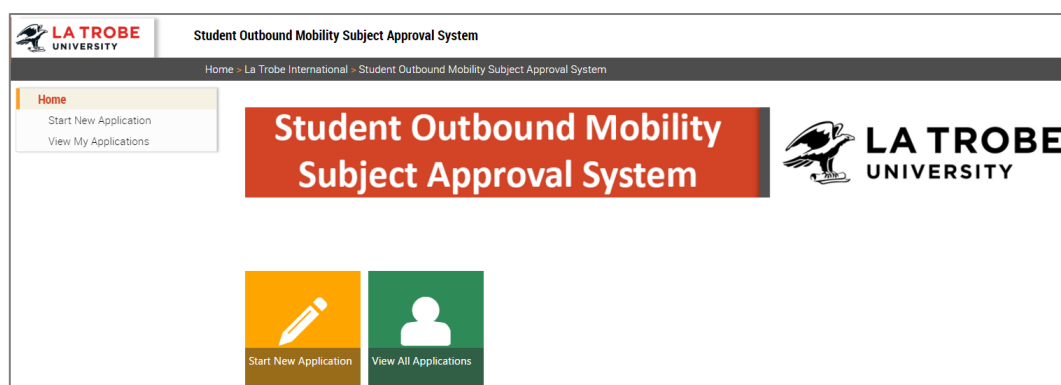
The system automatically allocates applications to the appropriate College Client Services team who can either update the application or reallocate to Course/ Discipline Coordinators for review and approval. The progress of the application can be monitored by the student and La Trobe Abroad, and processes have been built in to facilitate timely review and approval.

The system is accessible at **https://uniforms.latrobe.edu.au/sites/lti/somsas**. Students can access SOMSAS with their normal La Trobe login and password, and neither will be needed if you are already logged into the La Trobe network. Students can also access SOMSAS from any computer with an internet connection. Please note SOMSAS has not been designed to work on mobile devices.

Create a New Application

Login to SOMSAS via short-term program 'apply' website **http://latrobe.edu.au/students/exchange/short-programs/apply**, or via **https://uniforms.latrobe.edu.au/sites/lti/somsas**

Click the Start New Application button.

Your personal information and College will automatically populate. Select the **Application Type** "Short Term Program (STP)"**.**

SHORT TERM PROGRAM

Refers to an overseas program equivalent to less than 1 La Trobe semester – usually 2-6 weeks in length, or less than 45 LTU credit points.
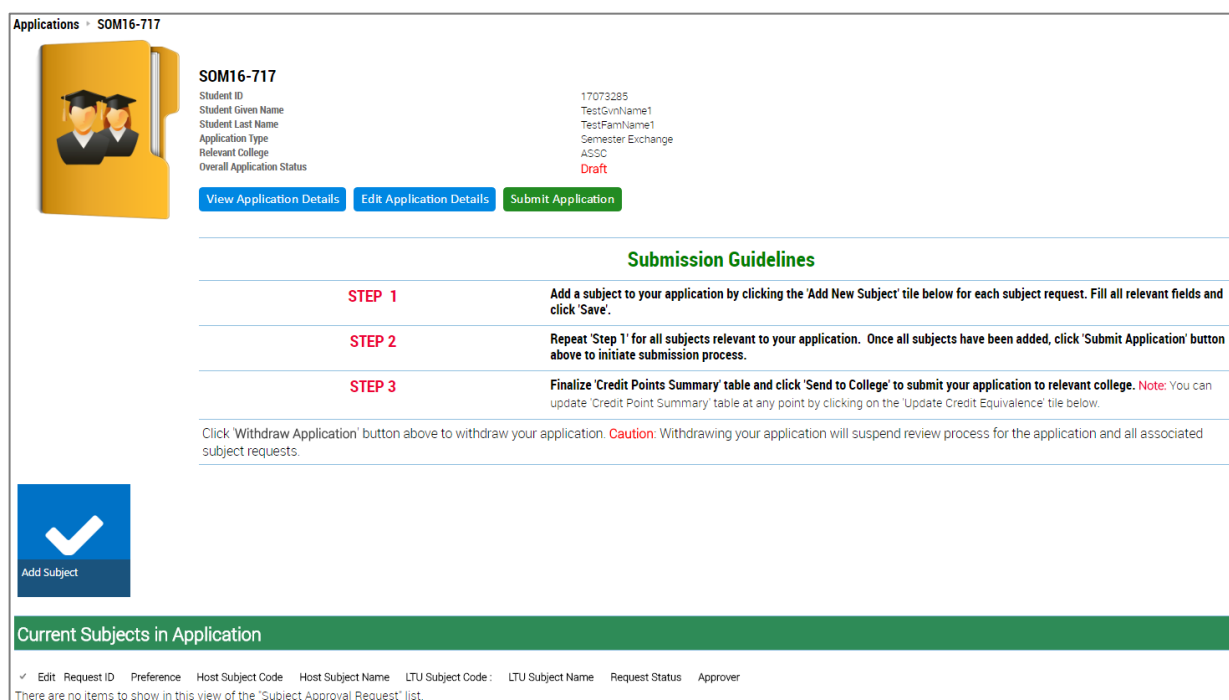
- Select the **STP Start date** – the date the short term program commences

