

International Exchange Student Handbook

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Produced by the International Office at DCU

1. Introduction - Exchange programmes in DCU:

Erasmus:

The **Erasmus Programme** is an EU-funded education programme designed to encourage students to expand their university education by spending a period of study in another EU member state, or member states of the European Economic Area. The Erasmus programme applies to all member countries of the European Union, plus Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. To achieve this, funds are provided only for formally organised mobility schemes involving specific universities with which DCU has signed an Erasmus Bilateral Agreement.

DCU has participated in the Erasmus programme since its inception in 1987 and hundreds of students have availed of the opportunity to study abroad. Feedback over the years shows that almost all of them have found it to be a most rewarding experience. DCU currently has about 100 Socrates Bilateral Agreements signed with other universities which facilitates the mobility of up to 300 students each way each year.

ECTS - European Credit Transfer System:

The European Community promotes inter-university co-operation as a means of improving the quality of education for the benefit of students and higher education institutions, and student mobility is a predominant element of that inter-university co-operation. The Erasmus programme clearly demonstrates that studying abroad can be a particularly valuable experience as it is not only the best way to learn about other countries, ideas, languages and cultures; increasingly it is also an important element in academic and professional career development.

The recognition of studies and diplomas is a prerequisite for the creation of an Open European area of education and training where students and teachers can move without obstacles. ECTS provides an instrument to create transparency, to build bridges between institutions and to widen the choices available to students. The system makes it easier for institutions to recognise the learning achievements of students through the use of commonly understood measurements - credits and grades - and it also provides a means to interpret national systems of higher education. The ECTS system is based on three core elements: **information** (on study programmes and student achievement), **mutual agreement** (between the partner institutions and the student) and the use of **ECTS credits** (to indicate student workload).

Full academic recognition is a *conditio sine qua non* for student mobility in the framework of the Erasmus and Lifelong Learning programmes. Full academic recognition means that the study period abroad (including examinations or other forms of assessment) replaces a comparable period of study at the home university (including examinations or other forms of assessment), though the content of the agreed study programme may differ. Under ECTS, students are required to complete a full year course load of 60 ECTS credits (or 30 credits in each semester). Most of our European partners participate in the ECTS system and will provide you with a **transcript** at the end of your stay that should indicate the number of ECTS credits you have completed. This helps to facilitate the process of academic recognition between universities. Your academic co-ordinators in DCU will confirm the volume and level of work you are required to complete while abroad and this will be noted on the Learning Agreement. They will also receive your results from the partner university when you have finished and will interpret your results. A result of either "pass" or "fail" will then be entered onto your record for your year spent abroad. If your Schools are satisfied that you have completed a satisfactory amount of credits at an appropriate level, your result for the year will be entered as "pass" and you will progress to your final year. You

are also advised to speak to students who have been to the same host university, as quite often, they can give you invaluable, practical advice on what to do, which courses to take, where to go and what you need to bring. Further information on ECTS is available from:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm

Japan:

DCU has exchange agreements with eight Japanese universities: Toyo University, Kanazawa University, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, Sophia University and Takasaki City University of Economics, Ritsumeikan University, Doshisha University, Rikkyo University and Kwansai Gakuin University. Students of INTB Japanese and ALTS (Japanese) spend their third year in Japan – in addition students registered on the JHP programme who have the option to study abroad can also study at one of our Japanese partners. There is the possibility of applying for a number of scholarships for the year's study in Japan such as the, JASSO, AEIJ and Monbusho. A very useful guide to Japan that is published by the Japanese department in SALIS is "The Smooth Guide to Japan".

Other non-EU partners:

DCU also has exchange agreements with universities that are not part of the Erasmus programme – in the US, Mexico, China, Canada, and Australia. Most of which are primarily for the Science students who may spend a period of study abroad in their 3rd year.

