



# STUDENT GUIDE

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# I. THE ERASMUS PROGRAMME

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Erasmus programme, which stands for European community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students, was originally established as the Socrates programme in 1987. It has proved to be one of the most successful projects of the European Union and now offers a wider range of opportunities under the new Erasmus+ programme. The main aim of the Erasmus+ programme is to improve students' skills and ultimately their employability as well as to support the modernisation of education and training systems across Europe.

[Studying abroad | Erasmus+ \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

The University of Limerick has participated in the programme since 1988 and has the largest outgoing Erasmus+ programme in Ireland.

This handbook is intended to help University of Limerick students who undertake an Erasmus academic placement in a European partner university to prepare for the academic placement abroad. It provides general information and practical advice regarding the Erasmus exchange and life abroad. Do not hesitate to contact Erasmus staff at any stage during your Erasmus placement if you are experiencing problems or have queries, no matter how small.

Meanwhile we wish you an enjoyable experience and trust that you will come back to UL confident in the knowledge that you have made the most of the academic and cultural opportunities afforded by the Erasmus programme.

NB: Every effort has been made to ensure that all information provided in this guide is comprehensive and accurate at the time of printing.

## 2. ERASMUS CONTACTS

### a. UL Global

The Erasmus section of UL Global manages the Erasmus programme at UL. Contact details are as follows:

**Herveline Roche**

**Address:**

Outbound Mobilities  
Tel: +353 61 202353  
e-mail: [outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie)

**Lisa Fitzgerald**

Outbound Mobilities  
Tel: +353 61 234654  
e-mail: [outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie)

**Madeline Molyneux**

Erasmus+ Manager  
Tel: +353 61 202304  
e-mail: [erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:erasmus@ul.ie)

UL Global  
EO-020, Main Building  
University of Limerick  
Plassey Park Road  
Castletroy, Co Limerick  
V94 T9PX  
Ireland  
**Web:** <http://www.ul.ie/international>  
**Tel:** +353 61 213153

**UL Erasmus+ Institutional Code:** IRL LIMERIC01

## b. Erasmus Academic Coordinator at UL

Each degree programme has an Erasmus Academic Coordinator. The academic coordinator is responsible for reviewing and approving students' choice of university. The academic coordinator also advises on module selection and approves the Learning Agreement. He/She is also responsible for validating Erasmus results and converting grades, where applicable. Students should consult their academic coordinator for all academic matters. The list of coordinators is available in the Annexes section of this guide.

## c. Host University

### International office

In most cases, the point of contact at the host university will be an office similar to the International Office in UL. In some universities, the departmental or faculty academic coordinator is the point of contact.

Practical information regarding the academic placement, such as application procedures, accommodation, etc. is normally sent to students by the international office of the host university or is available on the University website.

### Academic coordinator

Students are assigned to an academic coordinator by the host university (also called Departmental Coordinator). The Erasmus academic coordinator offers advice on courses available at the host university and approves the Learning Agreement.

### Emergency contact

In the event of an emergency outside of office hours, please call the UL's emergency number +353 61 213333 and the security person on duty will contact a member of our team.

The contact number for emergency services throughout the European Union is **112**. The contact number for the Irish embassy/consulate in your host country can be found on the DFA website: <https://www.dfa.ie/embassies/irish-embassies-abroad/>

## 3. ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

Full-time students registered at a European Higher Education Institution (HEI) which holds an Erasmus charter may avail of the Erasmus opportunity.

The academic placement abroad is available at all levels of higher education.

The Erasmus programme is available for most UL degree programmes and the study placement abroad is fully recognised as an academic component of UL degree programmes.

Most Humanities degrees include an integrated, mandatory Erasmus academic placement.

Students registered on degree programmes such as Law Plus, Business Studies, Product Design & Technology, Architecture, Performing Arts, etc. may take part in the Erasmus programme on an elective basis.

NB: Degree programmes which are accredited by an Irish professional association and do not include an integrated Erasmus academic placement, such as Health Sciences, Education, Law & Accounting degrees, are excluded from the Erasmus programme. Students should check if the Erasmus semester is available as part of their programme with their Course Director.

### a. Courses with integrated academic placement abroad

An academic semester abroad is an integral and mandatory component of the following UL courses:

Course	Placement Period
Bachelor of Arts (LM002)	Year 3, Autumn Semester

BA Applied Languages (LM044)	Year 3, Autumn Semester
BA European Studies (LM040)	Year 3, Autumn Semester
BA International Business (LM056)	Year 3, Autumn Semester
BA Journalism and New Media (LM039)	Year 3, Spring Semester
BSc Psychology (LM102)	Year 3, Spring Semester
BA Psychology and Sociology (LM038)	Year 3, Autumn Semester
BA Social Sciences (LM019)	Year 3, Autumn Semester
MA Irish-German Studies	Spring Semester

Students enrolled on the above-mentioned courses must complete an academic placement abroad in order to graduate. Students who do not complete the academic placement abroad or do not fulfil the academic requirements will not be able to graduate.

#### b. Eligibility criteria

- To take part in the Erasmus programme, students must be in good academic standing with the University of Limerick.

The Erasmus academic placement may only be undertaken if the student meets the minimum academic requirements to progress to the next year. The required standard is a minimum cumulative QCA of 2.00 or greater, with no deficient grades (F, I, NG, N), for compulsory placements. Students sitting repeat examinations at UL before going abroad must obtain sufficient results to progress to the next year.

For non-compulsory placements (e.g. Business studies, Performing Arts, Law Plus, Architecture, etc), students are advised to consult their UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator as specific selection criteria, such as a minimum QCA requirement, may apply.

ATTN: Students with Repeat exams / I grades

Students who are due to start an Erasmus mobility period in the Autumn semester and are to sit UL examinations in August are granted provisional eligibility for the Erasmus programme.

Therefore, students who have to sit UL examinations in August are instructed to proceed with the Erasmus process and submit their application to the host university.

Eligibility to take part in the Erasmus programme is confirmed once the student satisfies the academic criteria to progress to the next year, following publication of August exam results. While it is advisable to book flights and accommodation well in advance, students are advised not to travel until examination results are published and it is confirmed that they meet the eligibility criteria to go on Erasmus.

If the semester dates at the host university overlap with UL August exams, please contact us to discuss your options.

Important: Students who do not progress to the next year are not eligible to partake in the Erasmus programme. If a non-eligible student has already travelled to the host university, he/she will be required to return to UL without delay. Students whose study placement abroad is compulsory must defer the Erasmus placement to the following academic year.

- In line with the UL Student Fitness to Study policy, students must be fit to participate and function in university life in order to undertake a semester abroad (<https://www.ul.ie/policy-hub/policies>)

Students who are in breach of the UL Code of Conduct and/or on disciplinary or academic probation at UL may not take part in the Erasmus programme.

- Students in the first or final year of their degree programme cannot take part in the Erasmus+ programme.

### c. Duration

The academic placement may be undertaken in Year 2 or Year 3, in the Autumn or Spring semester, depending on their degree programme.

Students normally study at a partner institution for one semester (approx. 5 months). See also section F on Extension of Erasmus placement.

### d. Fees

As an Erasmus student, you do not pay any university fees (for tuition, registration, examinations, access to laboratory and library facilities etc.) to the partner university you are attending. However, some universities may charge a small fee for student facilities such as membership of the Students' Union.

You are still liable to pay registration fees to the University of Limerick while away on a study exchange. You will continue to be fully registered at the University of Limerick and will continue to have access to UL services.



### e. UL Academic regulations

The Erasmus+ study placement is fully integrated and recognised as part of UL's curricula. Therefore, students are still required to comply with UL's Academic Regulations, Code of Conduct and associated procedures while abroad.

Please see links below for most up-to-date versions of UL's policies:

<https://www.ul.ie/policy-hub/policies>

### f. Extension of Erasmus placement

Depending on the degree programmes, it may be possible to apply to extend a one-semester exchange to a full-year exchange. NB: certain degree programmes, for example LM102 - Psychology and LM038 - Psychology & Sociology, do not have the option to extend the placement to a full academic year.

The full-year extension can only be availed of within the same academic year (not the calendar year). Therefore the full-year extension is only available to students undertaking an academic exchange in the Autumn semester. Students whose Erasmus academic placement takes place in the Spring semester do not have the option to extend the placement to a full academic year.

Any request to extend the duration of the mobility period must be submitted before 30<sup>th</sup> November of the academic year abroad (e.g. 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 for AY 2022/23) to the UL Erasmus office. The form is available from the Erasmus team ([outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie)). Students who wish to extend their placement from one semester to the full academic year should first check with the host university if it possible to extend the placement. If so, students must submit a formal application to the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator and the UL Course Director for their degree programme. This formal application is to ensure that it is possible from an academic perspective to spend the Spring Semester abroad. Students will be required to provide a list of the modules they intend to take in the Spring semester. The modules need to be comparable to what students would normally take in Semester 6 as part of their UL degree programme. If the FYP process begins during Semester 6, students will have to choose a supervisor, submit their brief, etc. while studying abroad.