- Select the **STP Finish date** – the date the short term program ends

- *Note*: Ensure you select the start and end dates as specified by the program provider. The start and finish dates cannot be amended after saving.

Add Subjects to Your Application

The main SOMSAS page enables students to add subjects to the host institution/ program provider, monitor the progress of their application and once approved, print the required **Study Plan** and **Credit Equivalence Report**.

The **Submission Guidelines** are designed to assist students through the application process. As students add subjects to their application these appear in the **Current Subjects in Application** section.

To begin adding subjects to your application, click the blue **Add Subject** button. The **New Subject** screen will open, and this enables you to add the **Host Institution Details** and complete the **Subject Details**.

HOST INSTITUTION DETAILS

Select your **Host Institution** from the drop down list.

- Students will only be able to see **Host Institutions** relevant to the **Application Type** (Semester Exchange or Short-Term Program).

- The **Host Country** will automatically populate for most **Host Institutions**. If this does not occur for your selected **Host Institution,** select the relevant **Host Country** from the drop down list.

  - *Note:* If your program involves study in more than one country, please select one of the countries and list all other countries on the Overseas Short Program (OSP) Form.

- The **Host** Institution 'Other' is available for <u>Short-Term Programs only</u>.

For Short-Term Program applications where 'Other' is selected for the **Host Institution**, additional steps may need to be completed as outlined below.

- An information box will appear advising you of the requirement to complete and submit the **Non-vetted Programs Checklist** as part of your Study Plan application in SOMSAS. This is mandatory (except for La Trobe Study tours, PhD programs or SHE College organised clinical placements), and must be accompanied by a written statement addressing each of the items on the checklist.
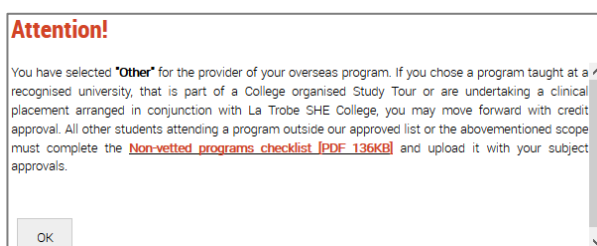

- The **Host Institution** text box will appear, and this is where you will type the name of the **Host Institution** or Program Provider

- The **Attached File?** field will appear. If you intend to attach your completed checklist and statement now before you begin working on your application, select 'Yes'. If you will attach these at a later stage, select 'No' and don't forget to complete this later!

