

# USCO HANDBOOK FOR INSTITUTIONS

PREVIEW COPY: September 2023

**UMAP.ORG** 

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# What is UMAP?

University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) is a consortium of Higher Education Institutions and partners, collaborating to increase opportunities for study abroad across the Asia Pacific region through a variety of short and long-term in-person and virtual exchange opportunities, as well as Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) experiences.

The 25 members represent countries in and around Central Asia, South Asia, and the Pacific Rim, including East and Southeast Asia, Australia, and North, Central and South America. Since UMAP's founding in 1991, membership across the region has grown steadily. UMAP strives to facilitate greater understanding of member countries' cultures, economies, and societies through collaborative partnerships and increased exchange activities. View fellow member institutions and potential collaborators in the UMAP member directory.

# Institutional Eligibility and Participation

UMAP membership is based on eligible countries or territories. To be eligible, a country/territory must be based in the Asia Pacific region and must have a UMAP National Secretariat. To become a member, institutions must receive the endorsement of their <a href="National Secretariat">National Secretariat</a>, which confirms their accreditation status. Membership is available to Higher Education Institutions only, not individuals or service-providing organizations.

# Student Eligibility and Participation

To participate in UMAP programs, students must be enrolled at a UMAP member institution and their applications must be nominated by that institution. Students of any nationality are eligible to participate in UMAP exchanges if they are enrolled in a UMAP member institution. Students from non-member institutions are not eligible for participation.

#### **UMAP** Communications

The UMAP International Secretariat communicates important information to the UMAP community in a variety of ways. Please make sure you can receive information from the following sources:

- UMAP Newsletter: a monthly electronic newsletter with reminders about upcoming deadlines, important policy updates, highlighted programs, and information about faculty and staff development opportunities. If you do not receive it, you can sign up using the form at the bottom of this page: <a href="https://umap.org/contact/">https://umap.org/contact/</a> If your institution uses spam filters, please ensure that <a href="https://umap.org">UMAP-IS@umap.org</a> is listed as a "safe address" so the newsletter does not get sent to spam. You might also check your "junk" folder if you do not receive it in the first week of each month.
- UMAP.org website: The home page offers featured news, featured country, and featured programs, which are updated regularly. Check back often for news from the International Secretariat and member countries. The website also offers detailed information about all aspects of UMAP programs.
- *Social Media*: UMAP is active on several social media channels. Follow us for important dates, featured programs, and new ideas.

Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/umap.org/">https://www.facebook.com/umap.org/</a>

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/umap-is

Twitter: https://twitter.com/UMAP ORG

## **UMAP Programs**

UMAP offers semester-long exchange opportunities, as well as short-term programs of one to eight weeks, and virtual programming, including Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) courses, micro-credentials, and virtual research and internship opportunities. The main categories of UMAP programs are:

- Program A an exchange program through which UMAP participating institutions send and receive up to two students with tuition waivers each semester
- Program B a negotiated bi-lateral exchange between two institutions that have agreed to exchange more than two students per semester
- Program C short-term programs of one to eight weeks, for which tuition may be charged.
  - Discovery Camp offerings are included under program C. They are short-term fully sponsored opportunities, where the host institutions cover all in-country program costs
- Virtual programs offered entirely online and may include both short-term and semester-long programs

#### What is USCO2?

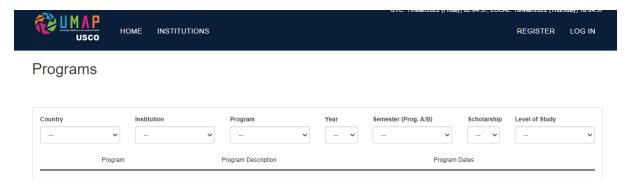
The UMAP Student Connection Online (USCO) online application management platform was introduced in 2019 as a "one-stop-shop" to manage UMAP student applications, application review processes, information sharing, and member networking and communications. It was revised in 2022 as USCO2. In general, the terms USCO and USCO2 will be used interchangeably to refer to the system now in use.