Students who extend their academic placement to the full academic year should be aware that the Spring semester placement is quality-graded, i.e. the grades obtained abroad will be converted and will impact on the UL QCA, and students are required to take 30 ECTS credits. NB: Academic requirements and grading may be different for students registered on a dual degree programme – please check with the UL Academic coordinator.

## Note on Erasmus funding

Students who extend their academic placement to the full academic year in an [Erasmus Programme country](#) may be eligible for Erasmus funding.

ATTN: Students are eligible to receive up to 12 months of Erasmus funding within one cycle, traineeship (work placement) and studies combined. This means that if a student has already received funding for an Erasmus traineeship and for an Erasmus academic semester, further funding will only be available for the remaining allowed period, if any.

## 5. WITHDRAWAL FROM ERASMUS PROGRAMME

Students who have to withdraw from the Erasmus programme must inform the Erasmus team and the UL Academic Coordinator.

### a. Exemption from or Alternative to Erasmus

If, for exceptional reasons, a student cannot partake in the Erasmus programme, he/she may apply for an Exemption from Erasmus or for the Alternative to Erasmus. This formal application is only for students registered on degree programmes which include an integrated academic semester abroad.

Applications should be made in consultation with the Erasmus Academic Coordinator / Course Director. Applications must be submitted through the Academic Registry TopDesk (Student Hub) and are then reviewed by the Student Status Committee (SSC).

The SSC meetings are held three times yearly following the end-of-semester exams and annual repeat exams in January, June and September. Application forms for Exemption from/Alternative to the Academic Placement can be obtained from the Academic Registry TopDesk (Student Hub).

- Where possible, applications should be submitted at least two semesters prior to the semester for which the exemption/alternative is being sought.
- The student should inform the Course Director, who may offer advice concerning application to the SSC and academic implications.
- Completed forms must be submitted, with supporting documentation, through the Academic Registry TopDesk (Student Hub). Students must provide evidence that they have exceptional circumstances that prevent them from studying abroad. Supporting documents may include a letter of support from UL Medical, Disability or Counselling services, birth certificate of dependent children, etc.
- The student should attend the SSC meeting (schedule available on the Student Hub).

NB: Please note that the UL Erasmus office has no input in the submission, review or outcome of SSC applications.

Students who are granted the Alternative to Erasmus will register for five alternative modules (30 ECTS credits) at UL, agreed with the Course Director. The modules will be graded on Pass/Fail basis, i.e. students must obtain at least C3 in each module to pass the semester.

### b. Early return from Erasmus placement

If a student has to terminate their Erasmus semester while abroad due to exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to resume studies at UL and register for alternative modules for the remainder of the semester, depending on the circumstances and the time of termination.

The student will be required to provide evidence that they have extenuating circumstances that prevent them from completing their semester abroad. The student's circumstances will then be reviewed by the Course Director and Erasmus academic coordinator at UL.

If the early returns takes place before Week 3 of the semester at UL, the student will be required to retrospectively apply for the Alternative to Erasmus and, if granted, will re-integrate the semester at UL (see Section 5a).

If the early returns takes place after Week 3 of the semester at UL, depending on the student's circumstances, the grades obtained abroad and the credit shortfall, it might be possible to make up the missing credits by submitting project work, agreed with the Erasmus academic coordinator at UL. In cases where the student returns from Erasmus with no or very few credits, he/she may be required to take additional modules or complete an additional semester at UL.

NB: Please note that each situation is dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Course Director, in consultation with the Erasmus academic coordinator.

ATTN: Students who withdraw from the Erasmus programme during the academic semester abroad may be required to reimburse the Erasmus mobility grant.

## II. ACADEMIC MATTERS

The Erasmus programme is wholly integrated into the existing UL curricula with fully recognised academic placements based on the ECTS credit system.

### 1. ECTS CREDITS

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a grading system used by Higher Education Institutions across the EU in an effort to standardise recognition of academic achievements between European institutions.

ECTS credits are indexed on the estimated workload required for a full-time student to achieve learning outcomes and successfully complete a module.

Students are required to take 30 ECTS credits during their Erasmus academic placement. The number of modules that students need to take will vary from one university to another.

Modules may not all carry the same credit weighting at the host university and credit weightings may range from 1 to 15 ECTS credits per module.

### 2. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to obtain 30 ECTS credits per semester (unless otherwise agreed by the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator, for exceptional reasons). Students must also submit an Erasmus narrative report at the end of the semester, to reflect on their academic and cultural experience abroad.

There are two Grade Registration types for the Erasmus academic placement: P (Pass/Fail) or N (Normal).

- When the Erasmus academic semester is a core component of the degree programme, the semester is graded on Pass/Fail basis, and Erasmus results do not impact on students' QCA. This also applies to BBS degree programmes.

Registration Type: Pass/Fail
Arts (LM002)
Applied Languages (LM044)
Business Studies (LM050) / BBS w/ Language (LM052/LM053/LM054/LM055)
European Studies (LM040)

International Business (LM056)
Journalism & New Media (LM039)
Psychology (LM102)
Psychology & Sociology (LM038)
Social Sciences (LM019)

- Elective (non-compulsory) academic placements are graded on Normal basis and impact on QCA (except Business Studies students). The results obtained at the host university are converted to UL grades by the UL Erasmus academic coordinator.
- Academic placements undertaken in lieu of a Cooperative work placement are graded on Pass/Fail basis and do not impact on QCA.

The Erasmus Academic Coordinator for each degree programme should be consulted for advice and approval with regard to module selection and credit requirements.

### 3. MODULE CHOICES AND LEARNING AGREEMENT

#### a. Module Choices

Students must ensure that the modules they register for at the host university equate to the required ECTS credits to pass Erasmus.

Students whose degree includes an integrated academic exchange are expected to take the majority of their modules in their own academic field. It may be possible to take a couple of modules from other academic areas, if permitted by the host university.

Students on an elective academic exchange are expected to select modules that match the content of the UL semester as closely as possible.

The UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator should be consulted before departure to establish the agreed workload with regard to module selection and degree requirements. It is important that students know exactly what is expected of them, in terms of the types of courses to take, workload, credits, results etc., before leaving Ireland.

#### b. Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement is an essential Erasmus document. It is the contract of study agreed between the student, the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator and the host institution.

The Learning Agreement outlines the modules that the student intends to study at the host university, along with the ECTS credit weighting of each module and the required level of language competence.

The Learning Agreement must be signed by the student, the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator and the Academic Coordinator at the host university prior to the academic exchange. This helps to ensure that the choice of courses is approved by UL and thus can help to prevent any later misunderstandings.

#### Learning agreement process

- Step 1: Complete the Learning Agreement with a provisional choice of modules.
- Step 2: Seek approval from the Academic Coordinator, and retain signed original. Provide a copy of the provisional Learning Agreement to the Erasmus team before departure.
- Step 3: On arrival at the host university, make contact with the Academic Coordinator to discuss module selection and examination arrangements. Students normally have the first two weeks to finalise module choices.
- Step 4: Record changes on the Learning Agreement and seek approval from the Academic Coordinator at the host university.
- Step 5: Return the completed, signed form to UL as soon as modules registration is finalised.

If there are changes to the provisional module selection listed on the initial Learning Agreement, students must contact the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator to get the changes approved. If there are any issues regarding courses at the host university, it is important to contact the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator immediately for advice and guidance.

### c. Language Courses

#### Language courses

Many host universities offer language courses to Erasmus students. Those courses can take place before the start of the semester or during the semester. If the host university offers a language course, it is advisable to take this. If a certificate is issued on completion of the course, the credits will be recognised by UL. There is sometimes a fee for these courses. Students should contact the Erasmus team if they are interested in taking a language course, as there may be extra funding available to reimburse fees for credit-bearing language courses (up to €200).

## 4. MANDATORY LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

### a. What is the EU Academy?

As of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015, a mandatory language assessment has to be undertaken before the mobility period. The EU Academy is the platform used to assess students' level of the language they will use to study at the host institution.

### b. Who must take the EU Academy assessment?

The language assessment is mandatory for UL students studying in a country where the main language of instruction is French, German or Spanish. It is considered that a student studies through the target language if half the modules or more are studied through the target language at the host university.

Students whose main language of instruction is English are not required to take a language test for the language of their host country.

The student's language skills (listening and reading) are assessed according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The CEFR divides learners into three broad categories that are sub-divided into six levels.

Level group	Level group name	Sub-level	Sub-level name
A	Basic User	A1	Beginner
		A2	Elementary
B	Independent User	B1	Intermediate
		B2	Upper intermediate
C	Proficient User	C1	Advanced
		C2	Proficiency

## 5. EXAMINATIONS

Students must complete the full placement period at the host university and are expected to take all examinations and assessments for the modules they are registered for. Assessment can

take many forms so make sure that you know how and when each of the modules will be assessed, and plan your studies and revision carefully.

**IMPORTANT: Autumn examinations are scheduled in January in the majority of European universities.**

Students are expected to complete the full semester at the host university and therefore sit examinations at the host University, even if this means that students have to travel back to the host university in January, after the Christmas break.

