GUIDE FOR STUDENTS GOING ABROAD IN 2018/2019 PART I: APPLICANT GUIDE
“Before my year abroad, I was somebody too shy to give answers in French class as I felt I wasn’t as good as everyone else however since spending my year abroad in Bordeaux, I have much more confidence to interact in French. Added to that, the amazing weather and people I’ve met, it has been a year well spent.”

Heather Mudge
Education
Bordeaux, France

Erasmus Applicant Guide 2018/19

Once in a lifetime experience!

Choosing to work or study abroad as part of your degree programme is an exciting and challenging experience. We would like you to feel supported in making this choice. This guide is intended to help you understand more about the Erasmus programme and contains information that you will find useful before and during your application.

Please read through this guide carefully to make sure that you have understood everything. Once you have completed the application process, it is recommended that you read “Part II: Erasmus Abroad”, as this will take you through the next steps in your journey to becoming an Erasmus student. It is recommended that you bring these guides with you for future reference when you are abroad. They will also be available on the Erasmus website.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please do not hesitate to contact us at erasmus@abdn.ac.uk.

We hope that you find the guide useful and have a very enjoyable and rewarding time abroad.

Best wishes,
Your Erasmus Team

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Introduction
Erasmus is a European funding programme for education, training, youth and sport. The current programme cycle, Erasmus+, runs from 2014 to 2020 with a proposed budget of €16 billion.

Erasmus+ provides students in higher education with the opportunity to study or work in Europe as part of their degree. Over 9 million participants have had an Erasmus experience since the programme began 30 years ago.

Erasmus is not just for languages students; it is directed towards students of all degree programmes. All students, regardless of nationality or level of study, are eligible to participate, making Erasmus something for everyone!

For more information, go to: https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/

What are my options?

• Erasmus+ Study
  Study exchange at a partner university for your subject in Europe. Single semester or full year

• Erasmus+ Traineeship
  Work placement at any organisation or institution in Europe. Single semester, full year, summer or graduate

Erasmus+ Mobility Grant
Students undertaking a study exchange at a partner university, or an eligible traineeship, are normally entitled to receive funding from the Erasmus+ programme in the form of a grant. Students can receive up to a maximum of 12 months of Erasmus+ funding, across study and/or traineeship activity, over the duration of their degree programme.
Erasmus+ Study

General Eligibility
An Erasmus study exchange must be recognised by the relevant academic department(s) as contributing towards your degree programme. To participate in an Erasmus exchange you must have completed one year of undergraduate study, and remain registered as a full-time student at your home institution while abroad.

Academic Eligibility
Undergraduate students planning a period of study abroad must:

- be in good standing academically in accordance with Regulation 16.1 of the General Regulations for First Degrees. This means that you must achieve 120 credits by the end of year 1 and/or 240 credits by the end of the year 2, without any outstanding resit exams prior to your departure
- have achieved a C average or above in all courses
- have the support of the relevant Go Abroad Tutor(s)
- have satisfied any other academic criteria as determined by your subject area(s)

If you intend to complete a Joint Honours degree, you must meet the above conditions in both subject areas and have support from the Go Abroad Tutors of both departments.

When can I take part?
You can go on Erasmus exchange for one semester, or the full academic year.

Students from the majority of subject areas where an exchange is not a compulsory element of the degree programme, would generally be permitted to study abroad at level 2 or level 3. However there are some exceptions, normally due to professional accreditation requirements, so check with your Go Abroad Tutor to confirm when students of your degree programme can take part in an Erasmus exchange.

If you study abroad during level 2, the credits you achieve will be awarded on a pass/fail basis and you must achieve the equivalent of 60 University of Aberdeen credits per semester in order to proceed into Honours on your return. If you study abroad during level 3, the credits you achieve will be awarded on a pass/fail basis and individual grades will not count towards your degree classification.

For students on five year programmes where a study abroad period is compulsory, for example languages or law with a language programmes, exchange takes place at level 3.

Destinations
The University of Aberdeen has Erasmus links with around 120 universities. Exchange links exist between departments so where you can go will depend on what you study. There are also a growing number of university-wide agreements, open to students of all subject areas.

