CHECK LIST

Essential things to do before you leave campus

☐ Complete required documents promptly
☐ See your Academic Co-ordinator about courses p6
☐ Make contact with other students p11
☐ Read this Guide carefully!

Essential things to do before you depart for your placement

☐ Make sure that your Learning Agreement is signed by the host before you arrive p6
☐ Ensure that you have a valid passport p11
☐ Register for Kent’s free, compulsory insurance p18
☐ Obtain a visa, if necessary p11
☐ Make sure your contact details are correct on your Kent student record (SDS) p11
☐ Book your travel and accommodation p12
☐ Make sure you know where to go and what to do on arrival p15
☐ Make financial arrangements p16
☐ Pack this Guide! You will need it during your stay.

Essential things to do when you arrive

☐ Get your arrival certificate signed
☐ See the Academic Co-ordinator at the host university to update your Learning Agreement p6
☐ Keep in touch! p21

“Without a doubt, it has been the toughest year of my life. However, I have learned so much and therefore it has actually become the best year ever. Thank you so much for this amazing opportunity.”

Wishwara Hiddalarachchi
German
University of Freiburg
INTRODUCTION

Studying or working abroad is an exciting opportunity to expand your academic and employment horizons, to experience other cultures in depth and to develop as a person.

This Guide is intended to give you general advice to help you prepare for your time abroad. It is an essential supplement to your own research and the information you will receive from your host institution, school or employer.

Please read this guide in its entirety before leaving Kent. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Erasmus Team.

The Erasmus Team is responsible for:
• Information about and help with all organisational aspects of the time abroad
• Liaison with partner universities
• Support for students before and during the period abroad
• Collection of Year Abroad marks

Lastly we wish you the best of luck with your placement and encourage you to make the most of all of the opportunities that will come your way. Remember that you are also ambassadors for the University of Kent, so do us proud!

With best wishes

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“It was definitely the best experience of my life, it’s very difficult accepting the fact that it’s over now! Ireland feels like a second home now though which is amazing, and I will be going back very soon.”

George Ray
History
University College Cork
PERSONAL PREPARATION

Your time abroad will be an unforgettable experience, which will be made even more fulfilling if you prepare well before you leave.

Consider
The more you put into your time abroad, the more you are likely to get out of it!

- What do you hope to get out of your time abroad?
- What skills do you want to develop?
- What attitude will you take with you? Going with a realistic attitude can make a big difference.

Cultural awareness
On arrival you will need to learn new skills and be ready to adapt to the host country's culture. You will probably encounter a range of differences over the period, some may be more obvious, or easier to get used to, than others.

There will of course be obvious cultural differences – history, language, religion, etc – but you may find that some differences are subconscious: assumptions about nationality, age, how relationships work, attitudes to authority etc.

Communication differences do not just affect those who are studying a foreign language: you might find there are differences of writing or speaking style, body language, or expectations of formality. For example, in some countries, calling an academic by his/her first name would be frowned upon.

You may also find that your expectations vary or even conflict with the expectations of those around you. This could be something as simple as expectations of personal space or as broad as the division of tasks between students and university staff. The latter can be a challenge as many host universities expect students to find information by themselves or to organise their own module registration and timetable. In some cases, this might be done in a low tech/high effort way rather than through an online system.

Culture shock
Whilst the best advice from our students is to ‘embrace the differences’, it can take time to do so and many experience culture shock in some form during the time abroad. This is normal and can be valuable as you develop new skills and self-awareness to deal with the changes. Allow yourself time to adjust: some adapt very quickly (or appear to do so!), for others the process is much more gradual.

Resources
Make the most of the resources available to help you prepare for the time abroad.

- Kent student questionnaires: Completed by Kent students during their time abroad, these cover a range of important topics from accommodation to finance to socialising. (Available in International Partnerships)
- Other students: The Erasmus Team can help you contact Kent students who are at/have been at your destination and incoming students from that city/country
- Academic Co-ordinator in your Kent school: He/she will help you with academic matters related to the time abroad
- This guide

“Best year of my life, never have change and education in my life been so significant, also met some of the best friends I will ever have.”

Ryan Goodge
Drama and Film
Universiteit Utrecht
“I have learnt so much this year and developed and grown so much in ways I don’t think I could have if I had not been pushed out of my comfort zone by this year abroad! The year abroad was very beneficial to my personal development.”

Tobi Kolawole-Olutade
Politics and International Relations with a Year in Continental Europe
University of Tampere
ATTENDING A UNIVERSITY 
– WHAT TO EXPECT

Our partner universities have been hand-picked by your schools to allow you to have a useful and interesting academic experience. Some may be bigger and more bureaucratic than Kent, others may be surprisingly laidback! In most cases, the exchanges have been running for many years so the Erasmus Team and your Academic Co-ordinator know the partner well and have good contacts with staff there.

The host university will give you details of useful administrative and academic contacts there. Exchange students often get additional help with procedures or have sightseeing trips or parties arranged especially for them.

Don’t forget that adapting to the culture of studying in another country is part of the experience of the period abroad! The first few weeks may be challenging, but this can be overcome with an open mind and positive attitude. A few notes are given below to help you prepare for the differences:

Registration procedures
These can seem complicated and frustrating as the systems may not be what you are used to at Kent. (Incoming exchange students to Kent sometimes feel the same way!) Be prepared to devote time and energy to registration and don’t be afraid to ask local staff or students for help. Do participate in any orientation programmes offered by the university because these will often include help with registration.

Style of teaching
There is a wide variation in teaching styles. Some are similar to Kent, having lectures and seminars with an emphasis on discussion and analysis. Others teach primarily through lectures with an emphasis on the student learning from lecturers and set texts. It can be difficult to get used to the latter, but the knowledge obtained can be put to excellent use in adding depth to your work at Kent. (In some cases, lecture halls are packed and it is necessary to arrive early to get a seat.)

University staff
Exchange students will have an Academic Co-ordinator who can be contacted about academic problems. He/she may be more accessible than other tutors, who may not have office hours or an office in the university, and will be used to queries from exchange students. Contacting class tutors is best done by speaking to them after the class or by emailing to arrange an appointment.

The academic year
Most mainland European universities have a two semester system with exams at the end of each teaching period. A few universities have ‘blocks’ of teaching with students taking one or two courses in each block and then being assessed immediately. Term/semester dates will be made available by your host university either online or in the information they send you.

Social life
There is a greater distinction between study and socialising at most partner universities than at Kent. In some countries, like France, students will socialise at bars and clubs in the city where they are based and will keep the residences as places to study and sleep. The student questionnaires in International Partnerships give lots of information about the social life at each university, whether for all students or for exchange students in particular. Exchange students are often in the fortunate position of having parties, events and trips arranged especially for them by the local International Office.

Orientation
Many universities offer orientation meetings and events to help students to settle in. Orientation events are highly recommended: some include tours and events and help is often given with registration. Most universities also provide language classes for exchange students either before or during the academic year.

