Incoming Erasmus Students 2018/2019
Part II: Erasmus Aberdeen Guide
Welcome!

Founded in 1495, the University of Aberdeen is respected the world over for its high quality teaching and research. We are the UK’s fifth oldest university, with a student population of around 14,500 and a large international community of students drawn from 120 different countries.

We are delighted that you have chosen University of Aberdeen for your Erasmus exchange and can’t wait to welcome you and share all Aberdeen and the University has to offer! From a wide range of study options to suit your academic interests, as well as a huge variety of social and leisure pursuits for you to take part in, one thing is for sure, your exchange at Aberdeen will pass in a flash of activity, enjoyment and adventure!

This Guide is intended as a follow-up to ‘Part 1: Application Guide’. It includes more detailed information and advice about preparing for your arrival and your first few weeks in Aberdeen as well as your studies and student life at the University. This Guide is aimed at students coming to Aberdeen on study exchange, through the Erasmus+ programme or Swiss-European Mobility Programme.

We hope that after reading the Guide you will feel prepared and (most of all!) excited about your upcoming exchange at University of Aberdeen! If you have any questions at any stage please do not hesitate to contact the Erasmus Unit by email at erasmus@abdn.ac.uk.

We very much look forward to welcoming you to the University of Aberdeen!

Best wishes,
Your Erasmus Team

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You can find out more about studying here and living in Aberdeen in our Lonely Planet Guide.
Pre-Arrival Checklist

Accommodation
The University of Aberdeen offers a wide range of accommodation options which you can view on the website. The majority of incoming exchange students choose to apply for halls of residence at Hillhead Student Village. This is within walking distance of King’s College campus and served by a frequent bus service.

New single students are guaranteed a place within the University’s portfolio of accommodation, provided the application is submitted by the published deadline. Incoming exchange students can take an accommodation contract for one semester or the full academic year. Demand for certain properties can be high and allocation is on a first-come first-served basis.

You must wait until you have received your Acceptance Email before applying for accommodation. Your Acceptance Email will include your unique student ID number which you will need to complete the online accommodation application. All accommodation enquiries should be directed to the Student Accommodation Office via email: studentaccomm@abdn.ac.uk.

University accommodation contracts commence on the dates given below. If you choose to arrive prior to these dates you will need to organise a hotel or other temporary private accommodation.

Move-in weekend for first semester and full year exchange students is 1+2 September 2018.
For semester 2 exchange students it is 5+6 January 2019.

Unit cannot support you with this. Accommodation in the private sector in Aberdeen can be expensive and in some instances it may be difficult to obtain a short-term lease. If you are able to secure a lease, it is essential that you are fully aware of the implications of the document, which will be legally binding. University of Aberdeen’s Student Association (AUSA) has some useful information about renting privately on its website.

Book Travel
There are direct flights to Aberdeen from several continental European airports including Alicante, Amsterdam, Bergen, Copenhagen, Dublin, Oslo and Paris. Alternatively Aberdeen airport has excellent links with London airports and flying time is just over 1 hour. Or you may choose to fly to Glasgow, Prestwick or Edinburgh airports and take a bus or train to Aberdeen which will take 2.5 –3.5 hours.

Over ‘Move-in weekend’ in September, the University offers a ‘Meet and Greet’ service at the airport and a free hourly bus service to University Halls. Search ‘Meet and Greet’ on our website to register. For those arriving outside of these dates, taxis and buses are available directly outside the airport.
Entering the UK
EU/EEA/Swiss nationals who are participating in a student exchange programme will require a full passport or valid national ID card in order to enter the UK. This will enable you to reside here for up to one year. No other documentation is required.

All other students will need a visa to study in the UK. Students coming on exchange for the full academic year must apply for a Tier 4 Student Visa. Students coming to Aberdeen on exchange for less than 6 months are recommended to apply for the Short-term Student Visa.

• Once you have received your Acceptance Email, you should contact erasmus@abdn.ac.uk with a scan of the photograph page from your passport. This will enable us to produce a support letter for your visa. For Tier 4 students, this is called a Certificate of Acceptance of Studies or CAS.