You will find a full list of Erasmus partners on our webpage.

Joint Honours students may choose to study at a partner institution for either subject area, provided suitable courses in the second subject are also taught.

Many of our partner institutions offer courses taught in English so it is not necessary to speak another language to take part in an Erasmus exchange. Online language support is available prior to and during your exchange and we strongly encourage students to use this resource to enhance their language learning and pick up some useful phrases in the language of the host country.

Choosing your Curriculum
Students going abroad on an Erasmus study exchange are required to select courses prior to departing Aberdeen. It is essential that you agree your curriculum with your Go Abroad Tutor(s) before you go to ensure that the courses you study while abroad can be credited towards your degree. Similarly, if you need to change these courses while abroad, you must first seek the permission of your Go Abroad Tutor(s).

Generally, all students studying abroad as part of the Erasmus exchange programme are expected:

- to register, and pass, 30 ECTS credits per semester at the host institution
- to attend classes and submit written work as required by the host institution
- to participate in assessments for all courses of which registered, as required by the host institution

Recognising your Erasmus Exchange
If you have agreed your programme of study in advance and pass all required assessments at the host institution, the credits you gain will count towards your degree at the University of Aberdeen.

If you fail a course, or courses, while abroad you should explore the resit opportunities available at your host institution and endeavour to achieve the credits at a second sitting if at all possible. Otherwise you may have to take additional courses on your return to Aberdeen, or in extreme cases, repeat the entire semester/academic year (potentially meeting the costs of tuition fees).

If the period of study abroad is a compulsory element of your degree programme and you do not fulfill the academic requirements, you may be required to change to a different degree programme which can prove difficult if you do not have the pre-requisites for an alternative programme.

This is not intended to put you off studying abroad - just a reminder to take your studies during Erasmus exchange seriously!
Erasmus+ Traineeships

Students on language degrees with a compulsory year abroad, or on degree programmes with an industrial placement element, can undertake an Erasmus+ Traineeship as part of their programme. Other programmes offer the option to undertake a project abroad e.g. Engineering, Chemistry, Medical Sciences. Students from all subject areas are eligible to undertake summer or graduate traineeships.

Eligibility
To qualify for Erasmus+ funding a traineeship must be:

- deemed ‘academically relevant’ for your degree programme by the relevant Go Abroad Tutor
- of minimum duration 2 months
- full-time, applicable to the type of work
- take place in a participating European country (you cannot receive funding for a traineeship in your home country, nor the UK)

Summer Traineeship
A summer traineeship is a great opportunity to experience time abroad, particularly if your degree programme is less flexible and offers limited study exchange options.

Any summer traineeship activity undertaken and supported by the Erasmus+ mobility grant will be recognised and included on your Academic Transcript upon graduation. Examples of summer traineeships which previous Aberdeen student have received Erasmus+ funding for include saving sea turtles in Greece and gaining administrative experience in the Lithuanian Embassy in Paris.

Remember when you are applying for summer traineeships to check the contract start and end dates – these must not overlap with Aberdeen semester dates and the traineeship must meet the minimum funding duration of 2 months.

Graduate Traineeship
For students nearing the end of their studies, a graduate traineeship is a great opportunity to enhance your employability. If the traineeship takes place in Europe within 12 months of your graduation date, and the host institution agrees to sign off the related Erasmus+ paperwork, it may be possible to apply for Erasmus+ funding.

Erasmus+ Study & Traineeship
It is possible to undertake an Erasmus+ study exchange and an Erasmus+ traineeship at different times during your degree programme, subject to the approval of the relevant department(s) at the University of Aberdeen. Both periods abroad must be recognised as counting directly towards your degree programme at the University of Aberdeen, and the maximum duration of both together should not exceed 12 months.

Need to know
The Erasmus Team has funding available for relevant traineeship activities. However it is your responsibility to source, apply for, and secure a relevant traineeship. You can visit the Careers Service to find out more about the resources available to support you in your search.
How to Apply

Preparation
Students interested in participating in the Erasmus programme should add their details to the mailing list on our website. Students on the mailing list will be kept up-to-date with news and events and will be notified when applications open and close.