  - *Note:* Assessment of your study plan application in SOMSAS will not be completed until the **Non-vetted Programs Checklist** and supporting written statement are provided. Note these documents are only required where a student has selected 'Other' for the **Host Institution**, and does not meet one of the exceptions noted above.

- To attach the **Non-vetted Programs Checklist** use the **Attach File** button from the 'Edit' ribbon at the top of the page. This can be done before or after the application is submitted

Partner / Independent Short Programs

- Students undertaking a short program at a La Trobe University exchange partner university, or through one of the approved providers listed on our website should select the name of the relevant institution or program provider for the **Host Institution**.

La Trobe Study Tour

- Students undertaking a La Trobe **Study Tour** (a La Trobe subject taught at one or more overseas locations) should select **La Trobe University led Study Tour/ Overseas Program** as the **Host Institution**

Clinical Placement

- Students undertaking a **Clinical Placement** arranged in conjunction with the La Trobe SHE College should select the relevant **Host Institution** (this will be a host university, organisation or clinic) if listed. If the **Host Institution** is not listed, please select 'Other' and type the name of the host university, organisation or clinic in the **Host Institution** text box

Internships
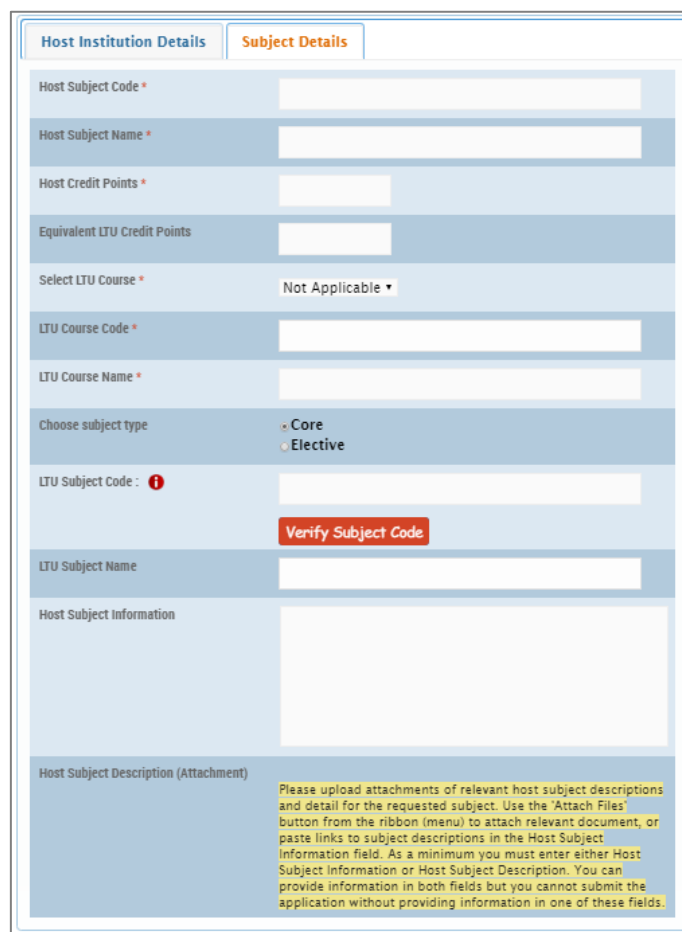
- Students undertaking an Internship/placement that is not arranged in conjunction with the La Trobe Abroad providers on our website should select 'Other' and type the name of the host organisation or company in the **Host Institution** text box.

PhD Students

- Postgraduate Research (Masters or PhD) students undertaking a program overseas that wish to apply for a mobility grant, and have reviewed the requirements on the Short Program website should select **Overseas PG Research Experience (PhD or Masters)**. This might relate to research overseas, presenting at a conference or other similar activity.

SUBJECT DETAILS

Once you have completed your **Host Institution Details**, click the **Subject Details** tab.

- Enter the Host Subject Code, Host Subject Name, and Host Credit Points for the first subject.

  o If the **Host Subject** you wish to take has only a **Code** or a **Name** enter this into both fields.