Your host university may arrange mentoring with local students or a Tandem language programme. Both are highly recommended for language learning and making friends. Information will be sent by the host university.

“Get out of your comfort zone! I cannot stress it enough. It is going to be the best year of your life.”

Eugenie Valentin
European Studies (Combined Languages)
Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna
ATTENDING A UNIVERSITY – STUDYING ABROAD

Your time abroad is an integral part of your degree. Because of this, you are expected to attend classes and obtain credits and marks.

If you have any questions after reading this information, please contact your Kent Academic co-ordinator or the Erasmus Team in International Partnerships.

All students must fill in a Learning Agreement and keep it updated throughout the study placement. The Learning Agreement is an obligatory academic contract between you, Kent and your host university.

Choosing courses
You should meet with your Academic Co-ordinator to discuss a provisional study programme and prepare your Learning Agreement in the summer term. A list of Academic Co-ordinators will be sent to you by email.

Before you go to see your co-ordinator, get as much course information as you can from your host university’s website/documentation or from the reference Learning Agreements in International Partnerships. Your co-ordinator at Kent will advise you about specific course requirements. Please note that many universities publish their course information much later than at Kent. In some cases, particularly in Spain and Italy, courses may not be finalised until shortly before the start of the academic year! Therefore, the Learning Agreement is provisional until arrival when you will be able to make changes.

Credits
You should choose and register courses worth 30 ECTS per semester (60 ECTS in total). A few universities have agreed with us a different total number of ECTS which your co-ordinator will discuss with you. If, at any stage, you think it will not be possible to get 30 ECTS in total per semester, please notify the co-ordinator and the Erasmus Team.

1 ECTS is equivalent to 2 Kent credits; so 30 ECTS is equivalent to 60 Kent credits, the normal workload for a term.

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)
The University has adopted ECTS in the context of our European connections and activities.

ECTS was developed by the European Commission in order to provide common procedures to guarantee academic recognition of studies abroad. It provides a way of measuring and comparing learning achievements, and transferring them from one institution to another.

Completing a Learning Agreement
When you have chosen your courses, write them on your Learning Agreement and get it signed by your Academic Co-ordinator. It is easiest to do this before you leave Kent. Students who will split the year between two placements should prepare two Learning Agreements.

When it has been signed by the Kent co-ordinator, send it to the host university for signature, keeping a copy for yourself. Please ask them to return the signed Agreement to you. You should then give us an electronic or paper copy. You will take the original with you to the host. If there is any delay/difficulty, please notify the Erasmus Team, erasmus@kent.ac.uk.

If your host university expects you to fill in their version of the Learning Agreement, that will be fine. It is not obligatory to fill in the Kent version as well. The important things are that you have a complete, correct, signed Learning Agreement and that the Erasmus Team has a copy of it.

Changing courses
On arrival you may find that your agreed courses are no longer available or clash with other modules. If you find yourself in this situation, you should follow the host university’s procedures for choosing new courses. (In many cases, the partner university allows several weeks for students to attend lots of different courses before deciding which ones they want to register for!)

When you have decided, make sure that you amend your course registration – following the host university’s procedures – and then update your Learning Agreement. Fill in the ‘During the mobility’ section of your Learning Agreement, get it signed by your host co-ordinator and then return it by email or post to Kent. You should repeat this process if you make changes later in the year.

“It is very different to the studies in the UK. However, this is the entire point of travelling abroad and experiencing new teaching and assessment methods. It is hard to get used to the constant monitoring (exams – mid terms) but it becomes second nature once you have settled.”

Wendy Neves
Politics and International Relations (Language)
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
**Course registration**

Although the Learning Agreement is obligatory, it may not complete your course registration. You must complete the host university’s process as well and register your modules with them.

You may find that the host university registers you not simply to a module but to a particular class and tutor as well. If you attend the right class but with the wrong tutor or do not register your modules correctly, it may be impossible to get your marks at the end of the year.

**Academic stresses**

The beginning of the time abroad can be stressful and it takes time to adapt to the new lifestyle and academic differences. Some find that their first marks are not what they have been used to or that they are struggling to adjust to the new system. This is a normal part of the study abroad experience and usually students find that the marks improve in the second semester when they are feeling much more settled and confident.

If you find yourself in this situation, don’t worry! If you have specific concerns, contact your course tutor or Academic Co-ordinator at the partner university for advice. Try to get to know other students in your class: they may be able to help you with notes and understanding the local systems. If you are very concerned about marks or settling in, notify your Academic Co-ordinator and the Erasmus Team at Kent.

**Disruption of studies**

Do your best to undertake all the classes and assessment in order to achieve the required marks and credits. If your work/exams are adversely affected by strikes, ill health etc, it is essential that you notify your Academic Co-ordinator and the Erasmus Team at Kent as soon as possible. In case of prolonged or serious illness, please ensure that you get a medical certificate from the doctor/hospital because it will be needed by your host university and by Kent.

**Marks and transcripts**

Before you leave the host university, check that you have completed the necessary procedures to obtain your marks. You should follow their procedures very carefully and submit any required documentation (e.g. Scheine or Libretto). You must also request a transcript before your departure. Bear in mind that it is much easier to sort this out while you are still at the partner university!

Students in Italy may be given a ‘Libretto’ which must be presented at the International Office at the host university at the end of the stay/exams so that a Transcript of Marks can be issued. The completed Libretto may be returned to you, in which case you should bring it to the Erasmus Team at Kent at the start of your final year. Students in Germany must prepare any required ‘Referat’ or ‘Klausur’, in order to obtain a ‘Leistungsschein’ or ‘benoteter Schein’ for each course. However, increasing numbers of universities are producing an ECTS transcript rather than issuing Scheine. Students at Lausanne should request their marks from each tutor.

**Submitting your transcript**

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Erasmus Team at Kent has received your transcript by Week 2 of your final year, whether from you or your host university. Check that all courses attended and the marks and credits attached to them are recorded on the transcript. The transcript should include the grade normally awarded by the local institution, the equivalent ECTS grades and the ECTS credits.

If you think a mark is wrong or a course is missing, you must contact the relevant office at your partner university to request an amended transcript. You must notify the Erasmus Team at Kent about this.

**Important note about failing courses**

If you find that you have failed exams or other assessment, please notify your Academic Co-ordinator at Kent and, if possible, re-sit the exam.

Students who do not take sufficient credits or do not achieve the required credits and marks without an adequate reason risk failing the Year/Term Abroad.

“...The teaching was great, with a remarkable competence for the English Language. As were the facilities, seminars and lectures and all people concerned with my learning around campus. (...) A wonderful experience that I would strongly recommend, have met some extraordinary people and had a great time living in a foreign city.”

Eliot McGowan  
Classics and Archaeological Studies  
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
“If you go for it, it can be the best year of your life. My expectations in September were that I would improve my French and have some fun in the meantime but I did not realise the immense impact living abroad can have on your life perspective, independence and wellbeing. I feel truly humbled that I was lucky enough to spend a year learning and living in a country with such great people and an amazing culture different to my own.”