For detailed information on all **Partner Institutions** please click here [link: <http://www.dcu.ie/international/partners.shtml>]

2. Going abroad to study - first steps:

The majority of DCU students who spend a period of study abroad generally do so as an integral part of their undergraduate degree programme. Students on these programmes *must* complete this compulsory period abroad in order to satisfy the requirements of the programme. There is no alternative offered to the 'year abroad' if students find themselves unable to travel to or stay in their chosen country. If you are studying on a programme which has a compulsory year abroad, you need to complete this year 'abroad' in order to progress with your degree programme. Please consult with your Chairperson if you feel that studying abroad is going to be problematic for you. The programmes which currently have a period abroad integrated into their academic structures are:

- Bachelor of Business International (one year)
- Applied Languages & Translation Studies (one year)
- Joint Honours Programme (one year)
- Computer Applications (one year or one semester optional)
- Engineering (one year or one semester optional)
- International Science (one semester optional)
- BA International Relations / BA Economics, Politics and Law (one year optional)
- BA in Contemporary Culture & Society (one year optional)
- BA in Civil Law & Society

The option of studying abroad is also possible on some programmes in the following Schools:

- School of Chemical Sciences
- School of Biotechnology
- School of Computing
- School of Electronic Engineering
- School of Mechanical Engineering

Semester/Year Abroad Meetings:

In November/December of each year, the International Office hosts a Study Abroad Fair. This gives DCU students the opportunity to find out more information on the range of destinations and universities that they can study at, and also the opportunity to speak to Exchange students from partner universities currently studying in DCU.

In February / March each year, the various Schools and Faculties organise a Semester/Year Abroad Meeting for students who will spend a period of study abroad during the following academic year. This is a crucial session and will provide general details on your year abroad and the academic regulations relevant to this year.

Following these School meetings, the International Office calls a meeting of all outgoing exchange students and provides information about the administrative aspects of your period abroad, financial supports available and practical information on living abroad. Details of this meeting will be forwarded to your DCU e-mail accounts.

It is crucial that you attend all meetings regarding the year abroad in order to be fully informed of all aspects.

Obtaining information on your host University:

Information is available from a variety of sources, and it is worthwhile to have investigated these well in advance of your departure:

- **Websites:** The most current and up-to-date information is available on the relevant university websites. It is advisable to study these carefully and note important dates such as Academic Calendars, Orientation periods, intensive language courses (if available) etc.
- **Academic co-ordinators in DCU:** The coordinators will provide you with information on the academic aspects of your study period abroad. They may also be able to provide first-hand information about the institution you have chosen as the coordinators visit these institutions on a regular basis.
- **DCU students who are currently on their year abroad** will provide many useful tips and 'inside' information which may save you time when you arrive at your host institution. This may include information about recommended courses to take, local discounts for students, accommodation etc. Academic Coordinators will be able to put you in touch with these students.
- **Exchange students currently on-campus:** As DCU is receiving students from the institution to which you will be travelling, it would be worthwhile making contact with these students. This may be done through student clubs (e.g. GlobaLinks), the Study Abroad Fair or by simply asking around!

In June/July prior to your period of study abroad you will receive an official information pack from your host University. This will include important information such as the procedure for arranging accommodation, the orientation schedule, semester dates. This information may be sent to your home address by post or may be posted to your e-mail accounts. Please ensure that the information on your portal pages is correct at all times and that you up-date any details such as change of address. The institution only sends one pack per student and it is the responsibility of the student to fill out all forms and return by the stipulated dates.

If you require assistance, please contact your Academic Coordinator at DCU and/or the International Office. The Institutional Exchange Coordinator in the International Office at DCU can be contacted by email: exchange@dcu.ie or by telephone: 01-700 5574.

It is important that you know the following information before departure (and booking flights):

- Semester start and end dates
- Exam and holiday periods
- Dates of the Orientation Programme, if provided
- Dates of preparatory Language programme (if applicable) and cost (if applicable)
- Procedures and information regarding registration and booking accommodation

You may need to correspond with your host university a number of times before you go abroad. You should ensure that you have all of the information you need as early as possible - before the end of July, at the very latest, as most university offices close in August and staff would not be available to answer your queries then.

Accommodation:

Some universities have on-campus accommodation available for exchange students. Normally you need to complete application forms in advance for these places. Information on this and forms are usually received in the information packs from the host university. In some cases you may also be required to pay a deposit which you are encouraged to pay as quickly as possible, as most accommodation on-campus is on a first-come first-served basis. If you wish to stay near or with a friend, you should communicate this to the accommodation booking office of your host university. The office may or may not be able to grant your request. It is worth noting that sometimes this type of accommodation is not of a very high standard, compared to what we are used to in Ireland. It usually consists of a single room in a hall of residence. You may find that cooking utensils and bed linen are not provided, and that a number of people could be sharing bathrooms or cooking areas. Try to find out about this before you go so that you know what to expect. Where university accommodation is available, it is usually the recommended option and has many advantages - it can usually be booked in advance; it is a good place to make new friends with other students; the location is likely to be close to the university; cost will be for the duration of your study period only; it is usually cheaper than alternative types of accommodation.