The Spring semester at UL does not start until the 3<sup>rd</sup> (sometimes 4<sup>th</sup>) Monday in January, which normally gives students enough time to write their examinations abroad and return to UL in time to start the Spring semester.

If exams clash with the start of the Spring semester at UL, the priority is to write the end-of-semester exams at the host university even if this means missing one or two weeks of the Spring semester at UL. It is essential that students write all examinations and return from Erasmus with a complete Transcript of Records, so that their results may be validated.

If the semester overlap exceeds 2 weeks, try and make arrangements at the host university to sit your exams at the end of January (do this as soon as the exam schedule is published). If you have difficulties making those arrangements, contact the International office ([outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie)), or Coop for KBS students, and the Erasmus academic coordinator at UL without delay.

Students should be aware that the host university's grading system will apply during the mobility period (not the UL grading system). The grading system, examination format, etc. at the host university will be different from that of UL. For example, most European universities have a 50% Pass rate, but some universities have a 60% Pass rate. Some universities enforce an 80% attendance rule and students who have an attendance record of less than 80% in a module may receive an automatic fail for that module.

## 6. RECOGNITION OF ACADEMIC PLACEMENT

The semester abroad is fully recognised as an academic component of UL degree programmes.



For the semester abroad to be validated, students are required to submit their official Erasmus Transcript of Records (TOR) to the UL International office as soon as it is issued by the host University. A Transcript of Records from the host university is the only proof that the placement has been successfully completed and academic requirements have been fulfilled.

Before returning to Ireland, students must ensure that they understand the host university's procedure for obtaining the Transcript of Records. It is the student's responsibility to find out when, to whom and in which format the Transcript of Records will be issued and to complete all necessary steps to receive their Transcript.

Students who have taken a language course during the academic placement must submit the Language Certificate to the Erasmus team together with the Erasmus Transcript.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they obtain all their results from the host university and submit the Transcript of Records to the Erasmus team without delay.

The Erasmus team will transmit the Transcript of Records to the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator and Academic Registry.

For study placements graded on Pass/Fail basis, the student must pass each module to obtain the credits. No credits are awarded for failed modules and compensating fails do not apply. Provided that the student has obtained the required credits at the host university, the Academic Coordinator will award a Pass to the student and will inform Academic Registry of same. The Erasmus grade does not affect the student's QCA.

For quality-graded placements, the grades received at the host institution will be converted to UL grades by the Erasmus academic coordinator at UL. The converted grades will impact on the student's QCA.

Students should be aware that details of Erasmus results, such as module titles and local grades, will not appear on their UL Transcript of Records.

Failure to submit the Erasmus Transcript of Records to the UL Erasmus office may delay progression to the following year and/or prevent graduation.

## 7. FAILED EXAMINATIONS

There can be serious academic consequences to failing the semester abroad.

Any student who fails a module should take the repeat examinations at the host university in order to clear the Fail grade. However, this may not always be possible when repeat examinations take place at a time when students have left the host country. If so, where a student returns from Erasmus with less than the required ECTS credits, it may be possible to compensate the missing credits (if the credit deficit is small) by submitting additional work agreed with the UL Erasmus academic coordinator. Such decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the student's circumstances, the credit shortfall and the grades obtained. A decision on how to proceed can only be made once the International office receives the student's official Erasmus Transcript of Records.

In cases where a student returns from Erasmus with no or very few credits, he/she will be required to take additional modules at UL or complete an additional semester at UL.

**IMPORTANT:** Failure to secure a Pass for the academic semester abroad will prevent graduation.

## III. FINANCIAL MATTERS

### 1. COST OF THE SEMESTER ABROAD

The cost of the semester abroad will depend on the cost of living in your host country (see fact sheet), the length of the semester (3-5 months), and the student's lifestyle.

Students are advised to gather as much information as possible regarding flights, cost of living, accommodation, before choosing their Erasmus destination. Certain countries or capital cities, such as Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Paris, London, Stockholm, etc have high living costs. The extra expenditure will also depend on whether the student is currently living at home. For students who do live at home, accommodation will be a major cost; those who already live away from home will often find that accommodation costs are cheaper than in Ireland.

## 2. FEES

Under the Erasmus programme, students have the status of *exchange* students and are not required to pay any university fees (for tuition, registration, examinations, access to laboratory and library facilities etc.) to the partner university.

However, some universities may charge additional fees for such services as student facilities, liability insurance, etc.

Students are still liable to pay the annual registration fees to the University of Limerick while away on a study exchange. This means that students remain full-time registered students of UL continue to have access to all of UL's systems and support services, albeit online.

Students must register on the UL online portal in Week 0 (as per UL academic calendar) of the period abroad. Academic Registry will notify all students by email in the week prior to the registration deadline.

## 3. ERASMUS FUNDING

### a. Erasmus mobility grant

Under the Erasmus programme, students studying in an Erasmus Programme country, except Ireland, are eligible to receive an Erasmus mobility grant, funded by the European Commission, when they spend between 2 and 12 months studying in a European higher education institution as part of their degree programme.

Note: You can benefit of an Erasmus exchange abroad multiple times, either as a student or as a trainee, but your total time abroad may not exceed **12 months** within one cycle of study.

The mobility grant is intended as a small contribution towards the overall cost of the semester abroad. While students may make use of the grant as they see fit, they should not rely on the grant for all living expenses.

The Erasmus grant is not means tested and does not affect students' entitlements to other grants such as SUSI, Back to Education, etc. The monthly grant amount is €300 or €350, depending on the host country, and the total grant amount is calculated on the basis of the semester dates at the host university.

The Erasmus+ mobility grant levels are subject to HEA review and approved on an annual basis. The table below shows the current monthly amount according to the country where the mobility is undertaken:

<b>Erasmus mobility grant levels (per month) AY 2021/22</b>
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Austria	€300.00	Latvia	€300.00
Belgium	€300.00	Lithuania	€300.00
Bulgaria	€300.00	Malta	€300.00
Cyprus	€300.00	Netherlands	€300.00
Croatia	€300.00	Norway	€280.00
Czech Republic	€300.00	Poland	€300.00
Denmark	€350.00	Portugal	€300.00
Estonia	€300.00	Romania	€300.00
Finland	€350.00	Slovakia	€300.00
France	€300.00	Slovenia	€300.00
Germany	€300.00	Spain	€300.00
Greece	€300.00	Sweden	€350.00
Hungary	€300.00	Switzerland	*
Iceland	€350.00	Turkey	€300.00
Italy	€300.00	United Kingdom	€350.00**

\*Switzerland: Following a popular vote on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2014 to limit access for EU immigrants, Switzerland has withdrawn from the Erasmus+ programme. Students may still take part in a study exchange at Swiss partner universities but the Erasmus+ programme has been replaced by the Swiss-European Mobility Programme (SEMP) until further notice. The SEMP grant scheme is administered by the host university and the grant level is approx. CHF 300 per month.

\*\* United Kingdom: Availability of EU funding may be subject to change, depending on UK participation in Erasmus+ programme after BREXIT.

ATTN: Students who withdraw from the Erasmus programme during the academic semester abroad may be required to reimburse the Erasmus grant.

## b. Grant payment process

NB: To be eligible for the Erasmus grant, the duration of the stay abroad must be minimum 2 **months**. Students are only entitled to funding while they are mobile and present at the host university.

All the forms and detailed instructions are emailed to eligible students in August for Autumn placements, in December for Spring placements.

The Erasmus mobility grant is paid in two instalments by bank transfer. To receive the grant, students must return the following forms through the Erasmus Power app:

- **First instalment (70%)**

To receive the first instalment of the grant, students are required to provide the following forms:

- **Confirmation of Attendance: Certificate of Arrival**, which must be signed and stamped by the host university (this can only be done once the student has officially enrolled at the host university and has started the Erasmus exchange)
- Signed **Erasmus Grant Agreement** (grant contract), emailed to students by the Erasmus team upon receipt of the Certificate of Arrival
- **Learning Agreement**, Sections A and B, which must be signed by the host university and the Erasmus Academic Coordinator at UL

*Please note that the dates on the Certificate of Arrival should reflect the semester dates. Changes in dates at the end of the semester may result in a reduced second instalment or a reimbursement of part of the grant by the student.*

The **Erasmus Grant Agreement** will be sent to the student's UL email address within 5-10 days of submitting the Certificate of Arrival. Students will be required to fill in the Erasmus grant agreement electronically, print it, sign it (only original wet signatures are accepted) and upload it to the Erasmus power app.

Students are requested to provide bank account details on the Erasmus Grant Agreement (name of account holder, BIC and IBAN). It is essential that correct bank details are provided as any error will result in a delay in the payment of the grant.

Once the Erasmus team receives the signed Erasmus Grant Agreement and the Learning Agreement (Sections A and B), the first instalment of the Erasmus grant will be paid through bank transfer (usually within 10 working days of receiving the signed Erasmus grant agreement).