# Tips for using USCO2

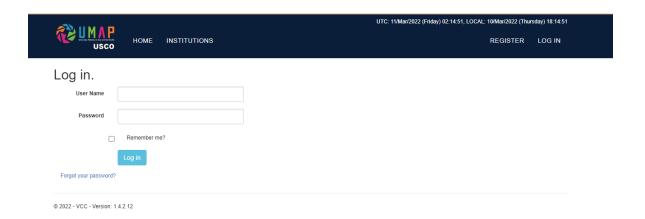
- Avoid using ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. Use upper and lower case (e.g. University of Regina, not UNIVERSITY OF REGINA).
- Make sure that you spell your name/institutional name correctly and in English characters; Special characters and accents (ä, é, ç, ñ) may not input correctly.
- Some fields are required. You will not be able to SAVE or SUBMIT your application until all
  required items are completed. Required sections are noted with a red asterisk \*
- Some fields have a limit to the number of characters that can be entered. Entering too much text can cause an error message. Please see <u>Common Errors</u> at the end of this document for a complete listing of fields with character limits.
- Once you SUBMIT your program description, you can no longer make changes to it. If edits are required, contact the International Secretariat

## USCO2 step-by-step for Institutions

In this section we will discuss each option that is offered in the menu after you log in to the USCO system. Go to: <a href="https://usco2.umap.org/">https://usco2.umap.org/</a> to find the USCO2 landing page. This is where all available program offerings are visible for students to search and apply to. This is also where institutions log in to the system to upload programs, look up coordinators, nominate students, and review and accept or decline applicants.

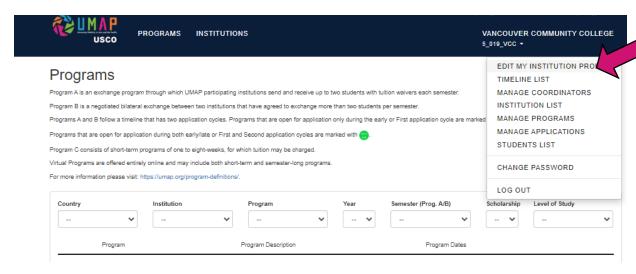


All current and recent program offerings will be available on this page. To search or sort through the programs, use the drop-down arrows on the filter boxes, to sort by: Country, Institution, Program, Year, Semester or Graduate/Undergraduate programs. For best results only use one or two filter criteria at the same time.



LOG IN: Log in using the User Name assigned by the UMAP International Secretariat. It will look similar to this: 11\_002\_cc. Enter your password. If you cut and paste your password from another document, be careful that you do not copy extra spaces at the beginning or end. This will cause an error. If you do not know your User Name or Password, contact <a href="UMAP-IS@umap.org">UMAP-IS@umap.org</a> to request them. Every institution has one User Name and Password. All UMAP coordinators at the institution share the same log-in.

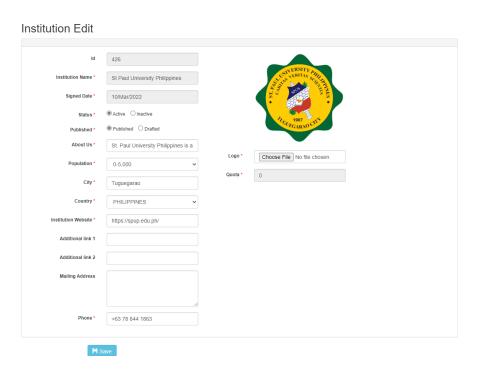
After successfully logging in, you will see your institution name in the upper right corner. Hover your mouse over the name to open the actions menu and choose one of the options described below.



#### EDIT MY INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

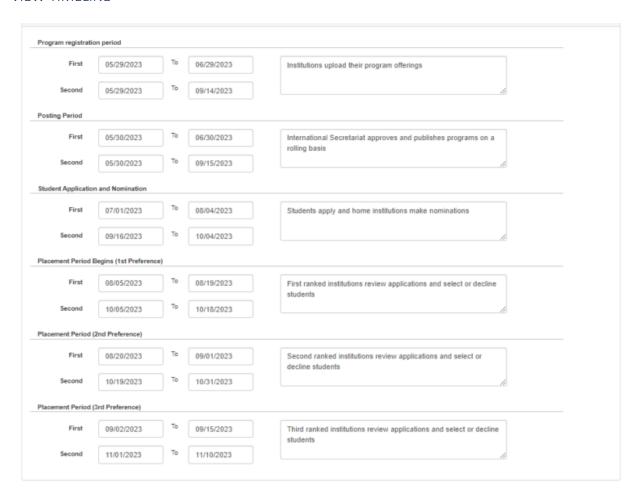
The Institutional Profile is an important communications and marketing tool. This is where potential applicants and partners go to learn about your institution. Every box with a red asterisk \* must be filled

in. Some information will be pre-filled. Please check that it is correct. Use the "About Us" box to describe your institution. There is a limit of 1000 characters in this box. You will get an error message if you write too much. "Population" is the size of your institution. Add links to your department/office, programs, or international resources. Use the http://... format for all links. You will not be able to change the number in the Quota box. Only the International Secretariat can do this.