If you are not pre-booking accommodation before you go abroad, try at least to have something arranged for the first few nights of your stay. Most universities have an Accommodation Office or an International Office that will be able to assist you and give you advice. Students who live at home while attending DCU may find this part of the stay abroad the most daunting. However, with careful and early planning most students generally do not have any major problems.

DCU is not responsible for your accommodation abroad - this is ultimately your responsibility. There is no reimbursement by DCU of any costs associated with accommodation while abroad.

Remember to speak to DCU students who are currently studying at your host university for advice on accommodation.

3. Academic Aspects:

Registration at DCU:

You must register with DCU prior to your year/semester abroad, and pay the usual fee. You will be informed of the online registration procedure by Registry. Please ensure that you register by the DCU deadlines; late registration charges will apply, and results will be withheld if you fail to register. For any queries on this, please email: registry@dcu.ie

Registration at host university:

You will also be required to register at your host university. Once enrolled in your host university, you must return the signed and stamped Certificate of Stay to the International Office at DCU in order for your Erasmus Grant to be released (details below). You will not be required to pay tuition fees, although in some universities you have to pay student services semester/registration fees. This is common in German universities and the costs vary from institution to institution. These costs do have benefits for the students such as: subsidised meals at student canteen, and reduced travel throughout the region. Costs for language courses (if charged) cannot be reimbursed.

Courses to take:

Your period of study at the host university is fully recognised by DCU as part of your study for your degree at DCU. It follows that you must achieve 60 ECTS credits for a year abroad, 30 ECTS credits for one semester abroad.

You need to be very clear about what is going to be required of you while you are at your host university, in terms of choice of courses, attendance requirements, submission of written or practical work, projects and passing of exams. You will have to bear in mind that methods of teaching, learning and examining may differ in a number of ways at the host university from those you are familiar with.

Your Academic Co-Ordinator in DCU should be in a position to advise you on all of the issues above. In some cases, academic regulations' booklets have been produced by the relevant School or Faculty in relation to some programmes.

Each exchange university with whom DCU is linked, is looked after by a member of the academic staff in a relevant School at DCU. This person is responsible for identifying the modules which DCU students could take at the host university, selecting the students who will participate (this is also usually done in conjunction with the Chairperson of the Programme Board), informing the International Office of the names of the outgoing students, etc. Your academic co-ordinator will be the first point of contact for questions and queries of an academic nature in relation to your period of study abroad. Each of our partner universities has a corresponding member of the academic staff, and an International Office (in most cases) to help you with your exchange placement. You therefore have 3 sources to help you choose your courses whilst abroad:

1. Academic Coordinators at DCU
2. Academic Coordinators at your host institution
3. DCU students who have already studied at your host institution

Learning Agreement

The European Commission requires that each student is in possession of a complete Learning Agreement

(<http://www4.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/international/Learning%20Agreement%20for%20studies-final%20Sep%202015.pdf>)

prior to departure for their study period abroad. This form was introduced in support of students and **it is one of the rights to be issued with it as an Erasmus student. It is also your responsibility to complete it fully and return it to the International Office prior to your departure.**

For completion, please follow these steps:

- Agree on suitable courses for study at your host institution in liaison with your DCU Academic Exchange Coordinator (course information should be available from all partner institutions well in advance).
- On your Learning Agreement, fill in your personal details and information relevant to your study period.
- List the details of all agreed courses on page one of the Learning Agreement

- Sign the Learning Agreement and then get your Academic Exchange Coordinator at departmental level and the Institutional Exchange Coordinator in the International Office to sign the form to gain official approval of your choices
- Once your form has been fully approved within DCU, you need to send it to your host institution (ideally as part of your application) for further approval on their side. Before submitting this form to your host information, ensure you have a copy of it. Please also ask for the form to be returned to you as soon as possible.
- When the form is complete, it should be submitted to the International Office for safeguarding.

When you arrive at your host institution, you may need to make changes to your choices and hence to the Learning Agreement. Should this be the case, please liaise closely with your Academic Coordinators both at your host institution and back in DCU to ensure your choices meet your DCU course requirements. You will also need to ask the Institutional Exchange Coordinator at DCU to send out your Learning Agreement for changes. Please make all amendments as necessary and have your form signed by all four parties as previously outlined.