Amelia Williams
French and History
Université de Genève
ASSISTANTSHIPS AND OTHER WORK PLACEMENTS

Working abroad is an exciting and challenging opportunity, providing an insight into potential careers and a chance to make useful contacts.

Assistantships
Assistants will find that most information will come from the British Council information packs and from pre-departure webinars and induction meetings held at the start of the year. It is highly recommended that you visit the Council’s website as soon as possible for information on practicalities as well as reports from previous assistants:
• www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad/outside-uk/english-language-assistants
• Essential teaching advice, downloadable materials and a web forum are available at: www.teachingenglish.org.uk

If you have not already done so, speak to assistants who have come back from the year abroad. They will often be very willing to pass on advice or helpful information or just have a chat about the year. Questionnaires completed by previous assistants are available in International Partnerships.

As soon as you are sent your school or local authority’s contact details, contact them. The British Council website has advice on how to do this. Make sure that you are aware of, and arrive in time for, any orientation meetings given by the local or national assistantship organisation. These meetings can be not only a helpful source of information, but also an opportunity to meet other assistants in your region.

Work placements
If you are undertaking a work placement, you must get approval from your Kent School and a contract/internship agreement signed by your employer. If you do not already have a signed contract, please contact the Erasmus Team urgently. You should contact your employer for information about the work involved and documents you may need. Find out as much as you can about your job, the local area and the company you will be working for, before you go.

Make sure you know:
• What is expected of you (eg tasks, responsibilities, confidentiality, behaviour and dress)
• What your hours of work will be and your holiday entitlement
• Will the company help you to find accommodation?
• What salary are they offering you, if any, and when will it be paid?
• Will you be expected to pay taxes or social security payments?
• Will the company’s insurance cover you at work?

Contact the Careers and Employability Service and your School’s Placement Officer for more advice.

Essential documents
In the event of No Deal, you will be notified by the Erasmus Team or the British Council (assistants), if it appears that work permits will be needed to work in the EU.

Work requirements
All students are expected to fulfil the terms of their contract and submit the work set by Kent. You will be given details of any required academic work, usually an essay or project, by your School’s Placement Officer.

Problems during the placement
If you have any difficulties or queries during the time abroad which affect your ability to do your job, you must speak to the staff member responsible for your placement at the school/company. The British Council’s website also gives advice on personal safety and the recommended process for problem solving.

If you do not feel able to speak the staff member responsible for your placement, try speaking to another colleague who you trust. Alternatively, assistants can contact the local assistantship office. The Erasmus Team and your School’s Placement Officer are also available to offer advice and support.

In the case of prolonged illness, you should obtain a medical certificate from the doctor/hospital concerned (See also page 19). You should also notify the Erasmus Team and your academic co-ordinator or Placement Officer at Kent.

“My only advice would be to enjoy every second because it goes by in a flash. Homesickness was something that I worried about before I arrived, but apart from my first day here I have felt so at home and comfortable in Poitiers. Take every opportunity that comes your way and try to visit as many places as possible. As an assistant, you get the school holidays which is great! Make the most of the free time and travel. There will always be someone around to help you if you are unsure of anything – don’t be afraid to ask! Have fun!”

Maria Perry
French and History
British Council Assistant
ATTENDING TWO PLACEMENTS

If you split the year between two placements, remember to keep track of any preparation you need to do for the second placement during the first semester. If your first placement is coming to an end and you have not heard from the second placement for a while, please contact them directly and let the Erasmus Team know if you have any concerns.

If you will study at a (different) university in the second semester, make sure that you follow any instructions they give for pre-registration, arrival etc.

Many universities offer language courses or orientation programmes just before or during the second semester so make sure you take these into consideration when planning your arrival.

Documentation
Don’t forget to return all the necessary documentation to the Erasmus Team for both placements. The Departure and Arrival certificates are particularly important but it is easy to forget them in the rush of moving between placements. Make sure that you let the Erasmus Team know your new address as soon as possible after arrival.

Work requirements
Make sure that you know the work requirements for each placement, particularly if you will split the year between a university placement and a work placement. The Work Requirements information will be published on Moodle or given to you by your School’s placement officer.

Term dates and exams
Although every effort has been made to avoid a term date clash in the case of two university placements, you may find that the start of your second placement starts before the first placement’s exams have finished. If this is the case, find out if your tutors would be willing to set you an alternative assessment or allow you to sit the exams earlier. This is unfortunately not guaranteed as it is dependent on the host university’s regulations and the goodwill of your tutors.

If it is not possible, you must then contact the second semester placement to find out if you can postpone your arrival for a few days in order to complete your exams. Notify your Academic Co-ordinator and the Erasmus Team at Kent if neither option is viable.

Remember...
Allow yourself time to adjust to the new placement because you may experience culture shock again! Ask local staff and students if you’re not sure what to do and don’t hesitate to contact the Erasmus Team if you have any concerns/problems.

“…It’s a great opportunity and a lot of fun. The city is a beautiful place and the people are welcoming and slightly crazy (but in a good, fun way). I highly recommend doing a year abroad here!”

Charles Hall
Biomedical Science, Bogaziçi University
**PRE-DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**

Please feel free to contact the Erasmus Team for advice and help with any of these procedures.

The team is a useful source of information and can give more specific information on what is required by different countries or partner universities.

**Essential documents**

Make sure you have the following documents:

- **Passport**, valid for at least six months after the end of your time abroad. If you hold a UK passport, the Government advice is that ‘you should renew it now if, on the day you travel, your passport either: has less than six months left’ or ‘is more than nine years and six months old’.
- **Insurance** (see page 18)
- **Visa**
  - The host country’s embassy or consulate can advise on entry requirements as well as visa application processes and costs.
- **Residence requirements**
  - Check with your host if you need to register with local authorities/police on arrival and what documents are required, This might include your passport, proof of your financial support (eg a Student Finance statement or letter from parents), an accommodation or employment contract, student ID.
- **International Student Identity Card (ISIC)**
  - These cards can be extremely useful and can entitle you to discounts for travel and activities. Cards can be obtained from STA Travel. You will need a passport photo and your Kent ID.
- **Learning Agreement for study or work**
  - We will send this to you by email with instructions.
- **Arrival certificate**
  - We will email this, and other documents, to you with instructions.
- **Passport photos**
- **Photocopies**
  - Take copies of all the documents listed above as well as the originals. Do not hand over the originals to anyone in case they get lost.

**Assistant's note**

Assistants will receive instructions from the British Council, and possibly the local authority/school. It is really important to contact your school as soon as you receive the details. Those on work placements should check with their employer about forms that may be required in addition to the work placement contract.

It is essential that you meet any deadlines given so that you do not jeopardise your placement.

**Make contacts**

Do get in touch with other students who are at/going to the same destination as well as the incoming exchange students from there. The Erasmus Team can help you do this.

You can also get in touch on facebook: UniversityofKentGoAbroad.