What is Quota? Participating institutions may agree to accept more than two inbound students in a semester in return for an extra allocation to send more outbound students in the following semesters. These additional allocations do not expire and may be used at any time. These allocations are referred to as Quota. The International Secretariat will keep track of any quota allocations on the relevant institutional profiles.

#### VIFW TIMFLINE



What is a Timeline? The Program A/B selection cycle is controlled by a Timeline - set of dates that are coordinated so that everyone in the UMAP network completes selection activities for Program A/B at the same time. Each timeline has two cycles, early (first cycle) and later (second cycle) so institutions can choose to participate in the cycles that work best for their academic calendars. The timeline controls when institutions can share program information, nominate students, and make selection decisions. Timelines also control when students can apply for Program A/B opportunities. It is important to understand the timelines and know their schedule if you participate in semester-long exchanges. You can find active timelines in the action menu after you log in to USCO or on the UMAP website at: <a href="https://umap.org/timelines/">https://umap.org/timelines/</a>

# MANAGE COORDINATORS

After logging in to USCO for the first time, you need to add the contact information of up to three coordinators at your institution who will be working with UMAP programs. If you do not add coordinator details, you will not receive USCO system notifications when you have applications to process. Colleagues from other institutions will not be able to reach you. Click on Manage Coordinators to add or edit coordinator information. On the coordinator listing page, click on "Add New" to add your coordinator information.

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#### Coordinator List



- Fill in every box that has a red asterisk \*
- "Title" might be Prof., Dr., Mrs., Mr.
- Click on the blue Save button to save your information.
- If you have already entered your coordinator information and wish to edit it:
  - Click on "Institution" to sort the information alphabetically
  - Find your institution
  - Click on the blue "View" button
  - After opening the coordinator entry, click "Edit" or "Delete" on the upper right corner
  - o Edit as needed
  - Save

Best Practice! You can also use the Coordinator List to search for colleagues at member institutions to ask them about their programs or to start conversations about potential collaboration. The Coordinator List can be a networking tool.

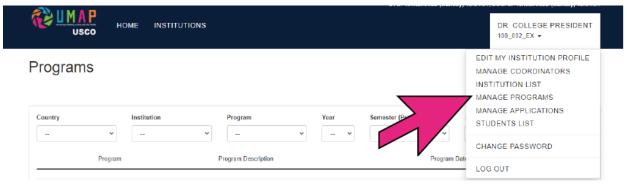
#### **INSTITUTION LIST**

Click on Institution List to see all UMAP members. From this page, you can click on the institution name to go directly to their website. You can use the drop-down menu at the top of the page to select institutions from a specific country.

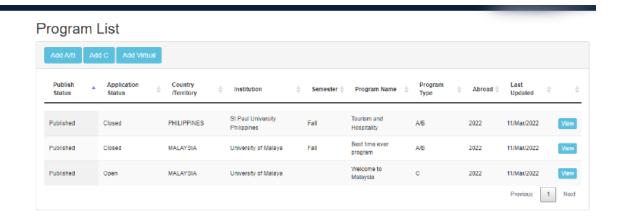
#### MANAGE PROGRAMS

To add a program offering, log in and click on Manage Programs.

The original USCO platform had a button to create a copy of a previous program. The current USCO2 does not have that function. You will need to enter your updated program offerings each year. The USCO platform will archive completed programs every year in April. If you wish to copy previous program information, please do so before April.



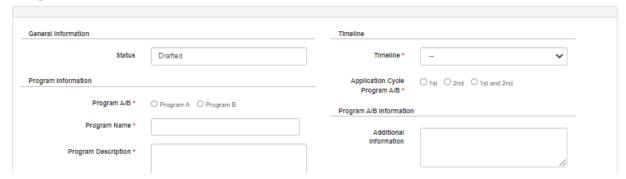
- Select "Add A/B" for a semester-long exchange program
- Select "Add C" for a short-term exchange program of seven days to eight weeks in duration, including Discovery Camps
- Select "Add Virtual" for a virtual program, either short-term or semester-long



# Program A/B

Institutions offering one- or two-semester programs should select Program A/B. Program A is the UMAP semester-long exchange where institutions offer to host up to two students and can send up to two students each semester in a tuition-waived status. Institutions must offer a Program A opportunity before their students are eligible to apply for Program A programs at other campuses. Program B should be used by institutions with a bilateral agreement to send and receive more than 2 students each semester. Program A/B offerings are tied to a timeline that has procedural deadlines. Please refer to timeline for more information.