Online application
For both Erasmus+ study and Erasmus+ funding for traineeships, there is an online application which must be completed by the stated deadline. The online application is very straightforward and doesn’t take long to complete.

However you will be required to prepare a brief Statement of Motivation beforehand which you will need to upload during the application.

For more information about the online application, please watch the short video created and produced by the Learners’ Toolkit team and available on their website.

Study application and deadline
Before completing the online application, you must research your options and choose your preferred host institutions. It is essential that you consult the Course Catalogues of your preferred host institutions, ensuring that courses suitable for your degree programme are offered at a relevant level and taught in a relevant language.

There will be a specific application information session for those applying for Erasmus+ study exchange on Monday 15 January 2018, 1-2pm, in the Arts Lecture Theatre.

Traineeship application and deadline
Students who have secured a traineeship which will take place between 1 June 2018 – 30 September 2019 are welcome to apply for Erasmus+ funding in this cycle. If you intend to look and apply for a traineeship but have not yet done so then you can still apply giving provisional details. Speculative applications are welcome!

“My year abroad on Erasmus has been brilliant so far. As a keen traveller, discovering more of Spain has provided me with amazing experiences and cherished memories. The chance to meet so many like-minded people, from various countries all across the world, has enriched my life as a student, and helped me learn more about different cultures, as well as making close friends.

Rebecca Endersby
Hispanic Studies + Linguistics
University of the Basque Country
What happens next?

Students who have applied for Erasmus+ funding for traineeships will be notified if they have been successful by email. Further instructions will then follow as to preparing Erasmus+ paperwork for receipt of the grant.

For those applying for Erasmus+ study exchange, the following steps apply.

**Selection**
At each partner institution we have a limited number of exchange places. With some destinations being more competitive than others, a selection process is necessary to allocate successful applicants to host institutions. This process is undertaken by the Erasmus Office, working closely with Go Abroad Tutors. The selection decision is based on academic merit, your Statement of Motivation and in some cases, the suitability between your degree programme and courses on offer at the partner institution.

**Offer Letter**
You will be notified of the outcome of your application in March. Successful applicants will receive an offer letter with details of their allocation and the terms and conditions of the offer. You will need to sign and return the Offer Letter by the stated deadline in order to confirm your place.

It is important to note that all selection and allocation decisions are provisional at this stage, subject to you meeting the specified academic criteria by the end of the academic year.

**Nomination**
Once you have returned your Offer Letter the Erasmus Unit will send a nomination email with your contact details to the host institution.

**Host institution procedures**
After receiving your nomination, the host institution will normally contact you directly with further information about their application procedure which you must complete. The procedures will vary between institutions.

Although you have been nominated by the University of Aberdeen for exchange, you will not be officially accepted by the host institution until you have completed their application procedure. It is your responsibility to do this. Please check the website of your host institution to familiarise yourself with their application process and importantly, any application deadlines.

**Need to know**
Some host institution application forms will require you to enter the Erasmus ID code of the University of Aberdeen. The code is UK ABERDEE01.

Documents which are commonly required as part of the host institution’s application include:

- a nomination certificate
- a language certificate (if studying in a language other than English)
- your Transcript of Records
- your provisional course choices

If you require a nomination or language certificate, please request this by emailing erasmus@abdn.ac.uk.

To receive your Transcript of Records, an official University document which details the credits and grades you have achieved thus far, please email erasmus@abdn.ac.uk. Do not order your Transcript of Records from the Online Store or use a print out from your Student Hub. The version we provide is free of charge and understood by our partners. Please allow one week for transcript requests.

You may be required to provisionally choose your courses at the host institution. For support when selecting courses, speak to your Go Abroad Tutor(s). Any documents pertaining to your course choice must be signed by your Go Abroad Tutor(s).
Some FAQs

Who can help me find out more about Erasmus exchange?
Your first port of call with any questions should be the Go Abroad Desk in the International Centre, 110 High Street. The desk is open for two hours daily and staffed by one of our Go Abroad Ambassadors: Aberdeen students who have taken part in an exchange and are keen to share their experiences and help you begin your Erasmus journey!