- Enter the Equivalent LTU Credit Points for your Host Subject.

  o This will usually be 15 or 30, or 0 (if the program is to count towards a course requirement for certain clinical placements).

- Select the **Subject Type** you want this **Host Subject** to be approved against.

 o The **Subject Type** relates to your La Trobe degree structure. If you require assistance in understanding your degree structure, please arrange an appointment with the ASSC or SHE College Client Services representative via ASK La Trobe in the Library.

  o For **Core** subjects click the button for **Core**, enter the **LTU Subject Code** in the text box and click **Verify Subject Code**. The **LTU Subject Name** will appear once verification is complete.

  o For **Elective** subjects click the button for **Elective.** The **LTU Subject Name** will be entered by the College Client Services team after you have submitted your application.

- Add the description of the **Host Subject.**

- o Enter the **Host Subject** information, or a link to the information, in the **Host Subject Information** text box; **OR**

- o Attach the **Host Subject Description** by using the **Attach File** button from the 'Edit' ribbon at the top of the page. Students can either copy and paste the description from the Host Institution website into a Word Document, or if available download a PDF description from the **Host Institution** website.

- o *Note:* Students must enter a **Host Subject Description** via one of the above methods, otherwise the system will not allow you to save the **Subject.**

- Click **Save**. You will now return to the main application screen, and will see the subject you added under the **Current Subjects in Application** section.

Partner/ Independent Short Programs

- If there is no **Host Subject Code** enter the program name into the **Host Subject Code** box.

- Enter the program name into the **Host Subject Name** box.

- Enter the credit points listed in the subject/ program description into the **Host Credit Points** box.

- Enter the Equivalent LTU Credit Points.

- Select the relevant **Subject Type** and follow the instructions above.

La Trobe Study Tour

- Enter the La Trobe **Study Tour** subject code into the **Host Subject Code** box.

- Enter the La Trobe **Study Tour** subject name into the **Host Subject Name** box.

- Enter the La Trobe **Study Tour** credit points into the **Host Credit Points** and the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box.

- Select **Core** as the **Subject Type** and follow the instructions above.

Clinical Placement

- If there is no **Host Subject Code**, enter the name of the **Clinical Placement** into the **Host Subject Code** box.

- Enter the name of the **Clinical Placement** into the **Subject Name** box.

- Enter '0' into the **Host Credit Points** box if not part of a La Trobe Subject.

- If the **Clinical Placement** is to count towards full subject credit, enter the number of credits in the **Equivalent LTU Credit** Points box. If the **Clinical** Placement is to count towards partial subject credit, enter '0' into the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box.

- Select the relevant **Subject Type** and follow the instructions above.

Internships

- If there is no **Host Subject Code** Enter, the name of the **Internship and area of study** it will cover into the **Host Subject Code** box (eg. Sports Journalism Internship).

- Enter the name of the **Internship and area of study** it will cover into the **Subject Name** box.

- Enter '0' into the **Host Credit Points** box if not part of a La Trobe Subject.

- If the **Internship** is to count towards full subject credit, enter the number of credits in the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box. If the **Internship** is to count towards partial subject credit, enter '0' into the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box.

- Select **Elective** as the **Subject Type** and follow the instructions above.

PhD Students

- Enter the name of the **Conference or Research subject area** into the **Host Subject Code** box (eg. Archaeology Conference or Egyptian Artefact Research).

- Enter "0" into both Host Credit Points and Equivalent LTU Credit Points box.

- Select Elective for the Subject Type.

- Enter into the **Host Subject Information** box or upload a one page statement explaining how the overseas program will impact your research, and list any other funding you are receiving. Also include the name of your Research Supervisor.

ADDING ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS AND/ OR HOST INSTITUTIONS

Continue to enter additional subjects for your **Host Institution** by repeating the process above. You will see that when you now select the **Add Subject** button the **Host Institution Details** automatically populate on the information you previously entered.