Letters confirming your student status:

If, at any time, you need a letter confirming your student status in DCU, you can get these issued from the Registry at DCU.

Visits by DCU staff:

You may be visited by one or two DCU academic staff during your year abroad (at least in the case of the European placements). These visits are an important part of your academic year and you will receive advice on projects or course work you are doing. You are obliged to be available to meet with DCU staff during these visits.

4. Financial Aspects:

N.B: Students applying to either the US or Japan must show evidence of financial self support at application stage. Students planning to study for the full academic year must include bank statements (or similar documentation) which show evidence of the following amounts:

**US – approx \$20,000 for the full academic year, \$10,000 for a semester
Japan – approx €10,000 for the full academic year**

Cost of living:

Living abroad as an exchange student does not come free, and the costs vary from country to country, and according to the period of time you spend abroad. Some countries are more expensive than others, as are some towns, and the extra expenditure involved will also depend on whether you are currently living at home. If you are, accommodation will be a major cost, but if you are not, you will usually find that accommodation costs are cheaper abroad than they are here in Ireland. In some countries you may be entitled to some local financial assistance towards the cost of your rent. For example, in France you may be able to get a substantial rent rebate of approximately 50% and maybe more. Your host university will have details on the procedure for applying for this.

The average cost of living in most countries of the EU is fairly standard. In many European countries student restaurants are subsidised and provide good meals at excellent value. Shopping at food markets is good value and helps you to practise the language. Your Student Discount Card (ISIC card) may entitle you to discounts in shops. Calculate how much money you will need and plan for higher costs at the beginning. You will probably be required to pay a month's deposit on your accommodation as well as a month's rent in advance. Extra money is also likely to be needed for a travel pass, for other deposits, student discount cards, etc. You may need to purchase extra household items if those supplied are insufficient.

Erasmus grants:

DCU students taking part in an exchange at one of the University's official partner institutions are eligible to apply for an Erasmus Grant if the following criteria are met:

- DCU must have an active Erasmus bilateral agreement with the host institution (a list of all partner institutions is available on our Student Mobility Website - N.B. this includes Erasmus and non-Erasmus partners, most of our EU partnership would be covered under the Erasmus programme) where s/he must engage in eligible criteria;
- Students must be fully registered on a course of studies leading to a degree or diploma up to and including doctoral level at DCU;
- Students must have successfully completed at least one year of university study.

Erasmus grants are intended to offset the additional costs of mobility, i.e. travel costs, foreign language preparation where necessary and a higher cost of living in the host country. They are not intended to cover the full costs of study abroad.

Each year, the International Office in DCU receives a block amount from the EU via the National Agency (HEA), which is based on the total number of student grants requested on behalf of DCU. The HEA will also determine maximum grant levels.

Grants are awarded for eligible activities abroad which take place between 1 July and 30 September of the following year, and which should last at least 3 months and not more than one year.

A second grant may not be awarded to any student.

Eligible activities abroad are (exclusively):

- Full-time undergraduate or postgraduate studies, including thesis preparation (but excluding research activities not specifically forming part of a course of studies) at the host institution leading to a recognised diploma or degree at the home institution;
- Industrial placements, provided that the placement is combined with a minimum period of study abroad of three months and that it is recognised as an integral part of the student's programme by the home institution, and that it is not wholly supported by the Erasmus programme or by any other European Community programme. Details on placement grants can be obtained by the INTRA Office at DCU

Applications for an Erasmus grant should be made on the official Form for year abroad students, this can be downloaded from <http://www4.dcu.ie/international/ects.shtml>

The completed application should be submitted to the Exchange Coordinator in the International Office by 31 May of the year prior to the anticipated exchange.

Estimated Grant levels are set at the beginning of September but will be confirmed when students provide exact arrival and anticipated departure dates from the host university.

In order to receive their grant, students must take care of the following:

- Register for your programme at DCU and pay relevant fees to DCU
- Print off, complete and submit your completed Learning Agreement (signed by the student, home and host university academic co-ordinator (available on the web) and return these to the International Office
- Have your Certificate of Attendance form (which contains both arrival and anticipated departure date) signed and stamped upon arrival at your host institution and return this to DCU as soon as possible

As soon as these matters have been taken care of, the Exchange Coordinator can release your 1st instalment (generally towards the middle of November for full year and semester 1 students; semester 2 dates depend on the starting date at your host institution). You will receive your Erasmus grant by bank transfer. Please ensure that you have input your correct banking details on your Student Portal Page (details of how to do this are on the Grant Application Form).