# Program A/B Edit



Status: The first field you see is "Status." This should show "Drafted." While it is in draft status, you can go back and add or edit details.

- Best Practice! You must complete all the fields with red asterisks \* before the system will allow you to save. You can enter brief information first and then go back later to add detail if you want to quickly save and then finish it at another time.
- Click on the blue Save button at the bottom of the page to save your work and continue it later.
  - Best Practice! Sometimes when you click Save you get an error. This is often because your Program Description is too long. Please see the <u>Common Errors</u> section for more detail on this.
- When you are done editing, click "Save and Submit." Now the Status field should show "Submitted."
- The UMAP International Secretariat will review each program before approving it. Once it has been approved, the status field will show "Published."

Timeline: click here to read about Timelines.

- You will need to choose if your program will be offered in the first, second, or both application
  cycles of the selected timeline. This decision should be based on the dates of the selection
  process at your institution.
  - Best Practice! If the dates of the first and second selection cycles do not fit with your application cycle, you can use the USCO system to conditionally select a student whom you then require to apply through your institutional process. Or you can receive applications and review them outside of USCO and only use USCO later to represent the selections that you have made. Please contact the International Secretariat to discuss how these options might work.
- When offering a semester-long program, institutions must select if it is Program A or B.
  - If it is program B, it is a good idea to show this in the Program Name Field. For example, "Brock University – Curtin University Bilateral Exchange." This will make it clear that applicants from outside of those institutions should not apply.

Best Practice! Do not use your institution initials in your program name. Applicants in other countries may not know where MU or NUK is. It is more helpful to spell out the name.

		// Required GPA	
Program Contact Name *		Required GPA	
			Please include scale e.g: "3.6 out of 4.0"
Program Contact Email *		1st Semester	
Teaching Language *		Start Date	
		End Date	
Degree Level *	○ Graduate ○ Undergraduate ○ Both	2nd Semester	
Exchange Duration •	O 1 Semester O 2 Semesters O Both	Start Date	
Accept Native English	○ Yes ○ No	End Date	
English Language Requirements	☐TOEFL ☐IBT ☐IELTS ☐OTHER	Will credit be offered? *	○Yes ○No
If other, specify			UCTS Users Guide
Page (English)		UCTS Calculator	
Score (English)		If yes, Number of credits per course	

Program Contact Name and Email: Enter the name and email address of the person at your institution who can best answer questions about this program.

Required GPA: If you have a required or recommended grade point average, enter it here.

Best practice: Also enter the grading scale - for example, "3.4 out of 4" or "8.2 out of 10".

Teaching language and Language Requirements: Enter the language that your program instruction will be in. If you offer courses only in the native language of your country, please be sure to include that information and complete the lower section about any tests or requirements to document language proficiency in that language. Do not click "Accept Native English, yes" if your instruction is in another language.

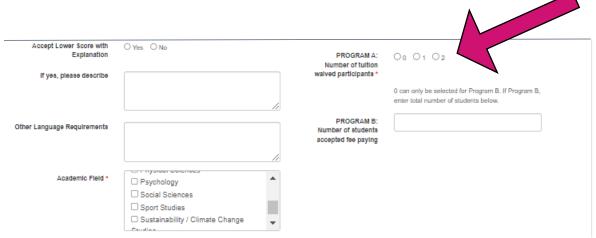
First semester/Second semester start and end dates are not required but are useful to help applicants understand the timing of your academic year.

Click on the link to the <u>UCTS users' guide</u> to better understand UMAP credits and credit transfer.

Best Practice! Enter your credits as a number or range of numbers, for example 3 or 2-4. Entering an explanatory sentence may cause an error.

When participating in Program A, institutions agree to send and receive up to two students per semester with a tuition waiver. Institutions can show how many students they are willing to accept.

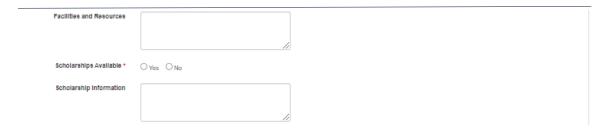
- If you are entering a Program A offering, select 1 or 2 tuition-waived participants.
- If you are entering a Program B offering, select "0" tuition-waived participants. Go to the next section and enter the number of students that can be selected through the Program B agreement. Program B is based on a bilateral agreement with another institution. You may waive or charge tuition to your partner institution students, as agreed in the bilateral agreement.



