

Study Abroad Handbook 2016-17 for Programmes in Politics, International Relations, Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology

This handbook is for programmes involving a study abroad placement in the following subject areas:

- Politics
- International Relations
- Sociology
- Philosophy
- Anthropology

Contents

1. Study Abroad with SSIS
2. Oversight/responsibility for the year abroad
 - a. Contact information
 - b. Emergency contact details
3. Applying for a year abroad
4. Preparing for the year abroad
5. Module selection
6. Assessment of the year abroad
7. Responsibility of students
8. Study Abroad partners

1. Study Abroad within the College of Social Sciences and International Studies

a) The College of Social Sciences and International Studies (SSIS) is keen to encourage students to take the opportunity to spend part of their degree studying at a partner university abroad. This time studying abroad counts towards the student's degree award

The College of Social Sciences and International Studies offers several different study abroad programmes. However, this handbook is for **four-year study abroad degree programmes** in the following disciplines

- Politics
- International Relations
- Sociology
- Philosophy
- Anthropology

This includes any undergraduate degree programme owned by the College of Social Sciences and International Studies which includes ‘with Study Abroad’, ‘with European Study’ or ‘with International Study’ in the degree programme.

b) Study Abroad programmes in the College of Social Science and International Studies are conducted according to the guidance set out in the University’s TQA Manual, specifically the following sections:

- Study and Work Experience Abroad Code of Good Practice
<http://admin.exeter.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa/Part%205/5Fabroad.pdf>
- Student Placements Code of Good Practice
<http://admin.exeter.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa/Part%205/5KStudent%20Placements.pdf>

2. Oversight of the Year Abroad

a) Responsibility within the College for overseeing the year abroad rests with

- The College Study Abroad Support Officer, Issie Hatfield (ssis-studyabroad@exeter.ac.uk) +44 (0)1392 723336
- The College Study Abroad Coordinator, Catherine Allen (ssis-studyabroad@exeter.ac.uk) +44 (0)1392 722672

b) Support for the year abroad is also provided by the Outbound Study Abroad team in the International Office. They are:

- Anna Moscrop (A.S.Moscrop@exeter.ac.uk, +44 (0)1392 723841)
- Sarah Hector (S.Hector@exeter.ac.uk, +44 (0)1392 725738)

c) In the event of an emergency, student may also contact the University’s estate patrol on +44 (0)1392 723999.

d) In the event of a complaint about the year abroad, or an academic appeal relating to a mark from a year abroad, students should follow the procedures at <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/policies/calendar/part1/otherregs/>

IMPORTANT DATES

OCTOBER	Study and Work Abroad Fair – Streatham Campus
NOVEMBER	Study and Work Abroad Fair – Penryn Campus
NOVEMBER	Online internal application form goes live
JANUARY	Deadline for internal Study Abroad applications
FEBRUARY	Students will be informed of their allocated placement
MARCH – JUNE	Students will complete their host university application. Please note that the application deadlines of each host university will vary. As part of your research you will be responsible for noting and abiding by the deadline of your host university. Attend the Study and Work Abroad pre-departure conference

3. Applying for a year abroad

- a) Students are able to apply for '*with Study Abroad*' programmes from UCAS, or may transfer in during their first-two years. Those intending to transfer in should be mindful of the requirement to study language modules in their first two years if they intend to study in a language other than English during their year abroad.

Students will be contacted at the start of their second year with information on the process of how to apply for a placement.

- b) Being enrolled on a four-year study abroad degree programme does not guarantee a placement abroad. All students intending to study abroad must apply to the College of Social Sciences and International Studies during term two of their second year for a placement.

To be eligible for a placement, students must have met the following criteria:

- i) **The student must have an average mark of 60 or higher in the first year.**

For our international partnerships this is written into our exchange agreements, so allowing very little flexibility. For our European exchange partners this is also the expected standard for those wishing to study abroad, although in certain circumstances mitigating factors can be taken into account.

- ii) **If the student intends to study in a language other than English, they must have taken the Advanced 1 (or higher) modules in that language through the Foreign Language Centre.**

In the event that a student is already fluent in the relevant language, they should visit the Foreign Language Centre (FLC) and ask for their language ability to be assessed. If the FLC can confirm to the Study Abroad co-ordinator that the student is at a level equivalent to Advanced 1 or higher, then the student will be exempt from the requirement to study the FLC language modules.