Student Financial Assistance Fund:

This SAF fund, managed by Student Support & Development, is available for students who find themselves in financial difficulty while abroad. Further information on financial assistance is available online at https://www.dcu.ie/students/finance/assistance_fund.shtml.

Financial Advice:

Open a Bank Account if possible. It is wise to compare bank charges before deciding where to open your account. You may need to present a letter to the bank from your host university/organisation. A bank account usually allows you to withdraw money from ATMs abroad.

• Internet banking is a convenient way for you to access your Irish bank account details while abroad. You should speak to your local branch about this.

• Bank drafts and telegraphic transfers allow you to transfer money from Ireland to your bank account abroad. A bank draft should be drawn in the foreign currency. Be aware, however, that it may take some time, perhaps 10 days, for the funds to be cleared by the bank abroad. Telegraphic transfer is a faster way of sending money abroad but it is more expensive and it will take around 3 days before you have access to the money transferred. The speediest way and, of course, the most expensive, of transferring funds is by Moneygram. You should enquire from your bank at home about International Banking Charges. You can minimise bank charges by reducing the number of international transactions.

• Euro cheques and Euro Cards are a very convenient way of withdrawing money from an Irish account while in Europe. Euro-cheques can be written in any currency and are very useful when visiting different countries. The

EuroCard allows you to withdraw money from your Irish current account at ATMs abroad, provided your account is in credit.

- Some Irish pass cards may be used at ATMs abroad. Enquire about this possibility before going abroad. Take care not to rely exclusively on pass cards or Euro-cards, as you may encounter difficulties in withdrawing money from ATMs in the event of computer failure.
- Credit Cards are very convenient and usually economical in comparison with alternatives.
- Travellers' cheques are a useful method of bringing money abroad and covering initial expenses. Long term use of travellers' cheques is likely to be awkward, however, as they cannot be sent to you from home (your signature is needed at time of purchase).
- Bring some foreign currency (at least enough to cover trains, buses, taxis, emergency overnight cost, meals, etc for the first few days).
- Do not have cash sent to you in the post as the postal service will not guarantee its safe delivery.
- Consult your bank for advice

If you are travelling within the Eurozone, some of the above points will not be relevant.

Local Authority Maintenance Grants:

Students in receipt of a Higher Education Grant (SUSI) or a VEC Scholarship will continue to receive this while studying abroad. Please contact your local grant authority to see if they will require a letter from Registry stating that you are a full-time fee-paying student of DCU for the forthcoming academic year, which will be spent studying in a university abroad. You must be *registered* with DCU prior to requesting this letter from the Registry. Where the maintenance component of a grant or scholarship has been based on the assumption that the student was living at home, the increased 'away from home' grant will be paid during the year abroad. It is very important to note that your grant cheque is worthless in a foreign country, so do not have it forwarded to you there. Instead, please email registry@dcu.ie with an instruction on where you would like your grant cheque to be posted to. If you are arranging for a member of your family or a friend to collect your grant cheque please notify registry@dcu.ie and ensure that the designated person brings along a form of identification, i.e. passport when collecting the cheque. Please arrange with your bank to allow this person to cash the cheque for you. In the absence of any specific instructions your cheque will be posted to your home address in Ireland. For any queries please contact registry@dcu.ie.

Tuition fees:

Students on exchanges pay the usual fees to DCU. Students are not required to pay tuition fees at the host university, although there may be a registration/semester fee.

5. Health, Safety & Support While Abroad:

Embassy Support:

Irish citizens travelling or living overseas are encouraged to register their contact details with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This is only available outside the Common Travel Area (Ireland/Great Britain). When you register with the Department, it means that they have a record of your details. The information will allow them to contact you, and provide assistance, if necessary and possible, if there is an unforeseen crisis such as a natural disaster or civil unrest, or if you have a family emergency while you are overseas. Registration is voluntary. It is intended for use by people travelling on holidays, and also for business travellers and Irish citizens resident overseas. While the Department encourages everyone to register, the facility is particularly useful for people travelling to remote destinations or locations where they may be at a higher risk. For people resident overseas, registration means that the nearest Irish Embassy or Consulate to where you reside is aware of your whereabouts and can include you in their contingency planning in the event of a crisis or an emergency situation.