- **Second instalment (30%)**

To receive the second instalment of the grant, students are required to provide the following forms:

- **Confirmation of Attendance: Certificate of Departure**, which must be signed and stamped by the host university (to be requested before leaving the host university).
- **EU Participant survey** (online survey emailed to students by the EU Commission)

Students will receive a personalised link to the **EU Participant survey** via an automated email sent to their UL email address at the end of the study placement abroad. This will be sent the day after the official end date of the semester at the host university.

*ATTN: Please note that, at the end of your semester, if the dates on the Certificate of Departure are marginally different to those indicated initially, the last payment may be significantly reduced or you may have to refund part of the grant to the European Mobility Grant.*

### c. Additional EU funding

Additional funding is available for students with an officially recognised grave disability and/or exceptional special needs. Applications should be made through the Erasmus team (information available from the Erasmus Coordinator) and be supported with a medical certificate. Further details are available from the following websites:

[Funding, grants, subsidies \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

[Supplementary Support for students with disabilities/special needs | I am a\(n\) | EURIreland - Higher Education Authority, National Agency for Erasmus+ Higher Education in Ireland](#)

Additional funding may also be requested for students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. HEAR students registered with the Access office in UL should send an email to [access@ul.ie](mailto:access@ul.ie) to inform the office of their upcoming semester abroad. The Access office will then send the list of students eligible for additional funding to the Erasmus office.

Students who are not registered with the Access office but feel that they should be considered for additional funding may put in request directly through the Erasmus Institutional Coordinator ([Erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:Erasmus@ul.ie)) but eligibility for additional financial support is not guaranteed.

Further information on EU funding can be found on <http://www.european-funding-guide.eu/>.

## 4. STUDENT GRANT SCHEME (SUSI)

National grant schemes are separate from the Erasmus mobility grant and students who qualify for SUSI may continue to avail of this entitlement for the duration of the Erasmus mobility period. The Erasmus grant does not have to be declared on the SUSI system, unless the student is entitled to a higher grant for the duration of the mobility.

SUSI's current regulations state the following:

- *If you are participating in Erasmus or a period of study abroad, in general you may continue to receive your grant as long as the period of study abroad does not exceed one year.*
- *If the Erasmus/Study Abroad is not compulsory, and you are in receipt of a maintenance grant, you will continue to receive the same rate of grant that was previously awarded (i.e. adjacent or non-adjacent rate).*
- *If the Erasmus/Study Abroad is compulsory, and you were previously in receipt of an adjacent rate of maintenance grant, you may be eligible for the higher, non-adjacent rate whilst studying abroad.*

The Erasmus team will provide a supporting letter for SUSI upon request.

Please contact SUSI directly for most up-to-date information.

## 5. BANK LOANS

Many banks offer banking facilities to students to help finance their semester abroad. Such facilities may include short-term loans with very low APR, standard student loans, credit cards with 0% interest for the first 6 months, etc.

Please contact your local branch or the on-campus bank at UL for further information on student banking.

The on-campus bank at UL also offers advice on money management and budget planning.

## 6. DEBTS

Students should ensure that they understand what is required regarding payment of bills, particularly for accommodation. For instance, in University residences in Europe, students are expected to pay rent from the first to the last day of every month, even if the room is unoccupied part of the month.

Any student who leaves bills unpaid will incur a debt and will need to discharge it. Failure to do so may result in the host university withholding the Transcript of Records, which in turn may

prevent the student from progressing to 4<sup>th</sup> year graduating from UL. The student may also be referred to the UL Disciplinary Committee.

## IV. PREPARATION FOR THE STAY ABROAD

Spending a period of study in a foreign university presents a unique challenge and opportunity. The key to a positive Erasmus experience lies in preparation, in obtaining all possible information about the host university, subjects available, and in ensuring that suitable accommodation is reserved. It should be understood that while UL has nominated the student to the host university and has facilitated a flow of information and communication between the university and the student, UL has little control over the student’s experience in the host University. This will depend on the quality of the services provided by the International Office of the host university and the cultural practices of the country. Some universities receive huge numbers of Erasmus students from all over Europe and have relatively few resources to support such a large and diverse student body.

### 1. ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Students must ensure that they have the following documents:

	<b>Irish citizens</b>	<b>EU citizens (non-Irish)</b>	<b>Non-EU citizens</b>
Passport or National Identity card (EU citizens) valid until the end of the semester abroad	✓	✓	✓
European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) valid until the end of the semester abroad	✓	✓	
Valid private health insurance			✓
IRP card valid until the end of the semester abroad			✓
Visa – Host university will send information regarding visa process			✓



Private health insurance	✓ (recommended)	✓ (recommended)	✓ (required)
Recommended: Travel insurance (including repatriation)	✓	✓	✓
Note: some universities make it compulsory for students to take out private health and/or travel insurance for the duration of the semester abroad			
Recommended: In Case of Emergency card (ICE)	✓	✓	✓
France only: Certified translated Birth Certificate	✓	✓	✓

## 2. APPLICATION TO HOST UNIVERSITY

Students are required to submit a formal application to the host university. Most universities send information by email. Students then apply (usually online) to the host university, complete the application and submit it to the host University.

### a. Application deadline

Application deadlines differ for every partner university.

Most partner universities publish a 'fact sheet' or 'info sheet' which contains essential information such as contacts, application process, deadlines, accommodation, semester dates, etc. Fact sheets can be found on the Erasmus website: (<https://www.ul.ie/global/ul-Erasmus-exchange-partner-universities-list>).

Students are advised to submit the complete application, with all supporting documents, well before the deadline. Students who miss the application deadline will not be accepted to study at the host university and may have to defer the Erasmus placement until the following academic year.

### b. Application procedure

Application procedures differ for every partner university.

Host institutions provide guides for incoming students, usually published on their website. Students are advised to consult the website of the host university and read the guide for incoming students.

The host university's application procedure is usually described on the fact sheet and/or on the host university's website.

Information on application procedures will be sent by the host university and/or forwarded by the Erasmus team to the student's email address. Students are therefore advised to check their UL email account regularly and also check their SPAM /Junk mail folder as automated emails are often blocked.

Information on application procedures is usually sent approx. 6 weeks prior to the application deadline. Students who have not received application information from the host university 3-4 weeks prior to the deadline should contact the Erasmus team without delay ([outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie)).

If documents or letters need to be issued or signed by the Erasmus section at UL, students must email the documents to [outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie) at least two weeks before the application deadline.

It is strongly recommended to complete the online application on a computer or laptop, not on a phone or tablet. Application platforms are generally not compatible with mobile devices.

Students will be asked about their language proficiency level on the application form. Host universities use the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) to describe language ability (see section on Online Linguistic Support). Usually, a B1-B2 proficiency level in the language of instruction is required. Students who will study through English at the host institution should rate their proficiency level as C2.

Note: Many French institutions require a Birth Certificate for enrolment. Students can obtain a certified translation of the birth certificate from Mrs Marie Hackett, French Honorary Consul for the Limerick region. Please send a copy of the birth certificate (long or short) with a stamped, self-addressed envelope and €10.

Address: Mrs Marie Hackett, Blackwater, Ard na Crusha, Co. Clare.

Tel: 061. 343051; Mobile: 086 057 57 31 ; Email: [mariehackett@outlook.ie](mailto:mariehackett@outlook.ie)

Students with special needs should inform the host university. The host university will inform the student of the support services they can avail of during their mobility period, in order to best support them during their stay.

### c. Selection process

For most universities, provided that a complete application has been submitted within the deadline and that all requirements are met, students should be automatically accepted at the host university and normally receive a Letter of Acceptance from the host university approx. 6 weeks after the application deadline.

Some partner institutions require that students submit a portfolio (e.g. Architecture, Product Design) or recorded performance (e.g. Performing Arts). Students should seek advice and guidance from the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator before submitting their application to the host university.

## 3. ACCOMMODATION BOOKING

It is the responsibility of the student to organise accommodation, in consultation with the accommodation services at the host University. Students should be aware that partner universities cannot guarantee accommodation to all Erasmus students and private universities or schools are usually not in a position to offer student accommodation.

Below are some points to consider when looking for accommodation:

▪ What types of accommodation options are available?
▪ What is the cost of each option?
▪ What is the procedure to book accommodation (form? online application?)
▪ What is the deadline to submit the application?
▪ What deposit is required and when must it be paid?
▪ Are utility bills included in the rent?
▪ From what date will the room be available?
▪ Is bed linen supplied Erasmus team?
▪ Is there a system to obtain access to the room if tenant arrives late at night or at weekend?
▪ What is the procedure for repayment of deposit?

### a. University accommodation

If available, students are strongly advised to apply for University residential accommodation, as it can be difficult to find accommodation in the private sector for a period of one semester.

All host institutions should have an accommodation office, which either accepts university residential applications or provides support to students to find accommodation in the private sector.

University accommodation is not guaranteed and usually allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is advisable to apply as soon as the application process opens. The booking period and procedure is specific to each university. Please check the fact sheet or host university's website for more information.

Students are advised to apply for and accept University accommodation if available.