Full visa information can be found on the UK Visas + Immigration (UKVI) website.

Please be aware that your visa application is your responsibility. Even if your application to study has been accepted by the University of Aberdeen, we cannot guarantee that you will receive a visa to study in the UK.

eRegistration
eRegistration is a compulsory step of the registration process at University of Aberdeen which must be completed before your arrival in order for you to be fully registered as a student. You will be sent an email with information and useful screenshots to guide you through the eRegistration process when the system opens.

Photo Upload (for Student ID Card)
Once you have completed the eRegistration process you will need to upload a passport-sized photograph for your student ID card. To do so visit https://w3.abdn.ac.uk/photoupload/default.aspx where full instructions are given. Please make sure your photo meets the guidelines for acceptable photo types and re-visit the webpage after uploading your photo to ensure it has been successfully accepted.

You should upload a photo at least two weeks prior to beginning your studies at Aberdeen so that your ID card will be ready for collection upon your arrival.

Go Abroad Tutor Appointment
All incoming exchange students are allocated to a Go Abroad Tutor who will fulfil the role of academic contact throughout your period of study here. Contact details for your Go Abroad Tutor will be included in your Acceptance Email. You should contact your Go Abroad Tutor via email prior to coming to Aberdeen to arrange an appointment time during registration week. See Registration Steps on P4.
Woohoo! You’ve arrived safely in Aberdeen and now it’s time for your exchange to really begin. The first week of semester is known as “Freshers’ Week”. There are no classes during this week but you will be very busy with orientation, registration and all the fairs and activities taking place on campus.

Finding your way around
The University of Aberdeen is based on two main campuses: King’s College in Old Aberdeen and Foresterhill campus. The Foresterhill campus is home to Aberdeen’s hospital, the University’s School of Medicine and Dentistry and the Institute of Medical Sciences. The majority of other students are based at King’s College.

You can download campus maps from our website before you arrive.

Orientation
On the opening day of each semester, the Go Abroad Team hold a compulsory Orientation Session for all incoming exchange students. During Orientation you will be introduced to the city and University, have the opportunity to meet fellow exchange students and enjoy social activities taking place around campus.

You will be emailed with further information about the time and location of Orientation before arriving in Aberdeen. You should make every effort to arrive in Aberdeen in time for Orientation. If you cannot attend please let us know by emailing erasmus@abdn.ac.uk.

Registration Steps
There are a number of important steps for you to get through during the first week in order to complete your registration as a University of Aberdeen student. These will all be covered in more detail at Orientation so don’t worry, help is at hand to guide you through!

1. Meet your Go Abroad Tutor
   You should have arranged a meeting with your Go Abroad Tutor during registration week prior to your arrival. Remember you will find their details in your Acceptance Email. During this meeting you can discuss and finalise your course choices and you will be enrolled accordingly. If you make changes to your original course choices your Go Abroad Tutor will sign your Learning Agreement document. Course enrolment at University of Aberdeen is done via an online system called ‘MyCurriculum’. As an exchange student you cannot access MyCurriculum independently, the Go Abroad Tutor will do so on your behalf.

2. MyTimetable
   Once you have been enrolled in your courses you will have access to MyTimetable. This online system allows you to view your course timetable, and select tutorial/lab/seminar sessions. If you have any issues using MyTimetable, the IT Service will be able to help.

3. Visa Registration
   Those of you who require a visa to study in Aberdeen must attend the University’s visa registration sessions during the first week of semester. Students with Tier 4 Visas must collect the biometric residence permit within 10 days of your stated arrival in the UK from a designated Post Office. The dates and times of visa registration will be communicated to you at Orientation.

4. Erasmus Drop-In
   Finally you should attend Erasmus Registration. Drop-in hours and arrangements for this will be emailed to you prior to the beginning of semester. Erasmus Unit staff will confirm your registration status, collect any documents which require the signature of the Institutional Erasmus Coordinator and issue you with your student ID card. Your student ID card is required for accessing the library, borrowing books and using computer and printing facilities on campus.