The Foreign Language Centre contact details can be found at <http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/flc/>

- c) If a student on a four-year study abroad degree programme is not eligible for a placement they will be required to transfer back to the equivalent three-year degree programme.
- d) Students on combined honours programmes are welcome to apply for a placement with either of their teaching Colleges. Flexible Combined Honours students can, in addition, apply directly through the FCH programme. However, students must not submit more than one application, i.e. they may not apply through both Colleges/FCH programme.
- e) Students are expected to conduct their own research into the available Study Abroad placement opportunities. Although the Study Abroad Co-ordinator and the International Office will do their best to provide up-to-date information and advice, it is the choice of the student whether to study abroad and which destinations to apply for.

Before applying students are expected to have fully researched any partner universities they are interested in, including (but not limited to):

- i. Location, environment and climate
- ii. Language of teaching and the language spoken locally
- iii. Available modules
- iv. Size and facilities of the university
- v. Cost of living
- vi. Accommodation

Further guidance can be found on the International Office website and at

http://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/internationalexeter/pdfs/erasmus-outgoing/2013/Researching_your_placement_v.4.pdf

- f) To apply students must complete an online application form. Information on this and a link to the form can be found at <http://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/student/undergraduate/studyingabroad/applyingtostudyabroad/polsoc/>
- g) This will ask them to list five choices of partner university. The majority of students receive their first, second or third choice. When it is not possible to allocate a student to any of their five choices, we would usually contact them to offer any remaining available places.
- h) If a student has left one or more of their choices blank, it would be taken to mean that they do not wish to go abroad if they are unable to receive one of their higher choices. This will not affect their priority for their other choices.
- i) Although we will make every effort to provide a placement for any eligible students wishing to go abroad, we cannot guarantee a placement.
- j) The application form also requires students to list the modules that they would want to take at each institution. These module selections will not be passed on to the partner university, but are required to demonstrate that the student has researched the available classes at the host university, and that suitable teaching exists for their discipline.
- k) Once all the applications have been received, places will be allocated with priority going to those with the highest average first-year mark.
- l) It is not normally possible to take any mitigation or other factors into account when comparing applications for placements.
- m) Students should be aware that many of our places at partner institutions are shared with other Colleges, so places at these institutions could be awarded to students from other disciplines. This will be determined by first-year average mark.

- n) The deadline for applications within Politics, IR, Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology is February. It is intended that students should be informed of their placement within two weeks.
- o) If a student on a 'with Study Abroad' programme does not apply for a placement, it will be assumed that they have decided not to go abroad, and they will be required to transfer back to the equivalent three-year degree programme.
- p) Students who have successfully applied for a placement, but are not yet on the appropriate four-year degree programme will need to complete a change of programme form.

4. Preparation for Study Abroad placement

- a) After students have been allocated a placement the following steps will take place:
 1. The University will contact the partner university to tell them which students we will be sending them.
 2. For students going to Europe (i.e. under the Erasmus programme), there will be a meeting arranged by the International Office to explain the Erasmus paperwork that must be completed.
 3. Depending on the host university, students will be required to complete application forms for that university. It will be the student's responsibility to send these forms to the partner university.
 4. Once the partner university is in contact with the student, they will be able to advise students on selecting modules, arranging accommodation and the cost of living. The College is not able to provide advice on accommodation – this advice will come from the partner university. In the event of the partner university not providing the required information, or not supplying a named contact for students to liaise with, the Study Abroad co-ordinator will be able to investigate this on behalf of students.
 5. There will be a pre-departure briefing meeting arranged by the International Office (usually in March). There may also be a meeting to explain the assessment requirements for the year abroad. These meetings will be compulsory for any student wishing to go abroad.
- b) If students are on a three-year degree programme, they will need to complete a change of programme form to transfer onto the four-year variant of their degree programme. This form can be collected from the SSIS College Office.
- c) Information on financial support during the year, including the Erasmus grant can be found at <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/international/abroad/feesandfunding/>.