Special requests concerning accommodation (e.g. being placed in a single room, being located close to a friend, etc.) should be communicated to the accommodation provider at the host university. Students should also inform the host university of any medical condition that they feel should be known to the accommodation provider. While the host university will do their best to accommodate special requests, students should be aware that host universities have limited control over room allocation as university residential accommodation in Europe is often administered by national agencies such as CROUS in France, Studentenwerk in Germany, DUWO in the Netherlands, OeAd in Austria, etc.

Students should be aware that the standard of accommodation often falls below that in Ireland. In countries such as France, Italy, Spain and Germany it is normal for students to share facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms. Students should also be aware that university accommodation is not necessarily within a walking distance of the university buildings. Public transport may be required to get to college (bus, tramway, subway).

It is standard procedure for university residences to request a deposit in order to secure the room booking. Students should ensure that they understand what is required regarding payment of rent, bills, deposits, etc. For instance, in university residential accommodation, students are expected to pay rent from the first to the last day of every month, even if the room is unoccupied for part of the month.

ATTN: Students should arrive at their accommodation when advised. University offices and accommodation offices are normally closed during the weekend and on public/bank holidays so it is best to arrive during office hours on a weekday, a few days before the beginning of the semester. Students should notify the host university of their arrival date and of any changes.

Students travelling late at night or at the weekend should make prior arrangements with the accommodation office to check in and get their key. If this is not possible, students should plan to book into alternative accommodation overnight.

When moving in, any issues or problems should be reported immediately to the accommodation provider. Bed linen is usually not supplied. Kitchens can be poorly equipped and may not be supplied with an oven, kettle, toaster, etc.

### b. Private accommodation

The normal procedure, where university residential accommodation is not available, is to obtain a list of accommodation providers from the International office of the host university. A good option is to book into a private student residence. These are quite common in European cities. It is best to arrange accommodation prior to the mobility period - some students assume that it will be easier to find somewhere to live after arrival in their new city; this is a risky strategy and can leave students stuck in hostels for weeks.

Students are advised to use caution and common sense when reserving private accommodation and signing contracts:

- Only consider ads posted by recognised letting agencies or accommodation providers that the host University's accommodation services have recommended.
- Do not reply to accommodation ads posted on social media.
- If you have any doubt regarding the authenticity of an accommodation offer, do not pay any monies.
- Use a credit card (MasterCard, Visa credit, American Express, etc) rather than bank transfer to pay for deposit / first month's rent. Paying by credit card usually ensures that you are covered by the credit card's insurance company in the event of a fraudulent transaction. Check with you bank what your credit card covers.

Accommodation leases usually expire at the end of a month. This means that, if the premises are vacated before the agreed term, students are still liable for the rent for the remaining period.

## 4. INSURANCE

All students are strongly advised to take out comprehensive health and travel insurance. Students should note that participation in the study placement abroad does involve certain inherent risks which the exchange student must assume. The risks associated with study abroad include, but are not limited to, responsibility for damage to or loss of property, personal illness or injury and death while the exchange student is a participant in the programme. Although the University takes all necessary steps to mitigate these risks and to provide assistance in time of need, the student must take responsibility for ensuring personal safety and security during the study placement. The student must also assume responsibility for taking out adequate personal travel and health insurance, the options for which are detailed below.

### a. European Health Insurance Card

EU students are required to obtain a European Health Insurance Card.

This card entitles the bearer to free accident and emergency treatment in EU countries. The card does NOT cover all medical expenses and is not a substitute for travel or private health insurance.

Irish citizens apply for the EHIC by submitting an application form online on <http://www.ehic.ie/>. The card is free.

Other EU citizens must apply for the card in their own country.

The EHIC is accepted in any EU member state as well as Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. The EHIC is not valid in Turkey; private health insurance is required.

Please note that healthcare services vary from one EU country to another. Please consult the EHIC website for further information on medical cover in your host country.

Irish students going to the UK: Ireland and the UK have a [reciprocal health agreement](#) under the [Common Travel Area](#). It gives Irish citizens who live, work or visit the UK access to healthcare.

#### Note:

Non-EU students are required to take out private health insurance for the duration of their stay abroad.

For UK citizens travelling to Europe, the EHIC has been replaced by the Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) – see [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## b. Travel Insurance

Students are strongly advised to take out travel insurance which will cover all overseas medical costs, including medical repatriation/evacuation, repatriation of remains and legal costs.

Make sure that your policy covers you for the activities you want to undertake and check for any exclusions. For example, many insurance providers require that students have been residing in Ireland for at least 3 months prior to taking out insurance. Be aware that multi-trip insurance policies from most insurance providers do not cover an extended period abroad.

ATTN: Insurance policy must be taken out prior to travelling abroad. Cover cannot be provided once students have left Ireland.

Please find below examples of Erasmus insurance providers, but students may take out travel insurance from any provider of their choice.

### **Oaktree Financial Services**

Tel: 1890 876 077

e-mail: [students@oaktreefinancial.ie](mailto:students@oaktreefinancial.ie)

web: [www.collegetravel.ie](http://www.collegetravel.ie) / [www.oaktreefinancial.ie](http://www.oaktreefinancial.ie)

### **Study & Protect (previously O'Driscoll O'Neill)**

Tel: +353 (0)1 6395800

Email: [support@studyandprotect.com](mailto:support@studyandprotect.com).

web: [Eramus \(studyandprotect.com\)](http://Eramus(studyandprotect.com))

## c. Private health insurance

In addition to travel insurance, students are strongly advised to take out additional private medical insurance to cover the period of study abroad. If you have a medical insurance policy (VHI, Laya, Aviva, etc.) in Ireland, contact the insurer to ensure that you will be covered while abroad and bring a copy of your policy or policy number.

In some universities, students are obliged to take out additional insurance, e.g. liability insurance, repatriation cover, etc. Read the host University's requirements on insurance or contact the host university directly to obtain this information. Please be aware that in recent years, accidents involving injuries such as broken limbs have occurred to students who were

under-insured while abroad. This can incur substantial financial cost for the student and their family, so please be attentive to this matter.

The following websites may be useful:

Aviva/Irish Life Health: [www.avivahealth.ie](http://www.avivahealth.ie)

Laya: [www.layahealthcare.ie](http://www.layahealthcare.ie)

VHI: [www.vhi.ie](http://www.vhi.ie)

As a registered student of the University of Limerick, you are covered by UL insurance policy.

The company used by UL for emergency medical assistance is AIG Europe S.A.

The AIG Insurance number is an emergency number for cases involving inability to access medical services on the ground, security issues such as civil unrest, evacuation, etc. This insurance does not cover COVID19-related illness.

Students are advised to make use of the EHIC card, embassy services, health & travel insurance and host university services such as medical and counselling as a first port of call.

Contact details for all advice and assistance from AIG:

Tel: +44 1273 747 625/ Website: [www.mylifeline.ie](http://www.mylifeline.ie)

## 5. CHECKLIST

Please use the checklist below to ensure that all the necessary arrangements have been taken care of for your academic exchange abroad.

The checklist below refers to the forms to be submitted to the Erasmus office in UL.

Your host university might require that you complete other forms, specific to their own processes. These are not listed below.

Approx. 6-3 months prior to Erasmus placement	Complete
Ensure that your passport is valid until the end of the mobility period. If not, apply for a new passport at least three months before the host university's application deadline (see host university's fact sheet). Consider getting a passport card as well.	<input type="checkbox"/>



Obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for emergency medical cover. If you already have one, check that it is valid until the end of the mobility period. If not, apply online (( <a href="http://www.ehic.ie/">www.ehic.ie/</a> ) to renew the card.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Obtain an official transcript of records from Academic Registry in case this is required by the host University.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scan UL transcript of records, passport, EHIC and some ID photos and save all documents on a USB key, personal email or online storage.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete and submit all application documents to the host institution within the specified deadline(s). Instructions are usually sent via email or available on the host university's website. Check the host university's fact sheet for more information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apply to the host institution for accommodation if applicable or make arrangements for private accommodation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Select provisional modules at the host institution and fill out the Learning Agreement. Get the form approved and signed by the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator, submit it to the host institution and upload a copy to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Approx. 3-1 month prior to Erasmus placement</b>	Complete
Arrange travel insurance and/or private health insurance (recommended). NB: Many providers require that the insured person reside in Ireland for at least three months prior to going abroad.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finalise accommodation arrangements (pay deposit, confirm arrival date, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make necessary travel arrangements, i.e. book flights, train tickets, know your itinerary, inform host university of time of arrival, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take the OLS language assessment (compulsory if the main language of instruction at the host university is French, German or Spanish; voluntary if the language of instruction at the host university is English).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Register with the Department of Foreign Affairs and add <i>In Case of Emergency</i> (ICE) contacts to your phone's Lock screen.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Approx. 1-2 weeks into Erasmus placement</b>	Complete
Register at on the UL portal when instructed by Academic Registry. In Week 0 (check UL calendar), you will receive a reminder from UL to register for the semester. Although you are on Erasmus, you must complete this task.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Complete and sign the UL Acknowledgement of Responsibility form and upload it to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> by 30 <sup>th</sup> September (Autumn) / 31 <sup>st</sup> January (Spring).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep and scan your boarding pass. Get the Confirmation of Attendance (Arrival section) signed and stamped at the host institution and upload it to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once the Confirmation of Attendance has been submitted, the Erasmus team will email the Erasmus Grant Agreement to the student. Fill out and sign the Erasmus Grant Agreement and upload it to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Within the first 2-3 weeks, finalise your module choices at the host university, email your Learning agreement to the UL coordinator for approval and upload the complete Learning Agreement (page 1 + Section A + Section B, all fully signed) to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Approx. 1-2 weeks before departure from Host University</b>	Complete
If applicable, make appointment with accommodation staff to get your room checked.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get the Confirmation of Attendance (Departure section) signed and stamped at the host institution and upload it to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> . Keep and scan your boarding pass.	<input type="checkbox"/>
For those who completed the initial OLS language assessment prior to the mobility period, take the OLS language test again.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Approx. 1-2 months after Erasmus placement</b>	Complete
Complete and submit the online Erasmus participant's survey to the European Commission (link will be sent by the EU commission via email).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write a narrative report on your Erasmus experience and upload it to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upload your official Erasmus Transcript of Records (Erasmus results) to the <a href="#">Erasmus power app</a> as soon as you receive it from the host institution so that your Erasmus results may be processed.	<input type="checkbox"/>