**Your contact details**

Please ensure that your home and emergency contact details are correct on SDS before and during your time abroad.

www.kent.ac.uk/student

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“So far it has been a unique and mind-opening experience as it has allowed me to meet many people from all over Europe, which has given me much insight into cultural differences. I have also partaken in activities I would usually not do such as visiting museums with friends and travelling around the city taking in the sights and sounds whilst adapting to a new culture.”

Ryan Earnshaw
European Studies with Spanish
Universidad Carlos III Madrid

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**Information and forms**

We have nominated all those undertaking a study placement to the appropriate partner university/ies. You should expect to hear from them about registration and other matters by email in the next couple of months.
ACCOMMODATION

Study placements

Some universities provide accommodation and will send information or links by email. Universities without their own residences may offer help in finding private accommodation. Remember most universities have limited accommodation and allocate rooms on a ‘First come, first served’ basis; it is therefore crucial to complete forms, sign contracts and pay deposits/administrative charges on time.

Read the contract carefully before signing and follow any residence regulations out of consideration for other residents.

Please note: Accommodation situations may vary from year to year. A university that could offer accommodation in previous years may be unable to do so due to an unexpected problem. In this situation, the Erasmus Team at Kent will endeavour to get university accommodation for those concerned; however, students should be prepared to look for private accommodation.

Work placements

If you are doing an assistantship or work placement, the onus is on you to find accommodation. It is a good idea to research the town where you will be working and ask your school/employer for advice. Some students like to go out to the placement early with family so that they can visit possible rooms.

If you will be an assistant, it is worth attending any introductory briefing/training in your area as many students have found flatmates among the other local assistants. Some have been offered temporary accommodation by a member of staff while they looked for permanent accommodation.

Finding private accommodation

Contact the Erasmus Team of Kent and the local International Office, school or employer for advice. Some may be able to help more than others. The student questionnaires are highly recommended: many offer advice on flat hunting techniques, good sources of information and occasionally give a landlord’s address.

Important advice:

- Find out about the safe/unsafe areas of the town before starting your search
- Avoid visiting flats/rooms on your own; take a friend as security and an extra pair of eyes to spot problem areas. If this is impossible, leave the address, your mobile number and expected return time with a friend
- Be careful what personal details you give in adverts or to potential flatmates
- Arrange meetings in a public place
- Be businesslike and confident
- Find out who might have access to the accommodation (landlord, landlord’s agent, etc)
- Read the contract carefully and if you have any concerns ask a native-speaker to check it on your behalf before signing.

Scams

Unfortunately, scams are increasingly frequent even on social media sites for exchange students. Make sure that the properties advertised do exist before you pay any money towards renting them.

Living in France

A lot of French landlords require tenants to have a French guarantor.

All those resident in private accommodation in France will be required to pay the Taxe d’Habitation. Please be aware that you may not receive the payment demand until your final year. You may be eligible for a rent rebate (the Aide au Logement) through the CAF (www.caf.fr).

When you have found accommodation

- Make sure you know the dates of your lease
- Check what is or isn’t included in your contract: utility bills, furnishings, wifi, cooking and laundry facilities etc
- What will you need to take with you? Bedding, kettle...?
- What will you buy there? Find out where the local supermarkets are
- Do you need to get insurance before you move in?
- Internet access may not be automatically offered. Check the student questionnaires for advice about getting it installed as this can take some time.

“Very glad I decided to do an Erasmus year! Having a great time, and don’t really want it to end…”

Hannah Smith
Comparative Literature-Film
Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3
TRAVEL

If you are a UK national and/or will be travelling from the UK, make sure you are aware of any travel changes following Brexit.

Allow plenty of time to clear passport control and customs, particularly if you will have a connecting journey. Remember that UK nationals will go through separate border control lanes to EU nationals and may need to show a return ticket or funds for their stay.

See the Government website for details: www.gov.uk/visit-europe-brexit

Options

There are many options for cheap travel and student discounts for tickets. Various companies offer booking services for train or coach travel in mainland Europe, including for example Eurorails, The Trainline, Eurolines (part of National Express Coaches). STA Travel is a travel agent specialising in student travel, which has a branch in Canterbury.

Booking in advance is a good way to get cheaper tickets, but be aware that the ticket may be valid for travel at a specific time or have additional charges for cancellation or changes. Take this into account if you will have a connecting journey in case there are unexpected delays.

International Student Identity Card

An ISIC card provides some discounts itself, including at the time of writing the Gatwick Express and Heathrow Express, but also is useful evidence of your full-time student status for accessing student benefits abroad. You can apply for one online or through STA Travel.

Driving

If someone will drive you to your placement, or you intend to drive during your time abroad, make sure you are aware of the differing regulations and requirements in your host country and any other countries that you will drive through.

If you hold a UK driver’s licence, make sure you also obtain any new documentation which may be required, for example and International Driving Permit. See the Government website.

Your insurance company may provide advice about taking a car abroad.

Luggage

Whether you plan to travel by air, train or coach, your luggage will be limited either by baggage allowances or by how much you can carry.

Find out what is provided in your accommodation before you travel to avoid taking unnecessary items. If you will need to provide your own bedding or cooking equipment, consider whether you need to take things with you or can buy them on arrival.

If you will take a lot of things with you, ask a friend or family member to travel with you so that you can use their baggage allowance too. Alternatively, find out if someone can post some items to you.

Remember to abide by the current hand luggage allowances and restrictions.

Travelling with others

You may wish to consider travelling with other Kent students. Although you may be the only student going to that area from your School, there may be other Kent students travelling there. The Erasmus Team can help you contact them or even contact other UK universities to see if they also have students going to your destination.

Safety when travelling

The following tips will help you to have a safe journey:

• Always keep your passport, money and valuables secure, but make sure that you can access the things you will need during the journey easily.
• Keep your luggage close to you at all times so that it cannot be tampered with or stolen.
• Act confidently and be aware of what is happening around you.
• Plan your journey in advance so you do not have to refer frequently to a map/guidebook, which could mark you out as a stranger.
• Make sure you know where to go and what to do on arrival (see Arrival section).
• If you have to travel at night on public transport, sit near the bus driver if you can or with other people on the train.
• Have some spare cash with you in case you need/want to take a taxi to your accommodation.

“A year abroad gives you knowledge and language skills you simply can’t get in class. I loved every second of my year abroad and wish this would never end!”

Carla Biondi
Asian Studies and Hispanic Studies
Teach Argentina
ARRIVAL

At your accommodation
Find out from your residence manager or landlord how to get your key and when you can move in. Don’t arrive after office hours or during a weekend/local public holiday unless they say this is possible. Have an alternative plan, eg the details of a local hostel or hotel, in case your journey is delayed.

At your university/placement
If the host has not already told you what to do or where to go on your first day at university/work, contact them for advice.

Make sure that you arrive in time for any induction meeting or orientation/welcome programme. At universities, this will often include advice about registration, modules and opening bank accounts as well as the chance to make friends.