Academic Fields: use the check boxes to show the academic fields that will be available to exchange students.

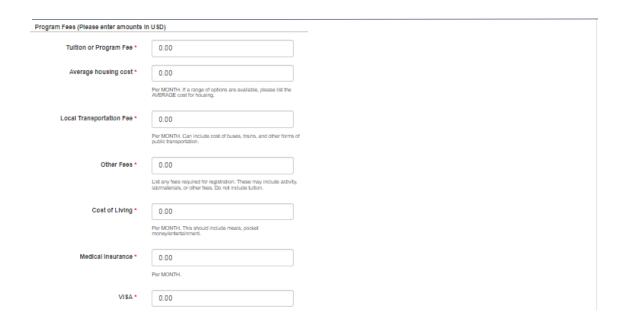
Facilities and Resources: use this box to describe any services or student supports that will be available to exchange students. This might include dormitory housing, sports facilities, tutoring, counseling, student cafeteria on campus, clubs, etc.

Scholarship Information: If your institution or your country offers scholarship support, please include that information here.



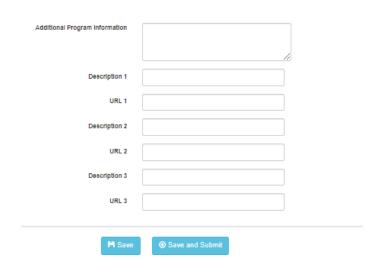
Planning Budget: This information helps students plan their budgets and to decide if they can afford to study on your program. All amounts should be provided in USD.

- If you are offering a Program A tuition-waived program, you should leave the Tuition or Program Fee box at 0. For Program B, you should include the cost of the program as agreed on in your bilateral agreement. This may include a full or partial tuition waiver or full-cost tuition.
- Average housing cost should show how much per month it typically costs to live in the student
  housing that will be available to UMAP exchange students. Host institutions are responsible to
  assist students in finding reasonably-priced acceptable housing. This might include on-campus
  dormitories, homestays, or rooms or student apartments near campus.
- Local Transportation Fees should estimate how much students usually spend, per month, commuting to campus by public transportation.
- Other fees may include activity, lab, or other fees that may be charged by your institution, but which are not part of the tuition cost.
- Cost of Living should estimate the cost of meals, pocket money, books, and entertainment for students, per month.
- If there is a monthly cost for health insurance for exchange students, please include it here.
- Any visa application costs should also be included.

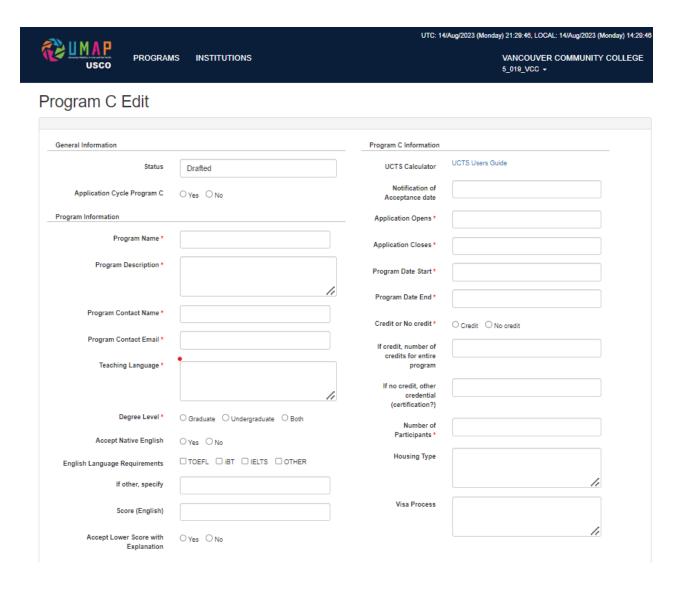


The final section of the form is for you to include additional information that might be useful to students. You can enter additional text in the Additional Program Information box. If you have information on your website that you wish to share, you can add up to three links. Please use the Description field to describe the information in the link. For example: International Student Services Office.

- Click **Save** if you plan to return and edit the information again.
- Click Save and Submit when your program entry is complete and you are ready to submit it for review.
- Best Practice! There may be a delay between the time when you submit your program and the time that it is published on the website. This is because the International Secretariat must review each program. Please do not resubmit it if you do not see it immediately on the website.