Note: Students can only apply for one overseas program per application in SOMSAS. If you are applying for another overseas short-term program, you will need to complete a separate application for that program.

Submit Your Application

Once you have added all of the **Host Subjects** to your application, proceed to submit your application for assessment. Please ensure that all details are complete, as further changes cannot be made after submission.

Click the **Submit Application** button at the top of the application page.

FULL TIME CREDIT POINT EQUIVALENCE

This will automatically open the **Credit Point Equivalence** page for you to complete. The **Host Institution** you have entered subject/s for will appear in the first column, and you will need to complete the **Host University Credits** and **Equivalent LTU Credits** columns.

Students are encouraged to complete the **Host University Credits** column where possible. Students should complete the **Equivalent LTU Credits** column as a minimum.

Partner/ Independent Short Programs

- The **Host University Credits** information may be available in the subject/ program description. If you are unsure leave this section blank

- Enter the number of La Trobe credits you believe the overall program is equivalent to in the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box. This is usually '15' or '30'

La Trobe Study Tour

- Enter the La Trobe Study Tour credit points into the Host University Credits and the Equivalent LTU Credit Points box.

Clinical Placement

- Enter 'towards course requirement' into the **Host University Credits** box.

- If the **Clinical Placement** is to count towards full subject credit, enter the number of credits in the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box. If the **Clinical Placement** is to count towards <u>partial subject credit</u>, enter 'towards course requirement' into the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box.

Internships

- Enter 'towards course requirement' into the **Host University Credits** box.

- If the **Internship/Placement** is to count towards full subject credit, enter the number of credits in the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box. If the **Internship/Placement** is to count towards partial subject credit, enter 'towards course requirement' into the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box.

PhD Students

- Enter 'towards research requirement' into the **Host University Credits** and the **Equivalent LTU Credit Points** box.

Once you have completed the **Credit Point Equivalence** table click **Send to College**.

If you require assistance in completing this section please visit the Global Lounge or contact La Trobe Abroad at **studyabroad@latrobe.edu.au**.

EMAIL CONFIRMATION

Students will receive an email acknowledgement once their application has been submitted. You can access and track your application at any time via the link in this email, or by logging into SOMSAS from the short-term program website.

Application Returned to Student

There are two instances where a students' application may be returned to them for further information. Students will be notified via email when either of these occur.

MORE INFORMATION REQUIRED

A subject assessor may determine that insufficient information has been provided by the student for a particular subject. In this instance the assessor will apply a status of **More Information Required** to that specific subject, and the student will receive an automatic email requesting action.

The subject assessor will be required to enter a **Subject Comment** explaining what additional information is required. This can be accessed by opening the subject in SOMSAS.

You can provide the additional information requested by entering text into the **Subject Comment** text box or by using the **Attach File** button from the 'Edit' ribbon at the top of the page to upload a document. Ensure you click **Save** for the subject, as it is this action that will notify the assessor you have provided the additional information.

COMPULSORY/ RECOMMENDED SUBJECTS

While reviewing an application, assessors may determine the student should add a compulsory and/ or recommended subject for the **Host Institution**. In this instance the assessor will apply a status of **Compulsory Subjects Requested**, and the student will receive an automatic email requesting action.

Details of the **Compulsory/ Recommended Subjects** requested can be accessed by clicking the **Edit Application Details** button in SOMSAS.

Assessment of your application will not progress until you provide the **Compulsory/ Recommended Subjects** requested. To complete the request, follow the **Add Subject** instructions above. Once you have added the **Compulsory/ Recommended Subjects**, click the **Submit Application** button to resubmit your application. You will receive an automatic resubmission confirmation email.

Withdrawing an Application

Students can withdraw their application in SOMSAS at any time after submission if required. To do this, login to SOMSAS and go to the main application page for your application, and click the **Withdraw Application** button. You will receive an automated email confirming your application has been withdrawn.