For assistants, induction meetings may give advice about the work but also provide an opportunity to meet other assistants, which can sometimes lead to finding flatmates.

Please get your Arrival Certificate signed by the host and return it to the Erasmus Team within two weeks of arrival. (The Erasmus Team will email a blank certificate to you before the placement starts.)

In your area
If you have to register with the local council or police, make an appointment or join the queue at the relevant office, taking all the required documents, plus photocopies, with you.

“As wonderful and amazing as a year abroad is you have to remember that it is a massive change. You don’t have to be doing things and feeling 100% amazing all the time. I found it quite like freshers again, everyone expects you to be doing fabulously all the time but that’s not always the case....So my advice would be – don’t rush! You have the whole year to explore. And remember what you’re doing is a big step in your life, it’s ok to feel overwhelmed...It is an amazing experience and I’ve very glad I did it.”

Alexandra Fowler
BA in English and American Literature
University of Copenhagen
FINANCE

With careful preparation and budgeting, it is possible to pay for essential expenses and still enjoy nights out and weekends away.

Be prepared for initial expenses for travel and accommodation, particularly if the academic year will start before your loan is due to be paid. In some cases, there may be a higher cost of living but other exchange students are usually a good source of information about the best supermarkets, cheap cinema tickets and rail/bus passes. The student questionnaires also give some very useful information on these matters.

See also the costs and funding information at: www.kent.ac.uk/goabroad/cost.html

[The following information is correct at the time of going to press.]

Erasmus+ Grant
If the UK continues within Erasmus+, the Erasmus Team will provide the relevant documents and information by email. An information session will also be held in the summer term.

Swiss-European Mobility Programme
Students at Swiss universities are normally eligible for the SEMP grant. This is paid through the Swiss university. They will advise you about the requirements and procedure. If there are any changes in the event of a No Deal Brexit, the Erasmus Team will notify you.

Tuition fees
Undergraduate students pay a reduced tuition fee to Kent if they spend a full year abroad. The fee is expected to be 15% of the normal Home/EU rate fee (currently £1,385) for both Home/EU and Overseas rate fee-payers.

Undergraduate students pay the normal tuition fees to Kent if they spend one term abroad.

Postgraduate students pay the normal tuition fees to Kent for a year or term abroad.

Tuition fees are not payable to any of the host institutions.

German universities charge a small semester fee which often provide benefits through student discounts and public transport passes. There may be similar small charges at other universities for membership of a student union, for study materials or other items.

Student Finance England
If you are eligible for funding through Student Finance, notify them as soon as possible that you will study or work abroad. This is particularly important if you have recently changed from a 3 year to 4 year degree programme.

Download your Study Abroad form from the Student Finance website, and bring/send it to the Erasmus Team for completion.

This should ensure that you get your funding at the right time. It may also be possible for students whose semester starts in August to receive the funding a bit earlier but this is not guaranteed.

Failure to notify Student Finance could result in your funding being delayed or in Student Finance not arranging funding for your final year.

Travel grants
You may be able to claim for some travel expenses through the Student Finance travel grant. You will need to have submitted your Course Abroad form and to have evidence of the expenditure.

Information is given on the Student Finance portal.

Emergency funding
If your Student Finance funding is significantly delayed or you need additional support after taking out your full entitlement, you may be eligible for emergency funding through Kent: www.kent.ac.uk/student/finance/emergency.html

Benefit entitlements
If you receive benefits, including DSA, tell the department responsible about your study/work abroad placement and check if it will affect your payments.

Cash and bank accounts abroad
Your bank
Inform your bank that you will be spending the next academic year abroad. Failing to do this could result in your card being stopped: the bank might assume that your card is being used fraudulently!

The bank will be able to advise you on managing your finances. Exchange rate inequalities and bank/credit fees (often surprisingly high) make it essential to manage your money in the most effective way possible. If using internet banking, make sure the necessary security precautions are in place.
Local banks
Whether, and when, to open a bank account abroad depends very much on individual circumstances. Check the student questionnaires for recommendations but bear in mind that there may be new regulations for UK nationals after Brexit.

Speak to students on arrival for advice on the most ‘student-friendly’ banks. When opening an account, remember to take proof of identification and, if applicable, university registration. You may also be required to pay some money in immediately.

Immediate costs
You will need a fair amount of easily available funds during the first few weeks of your stay, to pay at least the first month’s rent, plus a deposit, and for food and travel expenses. However, it is never sensible to carry large amounts of cash.

Money
If you plan to use your debit/credit card abroad or make transfers, find out what the charges will be. Make sure that your cards are widely accepted in your host country.

Pre-paid travel currency cards can be used like a debit card but are not linked to your account so there is less risk in case of loss or theft. Some charge fees for cash withdrawals so shop around for a good deal.

Employment
If you are considering part-time work to supplement your income, check that you have permission to work in that country and the hours allowed.

Remember your official placement is the priority so part-time work must fit in around it. Universities often have much longer hours in class than in the UK, so give yourself time to settle in before committing to a part-time job.

Teaching English privately can be a good way to earn some money. If you are an assistant and are asked to do some private tutoring, check that your school is happy with this.

Safety when looking for employment
The following points are aimed at helping you to find a suitable job safely:
• Speak to friends or colleagues who may be able to put you in touch with potential clients for language tutoring
• If advertising, be very careful about the kind of advert you write: ask a native speaker to advise you on the wording and do not give your home address
• Arrange to meet potential students/employers in a public place NOT your/their home
• Take someone with you or give the meeting location/time and contact’s name to a friend
• Dress smartly and behave in a businesslike way
• Keep the conversation off personal/social topics
• If you feel at all uncomfortable, excuse yourself politely and leave.

The majority of people are genuine but there have been some problems reported. This is not meant to put you off: it is simply to say that it is important to be vigilant.

“You meet so many people from everywhere and the views that you get on topics are so vast. It is not difficult to lose yourself in the beauty of the city... Coming abroad has opened my eyes in a lot of ways and has made me enjoy my degree more than I thought I ever could.”

Kashmeera Poona
English & American Literature and Creative Writing
Charles University Prague
INSURANCE

Insurance is an essential part of your preparation. It is always better to have insurance and not need it, than to not have it and get into difficulties!

European Health Insurance Card

Eligible students should obtain the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or equivalent from their home country. In addition to providing cover for some medical expenses it will almost certainly be a pre-requisite for university or police registration.

UK nationals are not expected to be eligible for the EHIC in the event of a No Deal Brexit.

If UK nationals are still eligible, the Erasmus team will email you information about applying for a student EHIC.

What does the EHIC cover?

The EHIC enables EU nationals to access state-provided treatment during your stay, often at a reduced cost and sometimes for free. Bear in mind that state provision and EHIC entitlements vary from country to country. Private treatment is not covered: eg in some countries, this might include a journey by ambulance.

Health insurance

UK nationals may wish to obtain health insurance before going abroad.

This may be obligatory in some countries, in which case students may be directed by the host university or employer to buy a policy from specific local insurers. There will be a (monthly) charge for this.