## V. LIVING ABROAD

### 1. ARRIVAL

Students are advised to arrive in the host country during opening hours on a weekday, when offices, universities, shops, etc. are open for business. It is advisable to arrive a few days prior to the Orientation programme, to have time to settle in.

Students should receive directions from the host university on travelling from the airport or train station and be informed where they should go first, i.e. the Accommodation office, the International office, the Coordinator's office, etc.

#### Buddy / Mentor Programme

If the host university offers a Buddy or Mentor programme, it is a good idea to sign up for it. The Buddy Programme is a free programme whereby the host university assigns a local student (a Buddy or Mentor) to incoming Erasmus students. The 'Buddy' will usually greet you at the airport or the train station and help you get to your accommodation and show you around the university and the city.

Remember to contact your family upon arrival to let them know that you are safe and sound.

### 2. ORIENTATION & REGISTRATION

Host universities normally organise an orientation programme for incoming Erasmus students. It is very important to attend, as this session will provide essential information about the host University and local facilities. It may also include consultation with an Academic Advisor and enrolment. If the host university offers a pre-session language course, it is advisable to take this, especially for students studying through the local language. If the course is certified, the credits will be recognised by UL.

On arrival, students should establish who their point of contact is at the host university. In many cases, this will be an office similar to the International Office in UL. It can however be the academic coordinator in the department.

Students will be required to register at the host university. The registration process is different for every university so students should be prepared to find differences in practice between their host university and UL. Students should establish how to register as soon as they arrive at the host university.

### 3. REGISTRATION WITH AUTHORITIES

In some countries, students may be required to register with the local authorities. There are two elements to this, i.e. registration with the host University and registration with the local/national authorities. Students should register with the University before they register with the authorities. The registration process can be time-consuming, so make sure you have all the documents you need (you may be asked for the European Health Card, student card from host university, passport, passport photos, guarantee of financial support, etc.).

In some countries, if the placement is only for one semester, students may not need to register with the authorities. It is advisable to confirm this with the International Office of the host university.

Please check the Department of Foreign Affairs website for further information.

### 4. ACCOMMODATION

Students should arrive at their accommodation when advised. Students should notify the host university of their arrival date and of any changes.

University offices and accommodation offices are normally closed during the weekend and on public/bank holidays so it is best to arrive during office hours on a weekday, a few days before the beginning of the semester. Students travelling late at night or at the weekend should make prior arrangements with the accommodation office to check in and get the keys. If this is not possible, students should plan to book into alternative accommodation (e.g. Air BnB) overnight.

When moving in, any issues or problems should be reported immediately to the office responsible. Bed linen is usually not supplied. Kitchens can be poorly equipped and may not be supplied with an oven, kettle, toaster, etc.

If you live in a student residence, remember that in most European countries, it is not acceptable to socialise noisily at night. Academic work is taken seriously and disruptive behaviour is not tolerated.

If you have to look for your own accommodation, contact the host accommodation office to find out what the going rate is in the area to avoid being overcharged and if there are areas that are to be avoided. For safety reasons,

Students are advised to use caution and common sense when reserving private accommodation and signing contracts:

- Only consider ads posted by recognised letting agencies or accommodation providers that the host University's accommodation services have recommended.
- Do not reply to accommodation ads posted on social media.
- Do not go flat hunting on your own.
- If you have any doubt regarding the authenticity of an accommodation offer, do not pay any monies.
- Use a credit card account (MasterCard, Visa credit, American Express, etc) to pay for deposit / first month's rent. Paying by credit card usually ensures that you are covered by the credit card's insurance company in the event of a fraudulent transaction. Check with your bank what your credit card covers and how to make bank transfer payments from a credit card account.

Accommodation leases usually expire at the end of a month. This means that, if the premises are vacated before the agreed term, students are still liable for the rent for the remaining period.

## 5. STUDIES

As stated in the Erasmus Student Charter, students should take full advantage of all the learning opportunities available at the host university and endeavour to perform to the best of their ability in all relevant examinations or other forms of assessment.

### a. Timetable

Erasmus students organise their own timetable and, in most universities, modules from various disciplines and various years are available to international students (with some limitations). Therefore, unlike in UL where students would follow a specific course within a specific year, there is no pre-established timetable for Erasmus students at the host university. Students must organise their own timetable. The number of modules that students need to take will differ from one university to another as credit weightings can vary widely, but modules must add up to 30 ECTS credits in total.

Students normally have approx. two weeks at the start of the Erasmus semester to organise their timetable and register for modules. This can be a stressful exercise due to clashes, classes being full or not running, etc.

Be aware that class enrolment is usually capped, i.e. places for international students are limited and classes can fill up quickly. Make sure to register for your chosen modules as soon as registration opens at the host university. If you do not get a place in your chosen modules, you may have to take modules from other academic areas.

It is advisable to set realistic goals, for example, undergraduate students will find Master's modules very difficult; registering for an Economics module if you have never studied Economics is inadvisable, etc.

Issues in organising the timetable should be discussed with a member of staff at the host university, either with the International Office or with the academic coordinator.

## b. Assessments and Examinations

Students should make sure that they understand the exam structure and grading system at the host University. It is imperative to attend classes, adhere to all deadlines and write all examinations at the host university.

Students should save any work, assignment, project, etc. submitted during the semester, so that these can be presented to the UL academic coordinator if needs be.

Students should be aware that the host university's grading system will apply during the mobility period (not the UL grading system). The grading system, examination format, etc. at the host university will be different from that of UL.

Any student who fails a module should take the repeat examinations at the host university in order to clear the Fail grade. However, this may not always be possible when repeat examinations take place at a time when students have left the host country. If so, where a student returns from Erasmus with less than the required ECTS credits, the UL Erasmus academic coordinator will review the student's results and decide how the credit deficit may be compensated. Such decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the student's circumstances, the credit shortfall and the grades obtained. A decision on how to proceed can only be made once UL receives the student's official Transcript of Records.

In cases where a student returns from Erasmus with no or very few credits, he/she will be required to take additional modules at UL or complete an additional semester at UL.

Students are also required to submit an Erasmus narrative report within one month of finishing the Erasmus placement. The report, if deemed satisfactory, may carry up to 6 ECTS credits, in case of a credit deficit.

ATTN: The report is not a substitute for a module and students are required to register for 30 credits at the host university. If a student fails a module, provided that they attempted 30 credits at the host university, then the Erasmus report may be used by the Erasmus academic coordinator to compensate for the credit shortfall, as a 'safety net'.

## 6. ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Students should be aware that the semester dates at the host university will be different to those at UL. Students must adhere to the academic calendar and exam schedule of the host university.

In the majority of European universities, Autumn examinations take place in January/February. Students are expected to travel back after the Christmas break to finish classes and write examinations.

If exams clash with the start of the Spring semester at UL, the priority is to write the end-of-semester exams at the host university even if this means missing one or two weeks of the Spring semester at UL.

If the semester overlap exceeds 2 weeks, students are advised to try and make arrangements at the host university to sit exams at the end of January (this should be done as soon as the exam schedule is published). Please contact us ([outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie](mailto:outgoing.erasmus@ul.ie)) and the Erasmus academic coordinator at UL without delay if there are any difficulties with this.

### TERM DATES AND EXAMS AT GERMAN UNIVERSITIES

Universities in Germany begin and finish later than in most other countries. The typical semester dates are mid-October to mid-March and students going to Germany sometimes experience difficulty because of the overlap in term dates between UL and the German partner. Instead of an official Transcript of Records, lecturers in Germany will issue certificates or *Scheine* at the end of January, as proof of studies; these include details of attendance, marks for essays and tests, as well as the Lecturer's assessment of the student's academic performance. Students should ensure at the beginning of the semester that a certificate will be issued for each module.