- *Note:* If you withdraw your application by error, or wish to reverse the withdrawal, you will need to contact La Trobe Abroad (**studyabroad@latrobe.edu.au**) to have your application reinstated. This can only be done prior to the deadline for the associated application period.

Study Plan Application Outcome

Once all subjects within your application have been assessed, and an outcome recorded, you will receive an email notification with the outcome. Each subject will now have a status of **Approved** or **Declined**. Any subjects that have been **Declined** will have an **Approver Comment** explaining the reason. This can be accessed by opening the relevant subject and clicking the **Subject Details** tab.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your application, or the outcome of a subject within your application, please contact your College Client Services team via ASK La Trobe to discuss.

La Trobe Abroad is also notified of the final outcome of all study plan applications in SOMSAS.

APPLICATION REPORTS

Students can generate two reports in SOMSAS, which are detailed below. The **Credit Equivalence Report** can be used as part of your OS-HELP application requirement, and as part of your notification to Centrelink of your overseas study.

- The Print Study Plan report.

  o Accessible at the top of the application screen.

  o This report shows all subjects within a students' application, and the outcome for each subject (approved or declined).

- The Credit Equivalence Report.

  o Accessible at the bottom of the application screen.

  o This report shows the overall credit equivalence for the students' application that must be completed during the overseas program, any **Compulsory/ Recommended Subjects** that were requested during the assessment process, and any **Overall Application Comments.**

  o Any specific requirements for the students approved study plan will appear in this section, so ensure you read this carefully and meet these requirements on your program.

La Trobe Abroad will require a copy of both reports for all students.

- Students are required to print both the approved **Study Plan** and **Credit Equivalence Report** and submit to La Trobe Abroad once ready, or with their completed Overseas Short Program (OSP) Form.

Quick Tips

- SOMSAS is integrated with a number of other La Trobe systems, and will automatically populate some information.

- SOMSAS will send automated emails to your La Trobe student email account only, and this cannot be changed.

- Any fields marked with a * are mandatory.

- Helpful tips are incorporated throughout SOMSAS, and can be viewed by hovering over any symbols.

- Once you have created your application you can return at a later stage to complete and submit it.

- To view a subject you have added to your application, select the   button.

- To delete a subject you have added to your application, hover of the subject line and select the symbol   ✓   that appears on the left hand side, then press 'Delete' on your keyboard.

- Once you have submitted your application, you cannot make any further changes to it. So please ensure that all the information you need to enter on your application is complete before submission.

Contacts

Students are encouraged to contact La Trobe Abroad (specific La Trobe Abroad Coordinator whenever possible) with any questions they may have during Global Lounge hours, via email or phone. Students can also contact us through one of the following methods.

Email – **SOMSAS@latrobe.edu.au**

Phone – +61 3 9479 8966

Website – **http://www.latrobe.edu.au/study/exchange-and-study-abroad**

Global Lounge – Open Monday to Thursday from 11.00am-3.00pm

Facebook Group – Search "La Trobe Abroad Overseas" and request to become a member of the group.

Definitions

OVERALL APPLICATION STATUSES

- Under Assessment – the application has been submitted and is undergoing assessment. This status is applicable when one or more subjects within the application have not been assigned an outcome, except in the instance of the 'Compulsory Subjects Requested' status.

- Compulsory Subjects Requested – the assessor (Client Services or Academic) have requested the student to add compulsory and/ or recommended subjects to their application. When this status is assigned the application is returned to the student for editing, however Client Services (and Academics) can continue assessment.

- Application Withdrawn – the student has withdrawn their application. Applications are viewable but not editable. If required La Trobe Abroad can reverse the withdrawal within the same application period.

- Application Approved – the overall study plan application has been approved by Client Services. Applications are viewable but not editable.

- Application Rejected – the overall study plan application has been rejected by Client Services. Applications are viewable but not editable.