

## Studying abroad

Getting the opportunity to study in another country appeals to many students for a variety of reasons, the main ones being learning a new language, gaining more independence and meeting different people. Another good reason is knowing it can also make their CV stand out to prospective employers.

Students of all subject areas can take part in these schemes, not just language students. Subjects offered range from engineering to the history of art. However, you will need to check with your academic department which universities abroad are participating.

According to the Prospects graduate careers website, the top five places to study abroad are Germany, Australia, Canada, France and the USA.

Read on to find out about your options.

### Study in Europe - the Erasmus+ scheme

Erasmus+ is a European funded programme that promotes the mobility of students across Europe, with up to 32 participating countries. You can study abroad for up to a year with a partner university of the institution you are studying at.

Both undergraduate and postgraduate students can participate in the Erasmus+ programme as part of their degree. The Erasmus+ website will tell you all you need to know. Your university will also have information on its website, with some universities hosting information days to answer all your questions.

Here are some of the main points regarding Erasmus+.

- You should apply through your university the year before you want to take part.
- Your university must hold an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education.
- You must be working towards a recognised degree up to and including the level of doctorate.
- You need to have accumulated a certain amount of credits to qualify. Each institution varies in their criteria – usually a good average grade performance of between 50%-65% depending on the institution.
- Placements are subject to availability down to each subject area in each institution.
- Exchanges can last between a semester or a full academic year (between three and twelve months).
- You can only study abroad in the 2nd or 3rd year of your undergraduate degree course.
- Your tuition fees will be paid as normal to your university.
- You are still eligible to receive a student loan, or bursaries during your time abroad.
- You would receive an Erasmus+ grant to cover the **additional** costs of studying abroad which is paid through your university. This can be up to €280-€330 a month, depending on the country you visit. Disadvantaged students can receive a further €120 a month.
- Any credits earned abroad on your course will be transferred to your university programme.

Since 2015, Erasmus+ also funds international study with partner countries outwith the EU.

### Work placements in Europe - Erasmus+ traineeship

You can also apply for work experience placements in any of the 32 participating countries in the European Union as part of your studies. The scheme is available to both higher education and vocational education and training (VET) students, and can last between 2 and 12 months. You would receive a grant of up to €380-€430 a month, depending on the country you visit. You would earn credits towards your course, and you may even get paid on the placement. Work experience is available in most sectors, public and private education and non-profit organisations.

You can check for traineeship opportunities on the [Erasmus Intern](#) website.

## International exchange programmes

Global exchange schemes offer you the opportunity to study in countries outside the European Union such as Canada, the USA, Australia, China, New Zealand, Brazil or Singapore. Placements usually last for one full academic year, and location and subject choice vary from institution to institution.

- Check with your department if it has any partner universities in an international exchange programme.
- You will normally have to apply in 2nd year for 3rd or 4th year study.
- Competition is high, so check early on in your course.
- Placements are not guaranteed, even if you meet the necessary academic requirements.
- You will be responsible for all costs of accommodation and travel for the placement.
- You might have to find a part time job to cover your costs there, however some countries may not allow students to work off campus, even for part time work.
- You should apply for your student visa once your application has been accepted.

As with Erasmus+ placements, if you are receiving SAAS funding there are no extra tuition fees to pay to the exchange institution. If you are in receipt of an SAAS loan this should also not be affected.

## Independently arranged study placements

You don't need to go through an official exchange programme if you want to study abroad. For example, you might like the idea of a longer stay, and studying the whole degree abroad. This has its advantage in that you have more control over choosing the place you study at, course content and your length of stay.

However independent study abroad means lots of discipline and basically funding your own studies and expenses – including medical insurance. You will have to either take out a loan or secure a scholarship from your chosen institution or from home. You may well also have to find a part time job when you are there, however some countries may not allow students to work off campus, even part time.

It's worth noting that it's cheaper to study in Europe compared to international destinations such as America and Australia. Some universities within the European Union may not charge you tuition fees, but you will still have to fund your living and travel expenses.

## Sources

- StudyAbroad.com - [www.studyabroad.com](http://www.studyabroad.com)
- Global Graduates - <https://globalgraduates.com/>

- British Council - [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)
- ERASMUS+ - <https://erasmusplus.org.uk>
- Prospects - [www.prospects.ac.uk/studying\\_abroad.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/studying_abroad.htm)
- The Complete University Guide - [www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/international/studying-overseas](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/international/studying-overseas)
- The Fulbright Commission website gives a wide range of information about the various opportunities for studying in the USA – <http://www.fulbright.org.uk>