You can register online at:

<https://www.dfa.ie/travel/citizens-registration/>

Student Support Services:

The level and type of student support services provided at third level institutions worldwide can vary greatly. If you currently avail of specific services while at DCU (e.g. financial support, disability support, counselling, health services, academic skills support etc.), you should do your homework well before deciding on your preferred institution abroad. As a registered DCU student, you still have access to all of the Student Support & Development services while studying abroad – but the level of support offered 'from afar' may be limited and not as effective as face-to-face. If you have a particular contact within SS&D, you should speak to him/her directly about your

pending year abroad and what support you may require. Alternatively, discuss this with one of the Student Advisors in the Student Advice Centre (Henry Grattan Building, Glasnevin Campus) (or mail student.support@dcu.ie).

Safety:

Students are advised to consider carefully their own personal safety. In particular, female students are advised to be aware that cultural differences can be misinterpreted in a foreign country, and should also be careful about being out alone at night. A personal alarm may be a good idea. This advice is not limited to females - all students should be aware of the occurrence of violence and theft. Incidents such as these occur in all countries and cities. If you are aware of your environment you are less likely to encounter difficulties. Stay in groups and speak to your peers and staff at your host institution regarding areas which are 'best avoided' in your city/town.

Health Insurance:

If you are travelling abroad for your studies, it is *highly* recommended that you are covered by a comprehensive health insurance policy. Keep a copy of these details in a separate file, along with a copy of your passport, in case you require them during your time abroad.

If you are an EU/EEA national travelling to the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, you are entitled to receive emergency medical care should you become ill or have an accident. From June 1st, 2004 the E111 and a number of other 'E' forms (e.g. E128) have been replaced by a new European Health Insurance Card. Detailed information about this Insurance Card can be found at: www.ehic.ie Alternatively, you should contact your local Health Board and request an application form.

N.B:

EHIC only covers emergency medical care so students are strongly advised to take out a private health and travel insurance policy for their studies abroad. VHI offer a student travel insurance, more details can be found at: <https://www.vhi.ie/global-health-insurance/index.jsp>

European partner universities have requested private health and travel insurance information from DCU students to ensure they are adequately covered while studying abroad.

VHI:

If you are covered by your parents' VHI Healthcare plan, you should confirm the actual level of cover you will have while abroad. This can be done quite easily by phoning [VHI](http://www.vhi.ie) or directly. Make sure that you keep a record of any emergency number that they give you in case you have to make a claim.

Other providers also provide international health cover – so shop around!

Practical Matters:

Year Abroad address:

As soon as you know, you should update your term address and contact telephone number via your student portal page. Any subsequent changes of address must also be notified immediately. Please ensure that your next-of-kin is up to date on your Portal Page, in case we need to contact a family member in an emergency. DCU may also have to communicate with you regarding your project, visits by academic staff during the year, or your grant or fee status. Please note that DCU communicates with students via their DCU email address only.

Passport and visa:

You will need a valid passport for travel to all countries except the UK, however, it is advisable to have a passport if you are going to the UK, as you may wish to visit other countries from there. Furthermore, you will be asked to present a passport or driver's licence as identification if you wish to avail of the public health service in the UK.

If you do not have a passport, you can apply through the Dublin Passport Office, Setanta Centre, Molesworth St., Dublin 2. Telephone 01-6711633.

The passport application form is available from any Post Office or Garda Station. For first-time applications, the completed form, witnessed and signed by a garda, together with 2 passport photos and the long form of your birth certificate must be submitted. Persons applying to have their passport renewed should submit their old passport. Payment must be sent with your application. Your passport will be valid for 10 years. Applications by mail take one month to be processed.

If you need your passport to be processed more quickly, you can opt for Passport Express which guarantees that you will receive your passport back within 10 working days. Passport Express can be arranged through a Post Office and costs slightly extra.

Visas: You will not require a visa if you travel to another EU member state. However, you may be required to register as a resident with the local authorities. Please enquire upon arrival in your host country.

However, if you are a non-EU citizen it is likely you will need a visa to study at the European host university. Please consult the country website for details on visa application or visit the country's embassy website. Visa applications require documentation, including an offer letter from the host university (which you will be sent as part of your offer pack) and a confirmation letter of attendance from DCU (this can be provided by the International Office in DCU).

Students going to countries that are not member states of the EU must obtain a visa prior to departure. Please ensure that you commence your visa application process in good time.