Orientation for first semester and full year exchange students will take place on Monday 3 September 2018.
Orientation for second semester exchange students will take place on Monday 7 January 2019.

You will be emailed with further information about the time and location of Orientation before arriving in Aberdeen. You should make every effort to arrive in Aberdeen in time for Orientation. If you cannot attend please let us know by emailing erasmus@abdn.ac.uk.
Student Hub
The University of Aberdeen’s online student portal is called the ‘Student Hub’. You will have access to Student Hub within 24 hours of completing registration. Your login and password for Student Hub will be the same as your computer login. On the Student Hub you will find personal information, your printing budget, exam timetables and course results. You should check the information held on you by the University via Student Hub and amend anything that is incorrect or missing.

University of Aberdeen Email Account
Your University of Aberdeen IT and email account will also go ‘live’ once you have completed registration. The University and Erasmus Unit will use your institutional email address for all email communications. You should check your email account every day. Missing important information due to not checking your emails is not a satisfactory excuse. Please ensure that you read all University emails carefully and respond where necessary.

Registering with a Medical Practice
EU/EEA/Swiss nationals who are studying full-time courses of any duration in Scotland are eligible for National Health Service (NHS) treatment. This is automatic and you do not have to apply for it in advance.

If you are going to be studying in Aberdeen for the full year it is recommended that you register with a General Practitioner (GP) at your local Medical Practice. If you need to consult a doctor you will be able to obtain an appointment more quickly if you are already a member of the Practice. To register you will need to provide photo identification and proof of address. If you have an ongoing medical condition you should bring full documentation with you.

If you are going to study in Aberdeen for one semester only, registration will be at the discretion of the individual medical practice. If you are not registered but need to see a Doctor, you should be able to ask for an appointment as a Temporary Patient.

As of 6 April 2015, students who require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK, have to pay an NHS health surcharge upon applying. The amount to pay depends on the length of leave granted. Having paid this surcharge, NHS treatment will remain free at the point of use for students. Students who require a Short-term Student Visa are exempt from the surcharge, but are not entitled to free NHS treatment. It is your responsibility to ensure you have adequate medical insurance cover before coming to Aberdeen.
Libraries + IT
Registered students automatically become members of the University Library. Further information about the collections and services offered are available on the library website. The library is a great place to study, work on assignments and of course, revise for exams. Opening hours vary throughout semester but during examination diets the Sir Duncan Rice Library is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

There are many computers available for student use in the libraries, computer labs and at Hillhead Student Village. There is also free wireless access and areas for laptop use across campus. If you are experiencing any issues with the computing facilities you can contact servicedesk@abdn.ac.uk or drop into the IT Help Desk in the Infohub or Edward Wright Building.

Go Abroad Office Hours
Erasmus Team members are available throughout the year to assist with any administrative or non-academic issues you may have.

The Go Abroad Desk in the International Centre is staffed daily by one of our Go Abroad Ambassadors. Office hours are:

- Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: 14:00 - 16:00
- Tuesdays and Thursdays: 10:00 - 12:00

If you have a query or need to submit or collect paperwork, then you can simply drop-in during these hours. Paperwork which requires the signature of the Institutional Erasmus Coordinator should be submitted to the Go Abroad Desk and will be available for collection within 48 hours.

We do ask that you respect these office hours as the Erasmus Unit is very busy dealing with a large number of incoming and outgoing students. You can of course contact us by email at any time, and we will respond to you as soon as we can.

Student Support
The University of Aberdeen welcomes applications from students with disabilities and has a team of dedicated Disability Advisers. If you have a disability which may impair your performance in continuously assessed work and in examinations you must ensure that you provide the necessary information in the Disclosure of Disabilities section of the online application.

If you have disclosed a disability on the online application, the Student Support office will send you an information pack prior to beginning your studies in Aberdeen. Documentary evidence of any disability/medical conditions will be required before the University can make any specific arrangement to support you in your studies. Any medical evidence you provide should be in English. All information and documents provided will be treated and filed confidentially.