Any student who has a pre-existing health condition or disability is recommended to take out health insurance, even if it is not required in the host country, as this might include a journey by ambulance.

Kent’s travel and personal accident insurance

All students who do an official study/work placement as part of their degree, are required to register for the free travel and personal accident insurance which is arranged by the University of Kent with a leading travel insurer, currently Chubb Insurance: www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/services/insurance/travelstaff

How do I register for insurance cover?

Complete the online travel notification form on the above website, no later than 10 working days before you leave. Cover will start when you leave home to travel to your host university/placement and will remain in force for the period of your official study/work placement.

It covers a wide range of benefits and provides extremely generous insured sums compared with other stand-alone travel insurance policies.

Information on claiming is given on the aforementioned website.

Incidental holidays

Please note this insurance cover applies for incidental holidays taken within your host country. Cover can also apply for holidays taken away from your host country during vacation breaks, but you must disclose these when first registering online for insurance purposes or by confirming the holiday destinations and travel dates by email to – Insurance@kent.ac.uk for cover to be agreed. If the period of holiday exceeds the overall official study/work abroad period, you will have to arrange separate insurance for the extended holiday.

Evidence of cover

When you submit travel notification form, please download the evidence of cover.

Retain printed and electronic copies of your cover information so you know exactly what to do in the event of an emergency. A copy may also be required by your host university or employer.

Illness and injury

If you suffer from illness or injury while overseas, you must contact Chubb immediately for help and advice: Assistance Helpline: +44 (0)207 173 7796

E: medicalassistance@chubb.com

Further guidance about what to do in an emergency is available in the cover information document.

Important note about Spain

If you need treatment at a hospital or medical centre, make sure that you go, or are taken to, one which is public/state-run. Private hospitals have much higher charges than a public hospital.

Personal liability insurance

Some universities (particularly in France) require students to take out personal liability insurance, sometimes offering a policy which can be taken out on arrival. In addition, some French residences require students to take out a ‘multi-risques’ cover for their room before they can move in. Check with the host university if the Kent insurance policy is accepted. If it isn’t, allow plenty of time to buy the required insurance on arrival before you get your key. It is usually inexpensive.

Note for students on assistantships and work placements

Ask the British Council, local assistantship office or your employer if you will be entitled to local social security and accident cover.

Please note different countries have differing regulations on insurance provision for work placement trainees, and these should be checked well in advance of travel, to ensure that you understand and are satisfied with their arrangements regarding accident and liability insurance while you are commuting, at work or travelling for the employer.

Health and risk assessments

It is most important that you read and comply with the University’s Travelling and Working Overseas Performance Standard. You will be asked to fill in the Overseas Travel health questionnaire by the Erasmus Team.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Finally, before embarking on any overseas journey, please read information available from the UK Government Foreign and Commonwealth Office – www.fco.gov.uk.
HEALTH AND WELFARE

The period after arrival abroad can be disorientating as you adjust to a different culture.

Home sickness and the difficulty making yourself understood, or understanding others, can make small difficulties seem much worse! Many students feel anxious, lonely or stressed in their first few days or weeks.

Fortunately, these feelings do not usually persist, and the long term results are often closer friendships with other students and an improved sense of your own capabilities. Past experience suggests that with time and a positive attitude the adventure just gets better. Most students are sad to leave.

Dealing with stress – Don’t suffer in silence

If you do find you are suffering from culture shock, anxiety or home sickness, talk to someone about it; you may well find that other students have similar feelings and you can help each other get through it. Remember to keep in contact with friends and family at home but don’t spend too much time doing this because it can make home sickness worse.

Don’t forget…

- Allow yourself time to settle in
- Make sure you eat and sleep well
- Get to know other students
- Take time to do things you enjoy
- Keep yourself busy

Don’t hesitate to contact the Erasmus Team at Kent. We are here to help and can empathise with the anxieties and problems faced having all studied or worked abroad ourselves! In addition to our Team, you can also get help from the local International Relations Office, your employer or a teacher at your school or the local assistantship office.

Counselling support

Kent’s Student Wellbeing team (www.kent.ac.uk/studentwellbeing/) is also available to you while you are abroad if you feel you would benefit from this. They are happy to arrange free, confidential appointments by phone for Kent students who are abroad. You must be registered with a doctor in your host town to access this service.

Health questionnaires

You will be asked by the Erasmus Team to fill in an Overseas Travel Health Questionnaire as part of your preparation. If you declare a health condition/disability, you may also have to get a ‘Fitness to Travel’ certificate from the Medical Certificate. This procedure is obligatory but completely confidential.

Prescriptions

Make sure that you have supplies of any necessary prescription medicines before you leave. Check that your medicine is allowed in the host country; www.gov.uk/controlled-drugs-licences-fees-and-returns

It can also be useful to have a small first aid kit with the basics (eg aspirin, plasters, antiseptic cream, antihistamines…) for the start of the year. You may also want to stock up on your favourite toiletries!

Medical Facilities

It is recommended that you register with a local doctor during your time abroad, particularly if you will be there for a year or have a pre-existing medical or mental health condition.

In some countries, patients can go directly to a hospital for treatment by a specialist rather than having to be referred by their GP. Some host universities have their own medical centres or clinics for students’ use, which could simply be access to a doctor or nurse or cover a whole range of services including clinics and psychologists. Assistants and those on work placements should contact their employer for advice about the local medical facilities.

Pre-existing conditions

If you have a pre-existing health condition, it is very important that you meet with your doctor, specialist or Student Support (www.kent.ac.uk/studentsupport/) to discuss your plans. This will help you to work out any practical, psychological or medical support you might need there. Even if you do not currently need support or a prescription, it is worth discussing this in case your circumstances change while you are abroad. Having a back-up plan will mean that if something does happen, you will be prepared and it can be dealt with promptly.

Please notify the Erasmus Team as soon as possible if you become ill or need assistance, so that we can advise you appropriately and liaise with your host university/school/employer on your behalf (if this is necessary). All information is kept confidential.

You may wish to get a letter from your GP confirming details of your condition and current treatment in case you need further treatment or prescriptions while abroad. However, local doctors might decide to run their own tests before prescribing medication or treatment.

Disability support abroad

Although most host universities will have a disability support service, they may not offer exactly the same facilities or support that Kent offers. Many services are focused primarily on assisting students who have mobility, vision or hearing impairments, for example with accessible rooms, note-takers, etc.

‘Unseen’ disabilities and conditions like dyslexia or autism are not always recognised abroad or covered by these services. In some cases, this is because local students get support through their own doctors or social services.

Awareness and support is growing, but it is important that students contact the Erasmus Team and Student Support early so that we can find out what support you need and what is offered at your placement.

“Don’t put pressure on yourself. Be free. It is the most incredible experience, embrace it. Embrace the differences between you and your new international friends. It’s OK to be homesick but try and get as stuck in as possible. Have fun.”