Bureaucracy, Integration, Communication, etc

Some overseas authorities are very particular about following strict bureaucratic procedures. These can be frustrating if you are not used to them. You would be well advised to go prepared and bring photocopies of all necessary documents and a generous supply of passport-sized photographs. Useful documents include your Passport, birth certificate, student ID, USIT card and driving licence.

It is important to integrate as quickly as possible into university life at your host university. If you stay grouped together with other Irish students, not only will your language skills not improve, but you will not reap the true benefits of visiting another university. Join as many clubs and societies as you can and make as many new friends as possible.

Remember you are representing DCU while abroad. How you integrate and perform may determine the success of the programme in future years. Students who wish to visit the same university in the future would, no doubt, benefit from your experiences. You are under the rules and regulations of the host institution, but as a representative of DCU, are also obliged to abide by the University's Code of Conduct.

Should you encounter any administrative, academic or indeed personal problems while abroad, please contact the International Office at DCU or Student Support & Development directly (student.support@dcu.ie), and we will do our best to rectify the situation. Do not delay in contacting us, the sooner we are aware of a problem, the better our chances of dealing with it effectively.

Your experience abroad should be beneficial to you personally, culturally and academically. If you encounter anything which prevents you from completing your work, if you feel you are being isolated as an international student or indeed if you feel you are not benefiting from your period abroad, PLEASE let us know.

Please call home on arrival - someone may be worried until they receive confirmation that you have arrived safely. Be sure also to keep in touch throughout the year. To telephone Ireland while abroad, dial the international access code of the host country, +353 + the area code (less the '0') + local number.

6. Semester / Year Abroad Checklist

Pre-Departure:

Complete your Learning Agreement

Registration forms returned to host institution

Accommodation forms and deposits returned to host institution

Booking forms for language courses / orientation programmes returned to host institution

Health Insurance organised (Health Insurance Card and/or private insurance)

DCU portal page up-dated

Registration at DCU completed & relevant fees paid

Confirm dates of arrival with host institution / accommodation office to ensure you can access your accommodation upon arrival

Remember to pack:

Passport & Tickets

Copies of Transcripts of results from DCU

Passport photographs (6)

Copies of birth certificate

Copy of Health Insurance plan

CV (if you are planning part-time work)

ISIC card, DCU ID card, Driving licence (if you have one)

Contact details of coordinator abroad (telephone number / e-mail address)

Confirmation of your acceptance at your host university (if received)

Bed linen (if required)

Adaptor (if required)

Easily accessible funds for the initial period

Letter from parent or guardian stating that you will have sufficient funds to support your period of study abroad (occasionally required by local authorities)

Upon Arrival:

Erasmus Students: Have your Confirmation of Attendance Dates Certificate signed and stamped and return to DCU International Office

Inform parents / guardian of your new address and safe arrival

Confirm registration and orientation schedules

Contact coordinator at host institution

Register online with the Irish Embassy / Consulate

Revisit 'learning agreement' and return to your academic coordinator at DCU

Organise a filing system for all documents relevant to your stay, including receipts for registration etc.

Before Returning Home:

Ensure you have collected all academic documents / transcripts from your host institution or arrange for these to be posted to the International Office in DCU

Have Departure Certificate completed and return to DCU

If documents are being sent to your home address in Ireland, ensure that relevant bodies (accommodation / academic institution) have the correct address

Forward all details and proof of completed courses to your academic coordinator in order to ensure progression into the next academic year at DCU (coordinator will have explained the process and the cut-off date) or arrange for this

Ensure all bills are paid in full and deposits reimbursed, where relevant

Close bank accounts in host country

De-register (if relevant)

Upon Arrival Home:

Contact Academic Coordinators to ensure that they have received all transcripts from your host institution

Ensure you have filled out and returned any outstanding Erasmus grant documentation

Check dates of registration for next academic year
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Up-date DCU portal page

[1] Some institutions forward transcripts to DCU, others do not. Please ensure that you are clear about the procedure at your host institution before you return to Ireland. It is the responsibility of the student to prove that they have successfully achieved the required number of ECTS credits at their host institution. Contact the International Office at DCU if you require assistance.