While you are studying at Aberdeen you can make an appointment with a Disability Adviser if required, or you can email student.disability@abdn.ac.uk with any queries.

Student Counselling Service
The University also offers a Student Counselling Service on campus which provides confidential guidance to students experiencing troubles. The service is available to all students.

Student Advice Centre
The Student Advice Centre can be found in the AUSA Union building on Elphinstone Road. The Centre provides general information for all students on everything from bus timetables to sexual health. If you have any queries feel free to drop-in to Student Advice, appointments aren’t necessary.
You will probably find studying in the UK to be quite different to studying in your home country due to differing education systems and cultures. This section will help you prepare for your studies at Aberdeen and get to know our procedures for attendance, monitoring, assessments and exams.

**Academic Calendar 2018/19**
Diaries at the read - here are the key semester and exam dates, and most importantly, the holidays!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1 (winter semester)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term opens</td>
<td>3 September 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching commences</td>
<td>10 September 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam diet commences</td>
<td>1 December 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term closes</td>
<td>14 December 2018</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 2 (summer semester)</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term opens</td>
<td>7 January 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching commences</td>
<td>14 January 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring break commences</td>
<td>29 March 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring break ends</td>
<td>22 April 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam diet commences</td>
<td>27 April 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term closes</td>
<td>17 May 2019</td>
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**Common Grading Scale (CGS)**
All coursework, class assessments and end of semester examinations at the University of Aberdeen are graded using the **Common Grading Scale** (CGS).

CGS comprises 23 discrete grades, grouped into 7 bands, with an associated grade point for each grade. A CGS mark of D3 or above is required to pass the course and gain credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGS Mark</th>
<th>Equivalent ECTS Grade</th>
<th>ECTS Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1, A2, A3, A4, A5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1, B2, B3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1, C2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3, D1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2, D3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1, E2</td>
<td>FX</td>
<td>Fail (some further work is required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3, F1, F2, F3, G1, G2, G3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fail (considerable further work is required)</td>
</tr>
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**Absence**
Unless you are ill, or have another good reason, you must attend all your classes and tutorials.

If you are unable to attend classes for medical reasons for a period of more than 7 consecutive days (including weekends), you must report this. Equally you must report an absence for a period of less than 7 consecutive days, if during this time you:

- fail to attend an examination;
- do not submit a piece of in-course assessment by the required deadline;
- or are unable to attend a compulsory teaching session (e.g. tutorial, laboratory or seminar)

To report an absence, you should complete and submit the relevant sections of the Absence Form available on [MyAberdeen](#). Some periods of absence will require you to submit supporting documentation (such as a medical certificate).
Monitoring

The University operates a monitoring system to identify students who may be experiencing difficulties with their studies. If a Course Co-ordinator is concerned about your performance or attendance they will report you to Registry, the University’s central administration office.

Registry will use your University email address to contact you should you be reported, so it is essential that you check your email account regularly. You must read very carefully any email communication from Registry regarding monitoring. It is essential that you respond to any email you receive by the stated deadline. Otherwise staff will assume you no longer wish to be registered for the course concerned and you will be withdrawn.

If you are withdrawn from a course which you do in fact wish to take, you will be required to meet with the Convener of the Students’ Progress Committee. You must make a case to the Convener in order to receive permission to be re-registered for the course.

If your attendance is poor and/or you do not submit written work, you may be withdrawn from the course concerned directly by the relevant School. This is known as having your Class Certificate refused. If your Class Certificate is refused, only the relevant Head of School has the authority to reinstate you on the course and you must make a case directly to the Head of School.

If you have been withdrawn from a course by Registry or the relevant School, you will not be able to receive the results of your assessments for that course, nor the credits.

Assessments and Exams

Your courses may be assessed either by coursework or examination, or by a combination of both.

If you are registered for, and attending, a course you will automatically be entered for the exam. Exam dates and times can be accessed via your Student Hub when the timetable has been finalised and published.

If you have to resit an examination, you must apply for this by the relevant deadline and pay the appropriate fee. All students, including Erasmus students, are required to pay a resit fee unless the first exam result has been accepted by the School as due to medical reasons or other good cause and recorded accordingly.