Program C consists of short-term (one to eight-week) programs offered by UMAP participating institutions. Programs are generally offered in a wide range of disciplines: cultural studies, language proficiency courses, technical or vocational training, entrepreneurship, and more. Institutions offering Program C may charge or waive tuition fees for students. Host institutions decide whether to offer credits or other credentials to successful participants.



• Application Cycle Program C: click "Yes" to confirm that this is a Program C offering.

The program C template has many of the same fields as Program A/B. Please refer to that section for complete details on the fields in the left-side column.

For the fields on the right side of the screen:

Program C is not controlled by a central timeline. You decide when the program will take place.
 You decide when the application opens and closes. Please also include the date when you hope to complete the admissions process and notify applicants of their status.

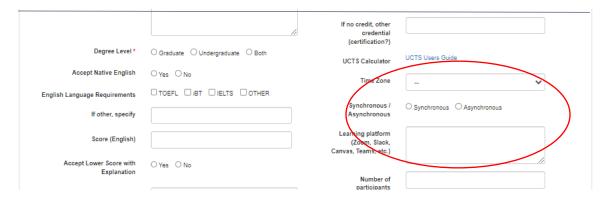
- If you are not offering credit, please enter what kind of recognition the students will receive for example, certificate of completion, micro-credential.
- Please list how many students you hope to accept for the program.
- It is helpful if you include information on the housing the students will be placed as well as
  information on the kind of visa they will need to apply for to participate in your short term
  program.

For program C you may charge tuition and should include the amount in the budget section.

Best Practice! There may be a delay between the time when you submit your program and the time that it is published on the website. This is because the International Secretariat must review each program. Please do not resubmit it if you do not see it immediately on the website.

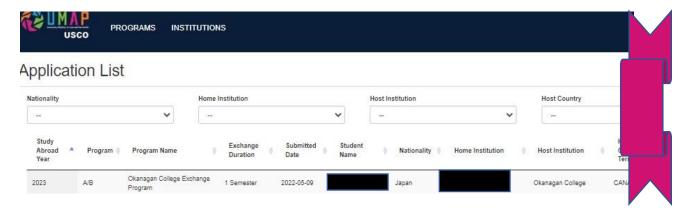
Virtual Programs: Virtual Program application deadlines are set by the host institution. They can be offered, reviewed, and applied for at any time.

The Virtual Programs template has many of the same fields as Program C. There are additional fields related to the timing and the technology of the virtual program. It is very important to complete these.



## MANAGE APPLICATIONS

To review, nominate, select, or decline student applications, click on Manage Applications.



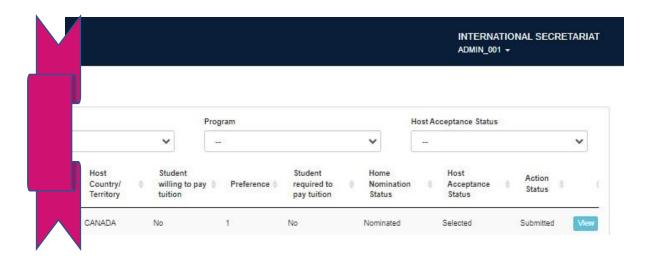
The fields at the top of the screen allow you to sort the information on your screen by: Nationality, Home Institution, Host Institution, Host Country, Program Type and Host Acceptance Status. You can use these if you want to sort by multiple criteria at once. To sort a single category, you can click on the small up/down arrows at the top of each column. In the Applications List you will see both outbound (applications from your institution) and inbound (applications to programs that you are offering).

# **Application List Fields**

- Study Abroad Year: select the application cycle that you want to see
- Program: select Program A/B, C, or Virtual
- Program name: sort the programs alphabetically by name
- Exchange duration shows the length of programs that the students have applied for
- Student Name, Nationality: sort alphabetically

Best Practice! Students of all nationalities are eligible to participate in UMAP programs if they are enrolled at a UMAP member institution. If you see a student applicant from outside of the UMAP region, they are eligible if their home institution is a member.