Useful Web Addresses:

DCU:

- Registry Office, DCU registry@dcu.ie
- Student Support & Development, DCU student.support@dcu.ie
- Fees Office, DCU fees@dcu.ie

Other:

- The Irish Times <http://www.ireland.com/>
- The Irish Independent www.unison.ie/irish_independent
- Ryan Air <http://www.ryanair.com/en>
- Aerlingus <http://www.aerlingus.com/>
- AIB <http://www.aib.ie/>
- Bank of Ireland <http://www.bankofireland.ie/>
- Ulster Bank <http://www.ulsterbank.ie/>
- Irish Government Departments <http://www.irlgov.ie/>
- Irish Dept of Foreign Affairs www.gov.ie/iveagh/ (includes Embassy listing)
- RTE <http://www.rte.ie/>
- USIT Now <http://www.usitnow.ie/>
- Taxback <http://www.taxback.com>
- <http://www.justlanded.com/>

7. ACADEMIC EXCHANGE COORDINATORS AT DCU FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/17

The following is an explanation of which staff signatures you need for approval of your subject / module choices:

BACHELOR OF BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL (INTB)

STUDENTS HOME COUNTRY	COORDINATOR	OFFICE NUMBER	TEL EXT*	EMAIL
France/ Belgium	Ms Juliette Pechenart – SALIS	C1 103	5198	juliette.pechenart@dcu.ie
Spain	Dr Ciaran Dunne - SALIS	C1 106	6144	Ciaran.dunne@dcu.ie
Germany/Austria	Dr Annette Simon – SALIS	C2 112	5463	annette.simon@dcu.ie
China	Dr Qi Zhang – SALIS	C1 116	5199	qi.zhang@dcu.ie

APPLIED LANGUAGES & TRANSLATION STUDIES (ALTS):

STUDENTS HOME COUNTRY	COORDINATOR	OFFICE NUMBER	TEL EXT*	EMAIL
France/Belgium/Switzerland	Dr Agnes Maillot	C1 110	5544	agnes.maillot@dcu.ie
Spain	Ms Cris Guntin	C1 115	5400	Cris.guntin@dcu.ie
Germany/Austria	Dr Angela Leahy	C1 112	5874	angela.leahy@dcu.ie
Japan	Dr Ryoko Sasamoto	CG46	5810	Ryoko.sasamoto@dcu.ie
China	Dr Qi Zhang	C1 116	5199	qi.zhang@dcu.ie

JOINT HONOURS PROGRAMME (JHP)

STUDENTS HOME COUNTRY	COORDINATOR	OFFICE NUMBER	TEL EXT*	EMAIL
Spain	Dr Lucia Pintado	C2 118	6015	lucia.pintado@dcu.ie
Germany/Austria	Dr Annette Simon	C2 112	5463	annette.simon@dcu.ie
France	Dr Agnes Maillot	C1 110	5544	agnes.maillot@dcu.ie
Japan	Dr Ryoko Sasamoto	CG46	5810	Ryoko.sasamoto@dcu.ie
China	Dr Qi Zhang	C1 116	5199	qi.zhang@dcu.ie
Gaeilge	Dr Colm O Ciardubhain	LG09B	5696	Colm.ocuardubhain@dcu.ie

ALL OTHER STUDENTS

PROGRAMME	COORDINATOR	OFFICE NUMBER	TEL EXT*	EMAIL
Contemporary Culture & Society	Dr Patricia O'Byrne	C2107	5437	Patricia.OByrne@dcu.ie
Communications/Journalism	Prof Steven Knowlton	C126	5424	steven.knowlton@dcu.ie
Chemistry	Dr Mercedes Vazquez	S202	7602	mercedes.vazquez@dcu.ie
Computer Applications	Dr John Judge	L2 13	6729	john.judge@computing.dcu.ie
Physics	Dr Paul van Kampen	N 143	5023	paul.van.kampen@dcu.ie
Electronic Engineering	Dr Pascal Landais	S3 45	8044	landaisp@eeng.dcu.ie
Mechanical Engineering	Dr Yann Delaure	S3 85	8886	yan.delaure@dcu.ie
Mathematics	Prof John Carroll	X1 39	8917	john.carroll@dcu.ie
Law & Government/International Relations	Dr James Fitzgerald	CG19C	7772	james.fitzgerald@dcu.ie
Education Studies	Prof Joe O'Hara	CA115	5351	joe.ohara@dcu.ie
Biotechnology	Dr Anne Parle-McDermott	X2 27	8499	anne.parle-mcdermott@dcu.ie
Science International	Dr Mercedes Vazquez	S202	7602	mercedes.vazquez@dcu.ie