If you have a valid class certificate you will be able to resit exams in the June/July diet, or in the following academic year, subject to course timetabling.

Further information about registering for resit examinations, and the deadlines for this, can be found on the Infohub website.

Plagiarism

The University of Aberdeen has strict rules regarding plagiarism with which all students must comply. Please read this section very carefully as Aberdeen’s plagiarism regulations may be different to those enforced by your home institution and there can be serious consequences for your study if these regulations are not adhered to.

Plagiarism is the use, without adequate acknowledgment, of the intellectual work of another person in work submitted for assessment.

When you prepare a piece of written work for assessment it is expected that you will carry out adequate research on the subject, consulting textbooks, websites and journals. If you use some of these ideas or a direct quotation in your written work, you must acknowledge the source of the idea or the quotation by using correct referencing. If you do not do so, you may be accused of breaking the rules regarding plagiarism.

You may also discuss a piece of written work with a friend. It is essential that the work you submit is different. If you submit the same work, in part, or as a whole, you will be accused of collusions, i.e. not preparing work independently. While you may prepare written work in this way at your home university you must be aware that this is not acceptable at the University of Aberdeen.

Students accused of plagiarism or collusion will be subject to the University’s disciplinary procedures. The Code of Practice on Student Discipline can be found on the website.

We would strongly advise you to refer to the web pages of the University’s Student Learning Service for more information on plagiarism.
Students’ Association

The Students’ Association (AUSA) is a group of elected students who represent student interests at the University. It supports the activities of a wide range of student societies – academic, sporting, social, cultural – and also offers a range of services. The Students’ Association aims to ensure that students enjoy their time at University and all are welcome to pop in to the office in the AUSA Building or visit the website for more information.

Clubs and Societies

The University of Aberdeen has a very active student social life with around 170 clubs and societies covering all interests from music-making to extreme sport. During Freshers’ Week there is a Societies Fair and a Sports Club Fair, at which most student clubs and societies are represented. AUSA have a list of all the societies on their website. Joining a society is a great way to meet a wide range of Aberdeen students with similar interests!

Aberdeen Sports Village and Aquatics Centre

Sports clubs use the state-of-the-art facilities available at Aberdeen Sports Village, opened in 2009, and the University’s Aquatics Centre, opened in May 2014. The Centre boasts a 50m and 25m pool with diving facilities, sauna, steam room and café. Both facilities are located next to the university campus.

Various memberships are available giving access to the gym, pool, facilities and classes. Check out the website for more information.

Exchange ABDN

Exchange ABDN is a society aimed at helping international students integrate into life in Aberdeen. They offer guidance and advice to incoming students and organise social events and activities throughout the year. They also run a Buddy Scheme for exchange students. Becoming involved with Exchange ABDN is a great opportunity to mix with Aberdeen students who are keen to practice their foreign language with native speakers and interested in participating in a future exchange.

Cost of Living

Aberdeen is a relatively expensive city to live in. It is estimated that students will require approximately £650-£850 per month to cover university accommodation, food, clothing, entertainment, local travel, laundry etc. Costs will obviously vary depending on your lifestyle and spending habits.

As an Erasmus student you should normally be eligible for an Erasmus Mobility Grant which is administered and paid by your home institution. You will not be able to apply for extra funding in the UK nor is additional funding available from the University of Aberdeen.

Full-time students registered at a UK university are exempt from paying Council Tax (a charge from the local authority). To be defined as a full-time student you must be attending a university in the UK for at least 24 weeks a year and registered for a full workload of 120 University of Aberdeen credits. Students living in university accommodation will not normally receive Council Tax bills but if you are staying in private accommodation you will need to request a certificate of student status from the Infohub.

Public Transport

Public transport, particularly taxis, can be expensive in the city. If you travel around the city by bus you can use your University of Aberdeen student ID card to buy discounted tickets. More information can be found on the First Group website.
Banks, Post Offices and Travel

If you are going to be studying in Aberdeen for a full academic year you may wish to open a UK bank account. To do so you will need to make an appointment with your chosen branch and bring with you your student ID card, passport and an official letter from the University. This official letter will be sent to your University email account after you have completed the registration process in full, provided you have detailed a term-time address on your Student Hub. Alternatively you can request a copy from the Infohub.