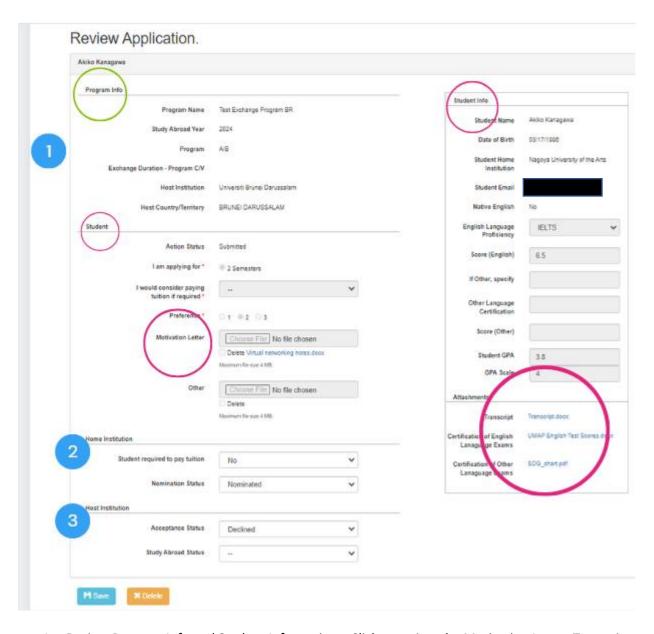
Home Institution, Host Institution, Host Country/Territory: can be sorted alphabetically.



- Student willing to pay tuition. There may be a Yes or a No in this column, or it may be blank. This field is an opportunity for Program A applicants to show if they are willing to be considered for Program B, tuition paid exchange, if they are not accepted for Program A.
- Preference: For Program A/B, students may submit up to 3 applications. They rank their applications as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, preference. This column shows their ranked preferences.
   Best Practice! Check out the section on Timelines to learn the relationship between ranked preferences and when you can make selection decisions.
  - Program C and Virtual programs do not require ranking and will not show anything here.
- Student Required to Pay Tuition: Institutions may send and receive up to two tuition-waived students each semester through Program A. When nominating students, home institutions must select "Student required to Pay Tuition" Yes/No. If No, that student is nominated as one of the Program A tuition-waived students from that institution. If Yes, they are being nominated for Program B programs or other programs that require the payment of tuition. Programs B and C as well as Virtual programs may charge tuition.
- Home Nomination Status: In this column you may see these options
  - o In Review: the student has submitted an application, but the Home Institution has not yet made their nomination decision
  - Nominated: Home institution has nominated the student. Home institutions may nominate two students each semester for tuition-waived Program A programs. They may nominate an unlimited number of students to Program C and Virtual programs.
  - o Declined: Home institution does not support this student's application at this time.
- Host Acceptance Status: In this column you may see these options
  - In Review: the student has submitted an application, has been nominated, and is now eligible for review by ranked institutions.
  - Pending: A higher ranked institution is currently making their selection decisions and/or it is not the correct time for your institution to select the application.
  - o Selected: A host institution has selected the student.
  - Declined: A host institution has declined the student and the application will go to the next ranked institution for review
  - Unavailable: A higher ranked institution has selected the student and the student is no longer available for selection.
  - Skipped: A higher ranked institution did not make an acceptance decision during their review period and the application passed automatically to the next ranked institution for consideration.
  - Cancelled: The student has withdrawn the application or a decision was made to remove support for the student. The application is no longer active.
- Action Status: the status of the student application.
  - o Draft: student has started the application, but it is not complete
  - o Submitted: application has been submitted and is ready for nomination/review
- View: Click the blue View button to open the application.

Best Practice! USCO2 will archive student applications each year. For Program C, applications will be archived when the programs ends. For program A/B, student applications will be archived the following year. If you need to collect information from your student applications, you must do so before they are archived.

#### **REVIEW APPLICATION SCREEN**



- 1. Review Program Info and Student Info sections. Click to review the Motivation Letter, Transcript, and language certification documents.
- 2. If the student is FROM your institution and you are reviewing to nominate an outbound student use the Home Institution section to record your nomination decision. Remember that if you are nominating students for Program A, tuition-waived opportunities, then you must also offer a Program A tuition-waived opportunity. If you nominate students to Program A without offering a reciprocal opportunity, your students' applications may be cancelled.
  - If nominating as Program A, select "No" from the dropdown menu. This means no tuition will be charged. If nominating as Program B or C, select "Yes" from the dropdown menu. This means that the student is nominated for Program B or C, where tuition may be charged.

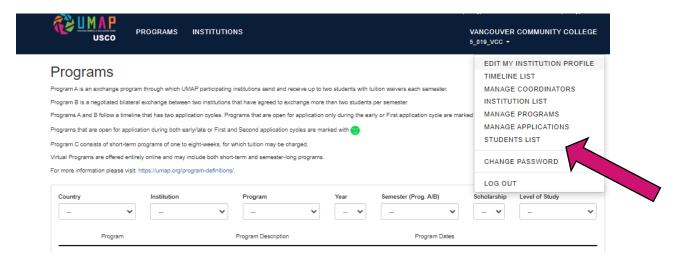
- Select Nomination Status: Nominated or Declined.
- Click Save
- You will need to review and nominate or decline each application separately for each student. Nominating them for their first choice does not automatically nominate them for second and third ranked applications.