## 7. PERSONAL SAFETY

Students should note that participation in the study placement abroad does involve certain inherent risks which the exchange student must assume. The risks associated with study abroad

include but are not limited to responsibility for damage to or loss of property, personal illness or injury and death while the exchange student is a participant in the programme. Although the University takes all necessary steps to mitigate these risks and to provide assistance in time of need, the student must take responsibility for ensuring personal safety and security during the study placement.

We strongly advise that students take out travel insurance and private medical insurance for the duration of the stay abroad.

Please inform the International Office at the host University and UL immediately in case of a serious incident or emergency.

### **Safety advice:**

- Attend orientation, apply for the Buddy programme if offered, obtain local information (e.g. areas or places which are considered unsafe)
- Obtain the number of a GP who speaks English (from the International office of the host institution) and have emergency contact numbers at hand at all times.
- Take care with displaying valuables; wallets, cameras, mobile phones etc should be hidden from view. Only carry a minimal amount of cash, sufficient to reach the destination.
- Be wary at all times, stay in a group when going out at night, take identifiable taxis
- Enter your local contact details on the UL student portal
- Avoid alcohol/drug consumption to minimise high-risk situations and remain vigilant of potential danger
- Avoid travelling in a car with a driver who is not well known to the passenger(s)
- Follow the host university on Facebook and Twitter to be informed of safety messages

### **Advice regarding important documents:**

Have your [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#) on you at all times.

Have an *In Case of Emergency* (ICE) card on you at all times or add your ICE contacts to your phone's Lock screen.

Do not carry your passport with you everywhere; keep it in a safe place and only carry a copy with you. Use a Passport card instead (see Department of Foreign Affairs website) or your Erasmus student card as form of photo ID.

Register your details with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) so that you can be contacted quickly if there's an unforeseen crisis like a natural disaster or a family emergency.

Download the DFA TravelWise app and add an alert for your destination.



## 8. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The emergency number in all EU countries is **112**.

The contact number of the International office at UL is **+353 61 213153** (during office hours only).

In the event of an emergency outside of office hours, students are advised to call UL's emergency number **+353 61 213333**; the security person on duty will then contact a member of the international office at UL.

As a safety precaution, we advise students to register with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DAF) while they are out of the country. This ensures that they can be contacted quickly in case of an unforeseen crisis.

Irish citizens can register with the Department of Foreign Affairs here: <https://www.dfa.ie/travel/citizens-registration/> We also advise that students download the DFA TravelWise app on their phone and add an alert for their destination.

For students from outside of Ireland, we advise contacting your country's Department of Foreign Affairs and making them aware of your Erasmus semester.

If required, the list for Irish embassies and consulates in Europe is available on the DFA website: <https://www.dfa.ie/embassies/irish-embassies-abroad/>

Incidents should be reported to the host university and UL International Office without delay. Serious incidents should also be reported to the local police station.

The best help is often close at hand so if you have problems, talk to the International office of the host university.

## 9. CONDUCT

Students are reminded that they represent the University of Limerick and Ireland when abroad. Whilst students must adhere to the rules and regulations of the host institution, they also remain registered as UL students and the UL Code of Conduct applies.

Please see links below for most up-to-date versions of UL policies:

<https://www.ul.ie/academic-registry/current-students/policies-procedures-handbooks-0>

As the University wishes to maintain good relations with partner universities and does not want to prejudice staff or landlords against future cohorts of UL students, issues such as non-payment of rent or utilities or bad behaviour are considered to be a breach of this Code, which may result in disciplinary action.

Please be aware that throughout Europe, drug/alcohol abuse is taken very seriously. Students whose conduct does not comply with local laws may be asked to leave the Erasmus placement and become involved in legal issues leading to prosecution.

## VI. Erasmus AND YOU

### 1. CULTURE SHOCK AND HOMESICKNESS

It takes a while to adapt to a new culture. After the initial excitement of meeting new friends, trying new foods, experiencing new academic settings, etc., it is common for students to experience homesickness. Many students are surprised at how homesick they feel in the first few weeks. What seems strange at first will soon become familiar. It is important to keep a positive attitude and be open-minded about people, cultural differences and new experiences, and not to compare everything with home. There will be some advantages and some disadvantages, and people gradually adapt to new ways.

#### a. What is culture shock

Culture shock is a logical reaction to differences we come across when experiencing a foreign culture. Most students experience culture shock or homesickness. This can be triggered by the stress of adjusting to the new customs, foods, language, people, and activities of a foreign culture.

#### b. Dealing with culture shock / homesickness

The following suggestions can help minimise homesickness/culture shock:

- Be prepared to feel up and down in the few weeks after arrival. Give yourself time to adapt to the cultural differences.

- Keep an open mind and a positive attitude. Try not to compare with home - this will allow you to be more objective and facilitate cross-cultural understanding.
- Isolation only causes more adjustment problems. Find things to do, especially at the weekend, and seek out people (Irish students, local and other international students) even if you think you might not have much in common.
- Make an effort and study the language daily to enhance your communication skills - this will help you integrate better.
- Sign up for Buddy programmes, student associations such as Erasmus Student network (ESN), etc where available.
- Take advantage of cultural activities and social clubs organised by your college.
- If you play sports, join a local sports club or find out if there is a GAA club in the area.
- Look after yourself - exercise and keep a healthy diet to reduce stress. Try and achieve a healthy balance between study, leisure and rest.
- Allow yourself to see the humour in misunderstandings and embarrassments.
- Talk with someone in the International Office of the host University.
- Get in touch with UL for assistance.
- If you consider dropping classes or withdrawing from Erasmus, please see a member of staff in the International Office immediately. Students can feel discouraged at times, but the staff at the host university will try to help you find a solution.

## 2. MAKING THE MOST OF THE EXCHANGE ABROAD

Studying abroad is an incredible opportunity and can be one of the greatest experiences in a student's academic life. The Erasmus experience has academic, social, personal and cultural benefits; it can widen your horizons, enrich your knowledge of other cultures, and change your outlook on life.

Whilst leaving your friends and family and living abroad can seem daunting, a semester abroad can be an amazing social experience. Below are a few pointers to help make the most of the experience.

### a. Prepare

Planning and organisation are key to a successful semester abroad.

Before embarking on an Erasmus exchange, read student reports and get contact details of UL students who went to the same destination the year before, and see if they have any advice or contacts there.

Looking online is also a really useful way to see who will be joining you for the year; sites like Facebook can help you to meet new people before you even arrive. Meeting other students online can make the experience less daunting and make it easier to settle into your new environment.

Keep on top of the paperwork to avoid last-minute stress and panic. Make sure you know what documents are required and do not leave form-filling exercises to the last minute.

### b. Get involved

Each year over 250,000 students take part in the Erasmus programme. Wherever you are, there will be activities and events organised for Erasmus students; this is the best way to meet other students. Take advantage of all opportunities offered to Erasmus students, especially in the first few weeks.

Meeting students from the host university can be more difficult. If the host university has a language tandem or *intercambio* programme, sign up for a conversation partner – it can be a great way to improve your language skills and get to know native speakers.

Student societies and sports clubs can be limited at the host university. Take the initiative and find out about clubs and associations in the town/city where you live.

### c. Travel

The exchange abroad is not just about studying; it is a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in a new culture and explore the host country. Make the most of your spare time, plan weekend trips and explore.

### d. Share

Photos, videos, blogs, journals, scrapbooks, sketchbooks, memory boxes – record your adventures and share your experiences with your friends back home and fellow Erasmus students.

## 3. LIFE AFTER Erasmus

The Erasmus exchange can be one of the most exciting experiences in a student's academic life and readjusting to normal life at home can be a challenge. It is not unusual for students to feel sad and confused after their stay abroad - after being away for 6 or 12 months, it is as if nothing has changed yet everything is different.

The following suggestions can help overcome the 'Erasmus blues':

- Share your experience and contribute to making other Erasmus students' exchange a success - contact the International Office to volunteer as an Erasmus 'ambassador' and speak to future students at the International Fair and/or Erasmus Information sessions.
- Volunteer for the Buddy programme at UL ([Buddyprogramme@ul.ie](mailto:Buddyprogramme@ul.ie))
- Become a member of the UL International Society and meet new Erasmus students
- Take part in the Language Exchange programme (contact Language Hub administrator in LC1-010)
- Plan your next experience abroad: internship, overseas programme etc.
- Plan a get-together with your Erasmus friends.
- Transform what you learnt during Erasmus into new opportunities for experience and networking.

The Erasmus programme has changed the lives of over 3 million students. As students move on in their personal and professional life, it will continue to inspire and influence them in their choices.

## VII. ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1. Erasmus Forms

#### a. Prior to departure for Erasmus

##### Provisional LEARNING AGREEMENT

To be completed before the Erasmus placement. The form must be approved by the UL Erasmus Academic Coordinator before sending it to the host university. Students must also upload the form onto [the Erasmus power app](#).

##### OLS ASSESSMENT

Students must take the OLS language assessment if the main language of instruction at the host university is a European language other than English.

## b. On arrival

### Finalised LEARNING AGREEMENT (Sections A and B)

Once your module choices are finalised and approved by the host university, the signed original must be uploaded onto [the Erasmus power app](#).