Erasmus students who will study in Aberdeen for only one semester are unlikely to be able to open a UK bank account.

The nearest Post Office to the King’s College campus and Hillhead Halls of Residence is in the Spar shop on the corner of King Street and St Machar Drive.

If you plan to travel around Scotland and the UK during your time here, you may wish to purchase a Young Person’s Railcard which gives you discount of up to 30% on train travel booked in advance. Further information can be found on the 16-25 website. Megabus also offers cheap bus travel between cities when booked in advance.

Things to Do in Aberdeen

The city of Aberdeen has many opportunities for cultural and social activities including cinemas, theatres, museums, music, dancing, eating and sports. There are a number of shopping centres and many places to eat. Lots of bars and clubs offer special promotions for students and there is a lively local music scene. Information about what’s on is available in local papers, through the student newspaper ‘Gaudie’ and on our incoming student Facebook groups.

If you enjoy the outdoors, the beach is easily accessible from Hillhead Halls of Residence and Aberdeen also has a number of lovely parks. In wider Aberdeenshire you will find lots of opportunities for hillwalking, skiing and visiting castles and distilleries.
Leaving ABDN (already!)

Before you know it the end of your exchange in Aberdeen will be almost at an end! Sometimes students who have been on exchange in the first semester request to extend their stay for the entire academic year but unfortunately this is not possible. Due to the high number of incoming students we receive we cannot permit any extension requests, no exceptions will be made.

Certificate of Attendance/Departure
Your home institution will probably require you to have a Certificate of Attendance (sometimes known as a Certificate of Departure) signed by the Erasmus Co-ordinator at the end of your stay. This should be submitted to the Go Abroad Desk in the International Centre within 7 days of your departure. The Erasmus Co-ordinator will sign all paperwork, ready for collection within 48 hours.

Exam Results
You will be able to access your exam results as soon as they have been finalised and published on the Student Hub.

If you wish to appeal against any exam result you should consult the University’s Policy on Academic Appeals. Please note that all appeals must reach the Academic Registrar by 4pm on the 14th day after the result is accessible on the Student Hub.

Academic Transcript
The Academic Transcript is an official document which details the results you have achieved at University of Aberdeen and a conversion table to the ECTS grading scale. At the end of your period of study in Aberdeen, once all exam results from across the university have been processed (approximately 4 weeks after the end of semester), an Academic Transcript will be sent to your home address.

Please ensure that your home address on the Student Hub is up-to-date and accurate prior to leaving Aberdeen. It is your responsibility to provide your home institution with a copy of your Academic Transcript. If they will only accept the Transcript directly from us, please email erasmus@abdn.ac.uk to request this.

Some universities need to receive Section 3 of the Learning Agreement along with the Academic Transcript. If this is a requirement of your home university, please make sure to submit your Section 3 document to the Go Abroad desk prior to your departure.

For students who are studying at the University of Aberdeen for the full academic year, you will only receive one Academic Transcript at the end of your exchange (not at the end of each semester). If you take resit exams you must inform the Erasmus Unit that you would like a copy of your Academic Transcript after the resit exam diet, otherwise we will not be aware of this.

Alumni
After studying at the University of Aberdeen you will automatically join our 86,000 strong international alumni network, living in 170 countries. This community offers opportunities to network, socialise and make contacts.

Students who have completed an exchange are also eligible for the Aberdeen alumni discount of 20% on the full cost of a self-funded taught postgraduate programme, or one year of a full-time research programme. So maybe we’ll see you again in Aberdeen soon!

Please ensure that your home address on the Student Hub is up-to-date and accurate prior to leaving Aberdeen. It is your responsibility to provide your home institution with a copy of your Academic Transcript. If they will only accept the Transcript directly from us, please email erasmus@abdn.ac.uk to request this.