5. Module selection

- a) Students are required to outline initial module selection during the internal application process. However, this is for the purpose of demonstrating that they have researched the partner university, and are satisfied that the range of modules offered fits with their programme and their academic interests. These module selections are not sent on to the partner university, and are not scrutinised by the College to ensure they meet with the College's requirements.
- b) Students are likely to be required to outline their module choices in their applications to their partner university. Erasmus students will need to put their module choices on their 'Learning Agreement' document.
- c) All final module choices must be approved in writing (usually by e-mail) by the College Study Abroad team.
- d) Students will not receive credit for modules that are not approved by the College Study Abroad team. If a student takes a module that does not have approval, then this number of credits will count as zero when the marks are converted back to Exeter marks.
- e) Students must take the equivalent of 120 Exeter credits (60 ECTS credits) during their year abroad.

The SSI3999 module includes two assignments which are worth the equivalent of 30 Exeter credits. This means that students will only need to take the equivalent of 90 Exeter credits from the partner university.

However, some Universities will require students to take a full study load (i.e. equivalent to 120 Exeter credits). This may be as a result of the host university's requirements or a condition of the student's study visa.

- f) If a student has taken more than the required number of credits, then only the best marks will be used, up to the required number of credits.
- g) Students are expected to follow a programme of study appropriate to their degree discipline at Exeter. Students may be allowed to take up to one quarter of their modules outside of this discipline at the discretion of the College Study Abroad team.
- h) Students must ensure that they are taking modules at a level appropriate for stage 3 (NQF level 6) of their programme.

6. Assessment of the Year Abroad

- a) The Year Abroad will make up 1/7th of the overall degree award. When the year abroad is the third-year, stages two, three (the year abroad) and four of the degree are weighted in the ratio 2:1:4.

Further details can be found at in The Undergraduate Degrees and Awards: Assessment Procedures at <http://admin.exeter.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa/Part%208/8Eugexams2.pdf>

- b) During the year abroad students are enrolled on a 'Year Abroad' module. This will be worth 120 Exeter credits. The converted marks from the host university will usually comprise one component of this module, and may form the sole component of this module. Other components may include reflective or evaluative essays. Details can be found in the module description of the applicable module. The module currently in use is:
- SSI3999 – For Politics, International Relations, Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology programmes
- c) Marks will be converted according to a standard scale approved by the College. Whenever possible students will be provided with a copy of this scale before they go abroad. However this will not be possible in the event of a new partnership being used for the first time.
- When available, mark conversion scales will be published on ELE before students go abroad.
- d) When marks are converted, they will be weighted according to their module value at the host university. No additional weighting will be applied (e.g. for academic level etc.)
- e) Marks are converted once the partner university has sent a copy of the formal, final transcript. It is usually the case that marks are converted before the end of term one of the year following the year abroad.
- f) Marks for the year abroad are provisional until approved by the discipline Exam Board in the summer of the academic year following the year abroad. The final year abroad marks will be released to students following this Exam Board, although interim results may be released sooner.
- g) Students are able to appeal against the process of mark conversion following the release of the final year abroad marks. The information on how to appeal can be found at <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/administration/complaintsandappeals/academicappeals/>
- h) Results for the year abroad will not normally be known at the time of the summer Exam Board of the academic year in which the year abroad is taking place. When the year abroad takes place in the third year (out of four), students will be allowed to progress to the next academic stage on the condition that they will pass the year abroad.
- i) When a student fails the year abroad, they will be required to transfer to the equivalent three-year degree which does not include the year abroad. The year abroad mark will remain on their final transcript (diploma supplement), but will not count towards their degree award.
- j) Students who pass the year abroad cannot choose to change to the three-year equivalent degree if they are unhappy with their year abroad mark.

7. Responsibility of Students

- a) Students must remember that they remain students of the University of Exeter while they are on their year abroad. They must act in accordance with University regulations, and should appreciate that they are representatives of the University. Students must ensure that they do not do anything that might bring the University of Exeter into disrepute.

- b) Students must ensure that they follow all local laws, and that they follow the regulations and conventions of their host university.
- c) Students are expected to take all necessary steps to ensure that their safety and security, and that of fellow students, is not compromised. Students would be expected to keep abreast of local current events, and register for regular country updates from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>) or their national government's equivalent.
- d) Students are expected to take out adequate travel insurance for the duration of their year abroad. It is possible to join the University insurance scheme. Details can be found at <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/campuservices/insurance/insurancepolicies/travel/undergraduatetravelinsurance/>
- e) In addition students should do the following:
- Register as a student at the start of the year
 - Regularly and frequently check their Exeter e-mail address (i.e. at least every other day)
 - Keep their contact, address and next-of-kin details up-to-date on ExeHub
 - Respond to communications from the Study Abroad co-ordinator and/or the International Office
 - Respond to other communications regarding their study at Exeter, including those relating to student fees and module choice.
- f) International students on UK tier-four student visas should remember that the terms and requirements of this visa will still apply while they are on their year abroad. These students will receive regular contact from the College Office with the purpose of demonstrating that they continue to actively engage in their studies. It is essential that students respond promptly to these, as failure to do so may lead to the cancellation of the student's study visa.