Elizabeth Asher
German and Business Administration
University of Freiburg
PERSONAL SAFETY

The following information is aimed at helping you to make the most of your time abroad!

Many issues can be avoided simply by raising your awareness of the world around you and using your common sense.

In your community

Be aware of local norms of behaviour and clothing: what is acceptable in the UK may give the wrong impression in other countries. Blending in with local young people can help you to avoid attracting unwanted attention or causing offence. Good guidebooks may give some useful information about this.

It may sound cynical and unfriendly but don’t take strangers at face value: be cautious about accepting/offering invitations, lifts or unsolicited offers of help. Remember that some countries have more strict/formal social norms than the UK; for example, in some areas, inviting someone you have just met to your accommodation can give the wrong signals.

Young people in mainland Europe go out to enjoy themselves and have a few drinks, but do not in general drink in order to get drunk. If you become unwell on a night out, go home with a friend, if possible, or book a reputable taxi. Don’t accept a lift from someone you have just met. If a friend becomes incapacitated, help them to get home safely.

It is best to avoid areas where protests or demonstrations are taking place.

Getting around

Be aware that places or routes which are ok during the day may be less safe at night. Avoid poorly-lit, deserted or isolated areas or short-cuts. If you’re going to a new place, try to arrive during the day time. When out late, try to avoid travelling alone and make sure you have a plan B for getting home just in case, eg details of a reputable taxi firm. If you think you are being followed, go to a populated place where you can get help, so the person does not find out where you live.

See also the safety notes on pages 12 and 13.

Attitudes

You may come across attitudes to gender, race, ethics, religion or other issues which are different to those common in the UK, or might even be unacceptable here. Some countries are very liberal in their prevailing views, others are much more conservative, and this can sometimes lead to discomfort.

Bear in mind that something which gives offence may be due to a cultural misunderstanding rather than being intended to hurt or demean. This can also work the other way because it is easy to inadvertently rude when you are still learning another culture’s norms, particularly in countries which are more formal than the UK. Personality differences can also be a factor: one person’s poor attitude may be due to their own bad manners, personal history or lack of empathy, instead of being a reflection on the wider community.

If however, you find that you are significantly affected by such an issue, please notify the Erasmus Team. We expect you to receive fair and equal treatment at your host university or place of work and for you to extend the same treatment to others.

Avoiding theft

Be on your guard and follow the same precautions as you would at home. Hold on tightly to your bag or sling it securely across your shoulder or in front of you, especially in a crowd. Keep your documents, phone and money on your person, rather than in a bag, which could be easily snatched.

Only take out large sums of money when absolutely necessary. Lock your room securely when you leave it. If you do get into difficulties, remember that your safety is more important that any possessions.

Keep your bank’s emergency numbers, a note of your card numbers (not your PIN!) and photocopies of your insurance documents in safe places. Keep them separate from your purse/wallet in case of loss or theft.

In the event of crime or loss…

Report the loss/theft of any personal belongings/documents to the police immediately and get a police report. Notify your bank at once if your credit/bank cards are stolen or lost so that they can be stopped and replaced. If your passport or national ID card is stolen or lost, the police will write out a temporary form, and you should then obtain an emergency passport/ID at the nearest British Consulate or the Embassy/consulate of your home country. Please also contact the Insurance Office if you need to make a claim (see page 18).

If you find yourself without your passport, any access to cash, or in any other serious trouble, the Consulate will try to help.
Once abroad, please keep in contact with us. We like to hear from you – don’t wait for a problem before you get in touch! If you come to the University during the year, please visit the Erasmus Team and tell us how you are getting on.

We do our best to keep in touch and contact you about specific matters (most frequently by group email), but unless you contact us we assume that all is well. If you have not heard from us for a while and are concerned, please do not hesitate to contact us. You will find our contact details at the beginning of this guide.

**Contact details**

Please ensure that your home, term-time and emergency contact details are correct on SDS. You should list your contact details for your time abroad in the term-time section. Update your details if you move or change your phone number or email address.

This is very important because we and other University offices will need to contact you during your time abroad.

**Using email**

Please let us know if it is difficult for you to access email at least once a week. If you want us to contact you additionally at another email address let us know.

You can access your Kent email from abroad through the University’s web mail service or you can have your emails forwarded to another inbox. This can only be done on a PC at Kent. Contact the Student Helpdesk if you need assistance (see details below).

- T: + 44 (0)1227 824999
- E: helpdesk@kent.ac.uk
- [www.kent.ac.uk/itservices](http://www.kent.ac.uk/itservices)

**Important note:**

If your inbox goes over quota, this will prevent you from receiving or sending emails. If you have problems with your Kent email address, contact the Student Helpdesk for assistance.

**Phones**

It is often worthwhile getting a local SIM card for internet and cheaper local phone calls.

Check with your provider regarding data roaming charges whilst abroad.

**Social Media**

Get in touch with other students through the Study Abroad Facebook page: UniversityofKentStudyAbroad.

Be very cautious about giving away personal information online – or to a stranger, unless they are in an official capacity.

While Facebook and Skype are great ways to keep in touch with home, please be wary of using them too much. Focusing on what is happening at home can make home sickness worse and make it much harder to make friends in the new place.

**The internet**

You may find that access to PCs and/or the Internet is more limited at your host university than at Kent. There are often fewer PCs per student which can lead to queues and time limits for use. Students may not be expected to use IT as much as at Kent.

Some students recommend buying a dongle to improve internet access.

**Staff visits**

Kent staff visit some destinations each year to meet students and monitor progress. If someone will visit your city or a place near you, we or the academic will contact you about arrangements. If a visit is not possible, staff can still be contacted by email or phone and can often arrange skype conversations.

“You get as much out of the experience as you’re willing to put in... Be organised, responsible and proactive; it is the best way to be prepared even in unexpected situations.

The best way to meet people is just to smile, be honest and introduce yourself.”

Melodie Turner
Hispanic Studies, British Council Assistant
PROBLEM SOLVING AND EMERGENCIES

Basic advice

• Read all the information sent to you by Kent and the host university/British Council/employer and refer to it during the year
• If you are unable to access the internet, let the Erasmus Team know as soon as possible so that important messages can be sent to you by post
• If you are not receiving information from Kent or your host university that other students have received, contact the Erasmus Team.

Problems during the year

Speak to your contacts at the host in the first instance if you have administrative or academic problems. This could be the host university’s International Office and Academic Co-ordinator, the mentor at your school or your supervisor at your work placement. This is particularly important if you have problems with courses and exams. In the case of unexpected absences (e.g., due to illness or bereavement), make sure you notify your tutors or follow your school/employer’s procedures.

If you have a serious problem which the host cannot help with (or you feel unable to speak to the host yourself for some reason), please contact the Erasmus Team.

In the event of a serious medical problem, please contact the Chubb emergency medical helpline (see page 18) and notify the Erasmus Team. Make sure that you obtain a doctor’s note. This may be needed for an insurance claim, your employer’s sickness absence policy or for a concession application at Kent. The Erasmus Team will provide advice and support, as appropriate.