Best Practice! You must complete your institutional nomination before the last day of the student application period. If you need additional time to review and nominate students, you may wish to create an earlier internal deadline that the students must meet for institutional review before the UMAP deadline.

- 3. If the student is applying TO your institution, use the **Host Institution** section to record your acceptance decision.
  - Use the drop down menu to select Accepted or Declined.
  - If Accepted, update the Study Abroad Status to "Accepted, Studying, Completed, or Cancelled.
  - o Click Save.

Best Practice! If you do not see the blue "Save" button at the bottom of the page, it may not be the right time to make this decision. Check the Program A/B timeline or the program C application deadline to see when you should be taking action. The Save button should appear only during the time you are eligible to use it.

STUDENT LIST: The Student List will show you a simple list of the students from your institution who have applied for UMAP programs.

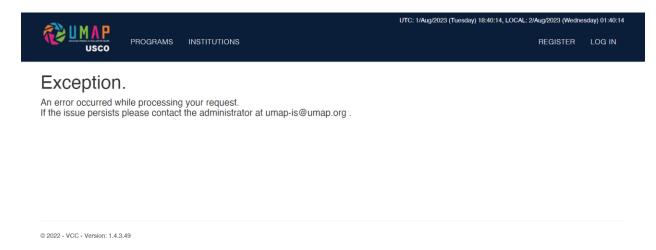


#### CHANGE PASSWORD

Change Password allows you to re-set your password to one that you choose yourself. The new password will require: 10 or more characters, lower case and CAPITAL letters, a number, and a symbol (@#\$%^).

# **COMMON ERRORS**

There are two error screens that you might see while working with the USCO2 system. The first is:



Institutions might see this error when adding a program offering if there are too many characters in a field that has limits on the quantity of text. The fields with limits can be found here:

<ul> <li>10 characters (1-3 words):         <ul> <li>Number of credits per course</li> <li>Program C and Virtual - number of credits</li> <li>Program C and Virtual Number of participants</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul> <li>100 characters (10-30 words):</li> <li>English scores</li> <li>Required GPA</li> <li>Program C and Virtual Other credential offered; Timezone</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>250 characters (40-80 words):</li> <li>Program Name</li> <li>Contact Name</li> <li>Email</li> <li>Other English Requirements</li> <li>Links and their associated descriptions</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>1000 characters (140-250 words):</li> <li>Teaching Language</li> <li>Accept lower score with explanation</li> <li>Other Language requirements</li> <li>Facilities and resources</li> <li>Scholarship info</li> <li>Additional Program info</li> <li>Additional A/B info</li> <li>Housing type</li> <li>Visa process</li> <li>Learning platform</li> </ul>
2000 characters (300-500 words)  • Program Description	

- If you are entering Program and see this error, check to see that none of your content is longer than allowed for the field. You can use another field labelled "other" or "additional" to provide more information, if needed.
- If you are still seeing the error message, please re-enter all your information and take a
  screenshot of it. Send the screenshot to the International Secretariat with your request for help.
  The International Secretariat can not help you without seeing what information you are trying to
  enter
- If you see this error message at a time when you are not uploading program information, please send the International Secretariat a detailed description of what you were doing when the error happened. Understanding the context will help the International Secretariat try to solve the problem.

Students may see this error if they have attached a file (transcript or language score report) that exceeds 4MB in size.

The second error screen looks like this:

```
Server Error in '/' Application.

Runtime Error

Description: An application error scoursed on the server. The current custom error settings for this application prevent the details of the application error from being viewed remotely (for security reasons). It could, however, be viewed by browsers running on the local server machine.

Details: To enable the details of this specific error message to be viewable on remote machines, please create a <customErrors> tag within a "web config" configuration file located in the root directory of the current web application. This <customErrors> tag should then have its "mode" attribute set to "Off.

<pr
```

While this looks like an error, <u>it may not be</u>. Sometimes this error is seen if there is a temporary interruption in the internet connection during the transmission of the information. Usually, the information is sent successfully anyway.

Best Practice! You may see this error when submitting program information. Before asking for help, check the status of your program from the Manage Programs page. You will likely see it there successfully in "Submitted" status. If not, please send to the International Secretariat a detailed description of what you were doing with the error happened.

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