8. Study Abroad partners

- a) A list of the partner universities available for student exchange can be found at <http://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/student/undergraduate/studyingabroad/wheretheyoucango/>.

Students are not able to go on an exchange placement to a university that is not an existing College or University partner.

- b) Partnerships for the purpose of student exchange may occur at University level (typically those outside of Europe) and at College level (typically those within Europe under the ERASMUS programme).
- c) The establishment of new partnerships for the purpose of student exchange is undertaken by the Assistant College Manager for External Relations, the International Office and the Study Abroad co-ordinator.
- d) The establishment of any new student exchange partnerships would normally be preceded by a visit from a member of the College, unless the university is an existing exchange partner with another College.

- e) It is the intention of the College for a member of staff to visit each partner university where we are sending more than five students at least once every two years. This applies only to College partnerships, and not partnerships at University level, as these will be the responsibility of the International office.

RESEARCHING YOUR PLACEMENT CHECKLIST

Where you go on your study placement is not simply about location, there are many factors to consider before deciding which institution you attend. This checklist will give you an overview of what to research before choosing which institutions to include on your application.

CHOOSING THE BEST UNIVERSITY FOR YOU

- Research the modules at several institutions (if you have a choice of where you can study)
- Choose modules that you are interested in, you may wish to take modules that will help you with your dissertation research.

LOCATION

- Where is the university located? Is it in a city or a more rural location?
- What is the climate like? Are there extremes of temperature, humidity, pollution, allergens such as pollen?
- Look at Google Streetview to get an idea of what the area looks like
- Have you researched what leisure activities are available nearby, such as sports or arts?

ACCOMMODATION

- Does the host university have student accommodation?
- Is this available to incoming Study Abroad students?
- How much will it cost per month?
- If there is limited student accommodation, what private accommodation is available?
- What are the accommodation deadlines – make a note of these for future reference
- Factor accommodation costs into your budget

FINANCES

For students studying in Europe:

An Erasmus grant is available to all students studying abroad in Europe. This will not cover all of your expenses whilst you are abroad, and therefore it is important you research the following:

- You can apply for a travel grant from Student Finance UK
- If you are in receipt of bursaries and additional funding, check with the University of Exeter funding team and Student Finance England/Wales to clarify if you are eligible to the additional funding whilst abroad.
- Research the average cost of living at your host country/institution – if it is more than what you would pay in Exeter, will you have enough money for living costs as well as the additional travel costs involved with studying abroad?
- Factor in the additional costs such as book supplies, mobile phone bills, administration fees and photocopying
- Talk to students who have returned from studying abroad and find out about their experience
- Can you work part-time whilst on your placement?
- Budget for extra spending money for travelling and socialising

- How about working over the summer before your placement begins to help boost your study abroad fund?

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH STUDYING ABROAD

- Return air fare (2 return air fares if you want to travel home for Christmas)
- Visa (if you are studying outside of Europe, or if you are an International Student you will need a visa)
- Travel and Health Insurance (this is compulsory). The University of Exeter offers a comprehensive insurance policy

STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACCESSABILITY

- Do you already have an Independent Learning Plan and/or are likely to require particular support or special dispensation with your learning abroad, does the host university offer the support you require?
- Are you currently or have you in the past experienced mental health concerns? Does the host university have facilities that you will be able to self-refer to if required?
- If you anticipate periods of anxiety or mental health concerns during your placement it would be beneficial to compile a personal action plan to include coping strategies, support networks of friends and family as well as emergency contact details for your host university and medical provision in country.

COMMUNICATION

- Do you need to take a language course before you study abroad (if you are not a Modern Languages student)?
- There are courses available through the Foreign Language Centre

CURRENT AFFAIRS

- Check out local and national news websites for the country you are visiting
- Find out about the culture of the country you want to visit

WHAT ELSE COULD YOU DO TO FIND OUT MORE?