Important note

It is important to speak to the Erasmus Team and your mentor, supervisor, or exchange co-ordinator as early as possible about any problems. Many problems can be sorted out quickly once you have talked to staff.

Emergencies

In the event of a natural disaster, terrorist attack or other major incident, please follow the advice of the local authorities to keep yourself safe.

Please make sure that you inform your family and friends that you are safe. The Erasmus Team will contact you to make sure you are ok and to offer support. We will monitor the situation, liaising with the Insurance Office, the University authorities and partner universities, and will advise you as appropriate.

The Wellbeing Team at Kent will also be available to offer counselling support if you are registered with a doctor in the host country.

If you have been directly affected, you can contact your home country’s embassy or consulate in the country for help and advice.

Consulates and Embassies

You can find details of British embassies and consulates overseas at: www.gov.uk/government/world

If you are not a UK national, you should contact the embassy/consulate of your home country.

British Consulates provide advice and support for British nationals experiencing serious problems overseas, for example emergency passports, help contacting family/friends if you need emergency funding, advice about local legal/medical support. If you are arrested for a serious offence, you should insist on the Consulate being informed. A consular officer will contact you to advise about local procedures and help notify relevant parties who could help you, but he/she will not bail you out of trouble!

“Although I am less than halfway through my year abroad, I would undoubtedly say that it has been one of the best experiences of my life. It isn’t something that is always easy but I have no doubt that I have matured and become more self-sufficient than ever before.”

Victoria-Anne Bulley
BA in Drama and English and American Literature
University of Porto
RETURNING TO KENT

Final year accommodation
If you will be away for the full academic year, you can find private accommodation through:

www.studenttenant.com/kent
www.homestampkent.co.uk/Accommodation (Canterbury)

The off-campus housing pages give a lot of useful information at: www.kent.ac.uk/accommodation

If you have medical or disability needs, you can apply for campus accommodation in the usual way.

If you are a Canterbury student and you will spend a term abroad, you will be able to apply for campus accommodation in mid-November.

Module registration
Module Registration for your final year will be online from March. It is very important that you register your module choices within Kent’s deadline.

Registration
Students returning to Kent after their time abroad will be expected to register online. Check the Student Guide for details.

Transcripts and year abroad essays
Don’t forget to complete any end of year/semester procedures at your host university, for example handing in your Libretto or Scheine to the International Relations office. You should bring the original transcript to the Erasmus Team when you return to Kent. If you are expected to do a project/essay, submit completed work to your School via Moodle by the deadline.

Culture shock
Many students find the transition back to being at home can bring on culture shock. Having got used to the culture of your host country, there’s a new time of adjustment. This can be unsettling and like an anti-climax, as you are expected to slot straight back into your UK life. Just remember to give yourself time to adjust again.

“Erasmus has encouraged me to learn for myself and not for a grade which is a teaching I shall keep with me for life. I have engaged much more with my course at Kent since returning from Prague.”

Roxana Willis
European Legal Studies, Charles University Prague
EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Whatever your degree subject, it will be enriched by the experience of living, studying and/or working in another country. It will develop your language abilities and cultural awareness as well as more general skills, like adaptability and initiative, which employers look for.

Please note the following points before you leave Kent:
• UK employers need staff who have language skills and international experience. [Source: British Chamber of Commerce]
• Early preparation is vital. Now is the time to start thinking about what you want to do after you graduate – not the beginning of your very busy final year. Many popular employers will have closing dates during the autumn term: some (such as solicitors’ firms) even before the start of your final year. Don’t miss the boat!

A great opportunity to enhance your skills
In the course of your degree, you will have many opportunities to develop skills and attributes prized by employers, through your studies and extracurricular activities, such as volunteering. Studying and working abroad enriches this, particularly in areas such as intercultural awareness, communication and perseverance.

Skills development
It is important to consider these things before you go abroad, so that you are able to get the best from it and can see your personal/skills development more clearly.

Study and work abroad can be intense, so it is often difficult to see changes in language or other skills day to day. Keeping a blog or journal to record your activities and then taking time out to review them can help you to see progress more clearly. It will also come in useful when you prepare your CV and job applications.

The following questions may help you to do this:
• How is my time abroad helping me to communicate more effectively with others?
• How is it developing my transferable skills and attributes?
• Am I working on some skills more than others?
• What am I learning about my own culture and view of the world, and those of the host country or other students?
• What have I learnt through dealing with challenges or difficulties?

Career planning
If you don’t yet know what you want to do or want to find out more about graduate opportunities in the UK or abroad, now is the time to do this. The Careers and Employability Service (CES) at Keynes College offers appointments with Careers advisers and has information about working abroad, career choices and preparing CV’s and job applications.

This is good starting point if you would like to return to your host country for work or postgraduate study. The CES can help you prepare so that you can make the most of your time abroad, carrying out careers research and making contacts.

The CES website (www.kent.ac.uk/ces) and the Prospects website (www.prospects.ac.uk) have useful information about all these things.

“...This is a fantastic way to improve your language skills and to discover more about work experience placements and job opportunities in future.”

Marina Ivanova
European Economics, Université de Grenoble 2
**REGULATIONS**

Please ensure that you are familiar with the following regulations.

In order to complete the year satisfactorily, you must:

1. Be aware of and comply with the regulations regarding marks.

2. Be resident in the approved place for the requisite period, as agreed with Kent and the host university, school or employer. Obviously short visits home are permissible. If a major personal difficulty seems to require a longer absence you must get in touch with the Erasmus Team and, if possible, receive confirmation of approval before acting.

3. Satisfy any requirements that go with your placement. Follow university courses seriously and take all exams wherever possible. Assistants and students on work placements are expected to carry out their duties conscientiously and to comply with all instructions given by the authorities in their school or their employer.

4. Conduct yourself, whether in a University, school or work placement, in a manner consistent with the norms of your Host University, school or employer and in a manner that will reflect creditably on the University of Kent.

5. Promptly notify the Erasmus Team of any serious problems during the time abroad, whether academic or otherwise, which are affecting or may affect your studies/work.

6. Do not leave behind any debts or other liabilities.

7. Where applicable meet the member of staff from the University of Kent who may visit you during the course of the year.

8. Keep the Erasmus Team informed of your address and complete and return the forms sent to you.

9. Provide information on your placement for future students by means of a questionnaire sent by the Erasmus Team.

10. If dividing the year between two placements, transfer promptly to your second institution or work place.

11. Submit any work required of you by Kent by the due date.

12. Obtain a copy of the Transcript of your Examination marks from your Host University and pass it on to the Erasmus Team on your return to Kent or submit any required work within the deadline.

“My experience in Spain was completely unprecedented. In every aspect a person can grow, I have grown. And that’s why I recommend everyone to put all of their worries aside and just do it. You will be thankful and, like me, you will return home with a whole bank of irreplaceable memories.”

Georgia Williams
Hispanic Studies
British Council Assistantship