### CONFIRMATION OF ATTENDANCE - CERTIFICATE OF ARRIVAL

Proof of enrolment to be signed and stamped by host university following arrival; to be uploaded on [the Erasmus power app](#).

### Erasmus GRANT CONTRACT (FINANCIAL AGREEMENT)

This form is emailed to students towards the beginning of the Erasmus placement, upon submission of the Certificate of Arrival. Bank details must be included in the contract (BIC and IBAN) for the lodgement of the grant to the student's bank account. The completed form must be uploaded to [the Erasmus power app](#).

## c. Prior to departure from host university

### CONFIRMATION OF ATTENDANCE - CERTIFICATE OF DEPARTURE

To be signed and stamped by host university at the end of the semester abroad; to be uploaded on [the Erasmus power app](#).

## d. Upon return from Erasmus

### Erasmus PARTICIPANT'S SURVEY

This questionnaire must be submitted online following completion of Erasmus placement. The questionnaire is a requirement of the EU. It will be emailed by the European Commission to the student's UL email address at the end of the semester abroad. Students have 30 days to complete the questionnaire. After that period, the link is de-activated.

### OLS ASSESSMENT

Students who took the OLS language assessment before the Erasmus semester and availed of the online courses must re-take the OLS assessment at the end of the semester.

### Erasmus TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS FROM HOST UNIVERSITY

Students must upload a scanned copy of their Erasmus results (official Transcript of Records) to [the Erasmus power app](#) as soon as they receive them. Our office will forward the documents to Academic Registry and the relevant UL Academic coordinator for evaluation, and will retain a copy of the transcript.

#### Erasmus NARRATIVE STUDENT REPORT

This report is to be submitted upon return from the semester abroad and is worth 6 ECTS credits. It should have a minimum length of 1,500 words and maximum of 2,500 words. It is graded on a Pass-Fail basis by the Erasmus academic coordinator. It should be submitted within a month of returning to the University of Limerick. Detailed instructions will be sent to the student's UL email address. The report is to be uploaded to [the Erasmus power app](#) within a month of finishing your Erasmus placement.

## ANNEX 2. UL Erasmus Academic Coordinators

Academic Area	Academic Coordinator	Office	E-Mail	Tel. (061)
Aeronautical engineering	Trevor Young	L1-028	<a href="mailto:trevor.young@ul.ie">trevor.young@ul.ie</a>	202531
Architecture	Jan Frohburg	ER3-015	<a href="mailto:jan.frohburg@ul.ie">jan.frohburg@ul.ie</a>	213698
Business/Business with Lang.	Elaine Berkery	KB2-15	<a href="mailto:elaine.berkery@ul.ie">elaine.berkery@ul.ie</a>	
Environmental Science	Bernadette O'Regan	B3-047	<a href="mailto:bernadette.oregan@ul.ie">bernadette.oregan@ul.ie</a>	202552
Computer Science	J.J. Collins	CS1-28	<a href="mailto:jj.collins@ul.ie">jj.collins@ul.ie</a>	202409
Digital Media Design	Gabriela Avram	CS2-031	<a href="mailto:gabriela.avram@ul.ie">gabriela.avram@ul.ie</a>	202782
Economics	Rita Buckley	KB3-29	<a href="mailto:rita.buckley@ul.ie">rita.buckley@ul.ie</a>	202624
Engineering	Reiner Dojen	D3-002	<a href="mailto:reiner.dojen@ul.ie">reiner.dojen@ul.ie</a>	213442
English	Sinéad McDermott / Tim Groenland	ER3-007	<a href="mailto:sinead.mcdermott@ul.ie">sinead.mcdermott@ul.ie</a> <a href="mailto:tim.groenland@ul.ie">tim.groenland@ul.ie</a>	213020
Electronic Engineering	Ian Grout	C2-044	<a href="mailto:ian.grout@ul.ie">ian.grout@ul.ie</a>	202298
French	Annie Halpin	LC2-013	<a href="mailto:annie.halpin@ul.ie">annie.halpin@ul.ie</a>	213432
Gaeilge & Lesser known languages	Ailbhe Nic Giolla Chomhaill	LC2-010	<a href="mailto:Ailbhe.NicGiollaChomhaill@ul.ie">Ailbhe.NicGiollaChomhaill@ul.ie</a>	234736
German	Joachim Fischer	MC1-008	<a href="mailto:joachim.fischer@ul.ie">joachim.fischer@ul.ie</a>	202354
History	Alistair Malcolm	C1-090	<a href="mailto:alistair.malcolm@ul.ie">alistair.malcolm@ul.ie</a>	202604
International Business	Kieran Gallery	KB3-43	<a href="mailto:kieran.gallery@ul.ie">kieran.gallery@ul.ie</a>	213319
Journalism	Kathryn Hayes	ER3-023	<a href="mailto:kathryn.hayes@ul.ie">kathryn.hayes@ul.ie</a>	234678
Law / Criminal Justice	Andrea Ryan	FG-003	<a href="mailto:andrea.ryan@ul.ie">andrea.ryan@ul.ie</a>	234190
Linguistics	Angela Farrell	LC2-008	<a href="mailto:angela.farrell@ul.ie">angela.farrell@ul.ie</a>	202244
Materials Science & Technology	Gerry Higgins	B3-030	<a href="mailto:gerry.higgins@ul.ie">gerry.higgins@ul.ie</a>	202069
Mathematics	Doireann O'Kiely			
Mechanical engineering	Philip Griffin	L1-031	<a href="mailto:philip.griffin@ul.ie">philip.griffin@ul.ie</a>	234235
New Media & Cultural Studies	Maria Rieder	LC2-007	<a href="mailto:maria.rieder@ul.ie">maria.rieder@ul.ie</a>	234858
Performing Arts (IWAMD)	Niall Keegan			
Politics & International Relations	Andrew Shorten			
Public Admin. & Leadership	Andrew Shorten			
Product Design and Technology	Niall Deloughry	PDC-2	<a href="mailto:niall.deloughry@ul.ie">niall.deloughry@ul.ie</a>	213111
Physical Education & Sports Science	D.J. Collins	P1-008	<a href="mailto:D.J.Collins@ul.ie">D.J.Collins@ul.ie</a>	202807
Psychology	Andrew Moynihan		<a href="mailto:Erasmuspsychology@ul.ie">Erasmuspsychology@ul.ie</a>	
Sociology	Lee Monaghan	F1-006	<a href="mailto:lee.monaghan@ul.ie">lee.monaghan@ul.ie</a>	213346
Spanish	Barrie Wharton	SG-31	<a href="mailto:barrie.wharton@ul.ie">barrie.wharton@ul.ie</a>	202974



For the most up-to-date list of Erasmus academic coordinators, please refer to the Erasmus website:  
[Erasmus Academic Coordinators | University of Limerick \(ul.ie\)](#)

## ANNEX 3. ul UL contacts

Student Academic Administration	<a href="mailto:saa@ul.ie">saa@ul.ie</a>
Student Status Committee	<a href="mailto:ssc@ul.ie">ssc@ul.ie</a>
Fees office	<a href="mailto:student.fees.office@ul.ie">student.fees.office@ul.ie</a>
Students Union	<a href="mailto:SUReception@ul.ie">SUReception@ul.ie</a>
ITD	<a href="mailto:itss@ul.ie">itss@ul.ie</a>
Access office	<a href="mailto:access@ul.ie">access@ul.ie</a>
Disability office	<a href="mailto:caoilinn.kennedy@ul.ie">caoilinn.kennedy@ul.ie</a>
Mature students office	<a href="mailto:mso@ul.ie">mso@ul.ie</a>
Counselling	<a href="mailto:counselling@ul.ie">counselling@ul.ie</a>
Chaplaincy	<a href="mailto:john.campion@ul.ie">john.campion@ul.ie</a>

## ANNEX 4. Useful websites

Handbook of Academic Regulations	<a href="#">Table of Contents (ul.ie)</a>
Student Handbook	<a href="#">UL Student Handbook   UL Student Life</a>
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	<a href="#">Irish Embassies Abroad - Department of Foreign Affairs (dfa.ie)</a>
Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI)	<a href="#">Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) SUSI</a>
European Health Insurance card	<a href="https://www2.hse.ie/services/ehic/ehic.html">https://www2.hse.ie/services/ehic/ehic.html</a>
Erasmus Student Network	<a href="#">Erasmus Student Network (esn.org)</a>
Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association (ITIA)	<a href="#">Homepage, Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association (translatorsassociation.ie)</a>
Aviva / Irish Life Health Laya healthcare (AIG)  VHI	<a href="http://www.aviva.ie/health/">http://www.aviva.ie/health/</a> <a href="#">Health Insurance   Health Insurance Quotes   Laya Healthcare Ireland</a>  <a href="https://www.vhi.ie/home">https://www.vhi.ie/home</a> <a href="#">Home - Oak Tree Insurance Agency (oaktreeinsagency.com)</a>

Oaktree Insurance Study and Protect Insurance	<a href="http://studyandprotect.com">Erasmus (studyandprotect.com)</a>
GAA Europe	<a href="#">Gaelic Games Europe   Gaelic Athletic Association</a>