- Check out the International Exeter website for further information on where you can study:
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/international/abroad/>
- Speak to other Exeter students who have returned from studying at the host university or country – what were their experiences?
- Your College/Department will have a Study Abroad Co-ordinator – make an appointment to talk to them to find out more
- Visit <http://www.thirdyearabroad.com>

Study Abroad Q & A – Politics/IR and Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology

What are the benefits of studying abroad?

- Discover a different culture
- See your own country and culture from a new perspective
- Develop self-reliance
- Learn new language skills
- Meet new people
- Study in a different style, or with a different focus.
- Study courses in areas not taught at Exeter
- Distinguish yourself to employers

Can I study abroad as part of my degree?

Yes. All UG Politics/IR, Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology programmes in the College have an equivalent programme including a year abroad.

How long can I go for?

Most students go abroad for a full year. To do this you would join a four-year version of your degree, where the third year is spent studying at a partner university.

Is it possible to do a work placement abroad?

At the moment we only offer study abroad.

Can I study abroad in English?

We currently have 29 different partner universities around the world. 24 of these teach in English.

What language skills do I need?

You need to be able to speak the appropriate language for your host university. If you only speak English then you will only be able to choose from the English-speaking partner universities.

If you want to go one of our partner universities in France, Spain or Germany, you will need to take 30 credits of modules per year through the Foreign Language Centre (FLC) at Exeter, as part of your degree, during your first and second year.

In order to go to one of those partnerships, you must have completed the Advanced 1 module in the relevant language. Normally we would expect students to enter the University with an A or AS-level in that language, to ensure that they are ready to take Intermediate 2 or Advanced 1 during their first year, and Advanced 1 or 2 during their second year.

If you don't achieve the appropriate language level, then you will only be able to go abroad to one of our English-language partners.

In the event that you are already fluent in the relevant language, you should visit the FLC and ask for your language to be assessed. If the FLC can confirm to the Study Abroad Coordinator that your language is at a level equivalent to Advanced 1 or higher, then you will be exempt from the requirement to study the FLC language modules.

Am I guaranteed a place at my preferred university?

No. During the second-year you will need to complete an application form with your top five choices of partner university. Placements will then be allocated to the best students, based on their first-year average of marks.

About half of the students applying will receive their first choice of university.

What are the criteria to go abroad?

See above for language skills if going to France, Spain or Germany.

Students will need to be able to demonstrate that they are achieving average marks over 60. If a student is already on the four-year programme, but does not meet the criteria to go abroad, they will be required to change to the three-year equivalent programme.

Do I need to apply straight on to the four-year programme, or can I decide when I arrive?

You can do either. If you are certain that you want to spend a year abroad then apply for the four-year programme. However, students on the three-year programme are also welcome to apply for a place abroad when they are here, and then change on to the four-year programme once they have been accepted. Presently (within SSIS) no priority for places is given to students already on the four-year programme.

Where can we go?

Please find an up-to-date list on the Outbound website here:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/outbound/where/>

Can I go somewhere else, even if I arrange it myself?

No. Students are only able to study abroad at one of the universities exchange partnerships.

How much will it cost?

This depends on where you go, and how long you go for.

FEES:

For the year you are abroad you will be required to pay reduced fees to Exeter.

Currently the fee for the year abroad is £1385.

You will not be required to pay tuition fees to the host university.

GRANTS:

If you go to a partner within Europe it qualifies under the Erasmus programme. This means that you are entitled to a grant (approx. €310-340 a month).

For more information about Erasmus Grants please visit

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/international/studyabroad/abroad/feesandfunding/erasmusgrants/>

Students are entitled to the same support from Student Finance during their year abroad that they receive normally, and may be able to claim additional expenses depending on their financial circumstances. Some students also qualify for a *'Travel Grant'* from Student Finance.

COSTS:

These vary from place to place, and depend on how much you personally choose to spend.

Things to consider beyond normal living expenses are travel costs of getting there, health & travel insurance, visa costs and whether you will want to do any additional travelling as part of the year abroad.

Where can I find out more information?

Visit the International Office's Study Abroad stand. Alternatively look at these links:

- <http://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/students/studyingabroad/>
- <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/international/abroad/>