- Mon, Wed, Fri 14:00-16:00
- Tues, Thurs 10:00-12:00

There is also a library of promotional materials from our partner universities available for you to access in the Centre at any time.

The Erasmus Unit looks after the over-arching organisation and administration of the Erasmus programme at the University of Aberdeen, including payment of the Erasmus+ mobility grant. If you have any specific questions about the programme, application procedures, grant payments or similar which can’t be answered at the Go Abroad Desk please drop us an email – erasmus@abdn.ac.uk.

Finally, in every department there is a designated Go Abroad Tutor who acts as the first point of contact for any academic matters relating to the Erasmus+ study exchange. Check our website to find details of your Go Abroad Tutor. Joint honours students will have two Go Abroad Tutors, one from each subject area. Your Go Abroad Tutor approves your curriculum choice while abroad.

What about tuition fees?
When studying or working abroad as part of your degree programme, you should continue to be entitled to assistance from public funds towards your tuition fees. Erasmus students do NOT pay tuition fees to the host institution, but continue to do so to the University of Aberdeen as follows.

Students funded by SAAS (Scottish/EU students)
- Full year study - SAAS cover full fee
- Full year traineeship - SAAS cover 50% fee, remainder waived
- Part year study - SAAS cover full fee
- Part year traineeship - SAAS cover full fee

Student Finance England/Wales/Northern Ireland and International Students (RUK students)
- Full year study/traineeship – fee waiver switched from final year to year abroad*
- Part year study/traineeship – standard fee applies

* only applies if it is your first ‘year abroad’ during the programme, otherwise you will be charged standard fees

You must apply to the relevant funding body as normal, indicating that you are going abroad. The Erasmus Unit will confirm to your funding body that you are abroad on a University-organised programme in the summer preceding your time abroad.

“I met exciting and open-minded people every single day, getting to know more about the local customs and traditions, seeing the rapid progress you are making with the language and being able to communicate freely with the locals - to me these are the highlights of my extraordinary and unforgettable Erasmus experience in Spain!”

Ivo Atanassov
European Studies
University of Alicante
What about my student loan?
If you are going abroad as part of your degree programme, you will most likely still be entitled to a student loan. Generally, you should still also be eligible for means-tested bursaries and grants, however students undertaking a paid traineeship may receive less, or no longer qualify.

Scottish students funded by SAAS, who are studying abroad as a compulsory element of their degree programme, may be entitled to claim the cost of a return flight and health insurance from SAAS. For more information, check the SAAS website.

How much Erasmus+ mobility grant will I receive?
The Erasmus+ Mobility Grant is intended to contribute towards the extra costs involved in studying abroad, but will by no means cover your full expenditure.

Grant levels are determined by the British Council each year and have not yet been announced for 2018/19. In 2017/18 the grant levels were set between €280-€430 depending on activity and host country.

Prior to beginning your mobility you will be issued with a set of personalised documents relating to the Erasmus Mobility Grant. Each document must be completed as instructed and returned to the Erasmus Unit. The grant is paid into your UK bank account in Pounds Sterling in two allocations. The first allocation, amounting to approximately 80% of the overall amount, is paid shortly after your arrival at the host institution. The second allocation is paid after your mobility has ended. Failure to return paperwork will delay grant payments.

If you return from your Erasmus exchange earlier than planned you may be required to repay some of your grant. If you do not meet the minimum duration of two months for Erasmus+ work placements, or three months for Erasmus+ study exchange, you will have to repay the full grant amount.

Additional funding for students from low income backgrounds and for students with disabilities is available, and we would strongly encourage and welcome applications from students in both these groups.

Are there any other useful sources of information?
We have collated feedback reports written by Aberdeen students who have previously been on Erasmus on our MyAberdeen page ‘Erasmus - Year Abroad’. These provide a great insight into our partner universities, top study and city tips and useful advice from our students who have been there, done that.

For another positive goldmine of student-generated information, blogs and invaluable tips about study and work abroad visit: www.globalgraduates.com.

And finally like our Facebook page ‘ErasmusABDN’ and join our group for those interested in going abroad in 2018/19 to be kept up-to-date with news, information sessions and deadlines, ‘Aberdeen Go Abroad’.
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WHEN?