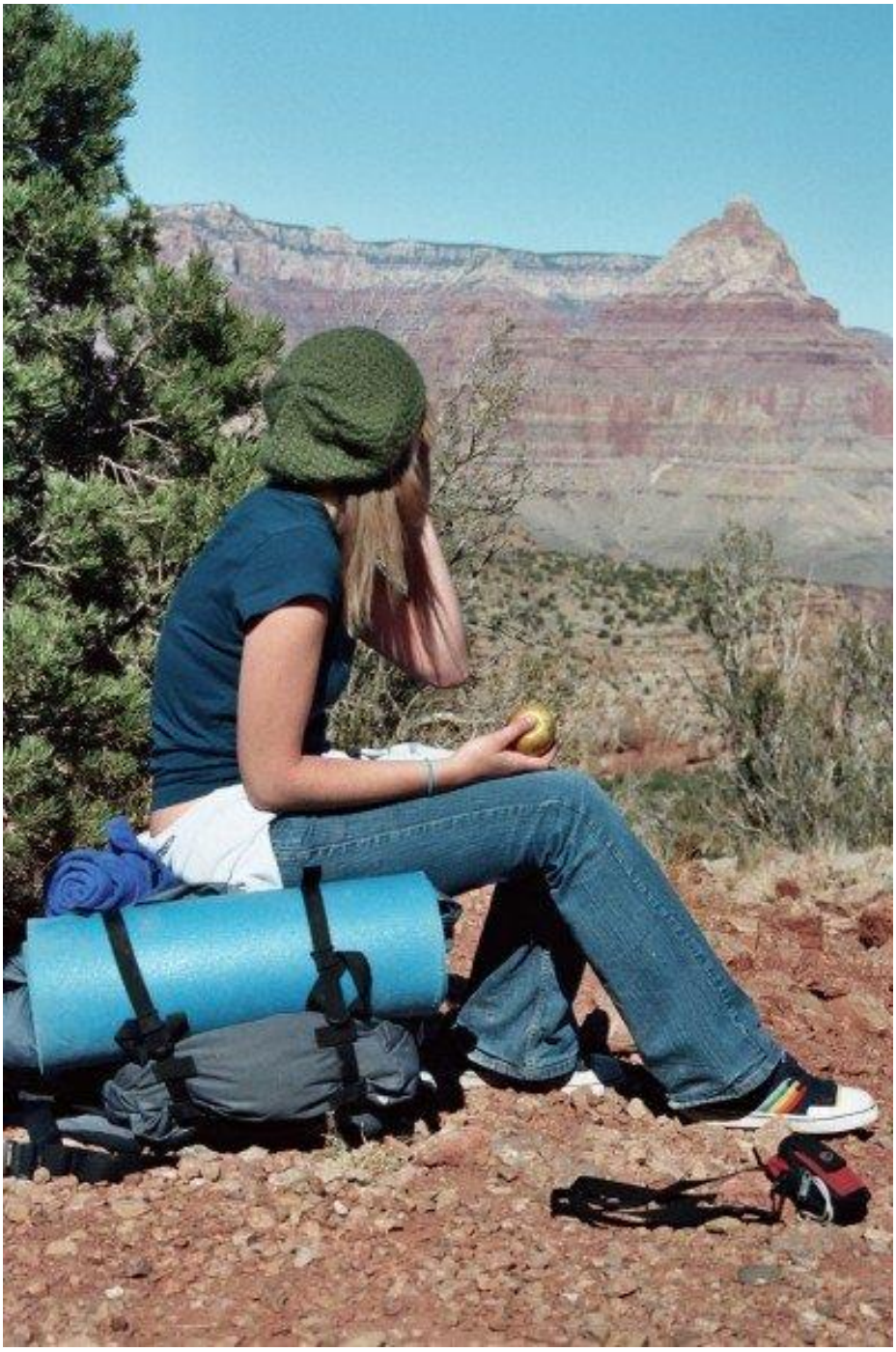
UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

GET READY TO GO

Preparing for your 2020/21 Study Abroad year



Contents

Click on the headings below to jump to each section.

Main Contacts at Leeds and Keeping in Touch 3
General Data Protection Regulation 3
Study Abroad Service Agreement 4
Pre-Departure Programme 5
To-Do List and Key Dates 6
Researching your Destination 7
Accepting your Place / Withdrawing from the Study Abroad Year 7
Application to your Host University Abroad 8
Acceptance from your Host University 9
How will I be notified of my acceptance? 9
Student Loan and Budgeting 10
Useful Resources for Budgeting 10
Tuition Fees 10
Student Finance Applications 10
Other Sources of Funding 12
Accommodation 13
Host university accommodation 13
Host university advice on private accommodation 13
Preparing for Your Academic Studies Abroad 14
Which modules can I take abroad? 14
Enrolling in modules abroad 14
How study abroad counts towards your degree 14
Language Skills 15
Health Conditions (including Mental Health), Disabilities and Learning Support Needs 16
Who should you talk to? 17
Disability Related Funding 18
Travel 19
Passports 19
Booking flights 19
Immunisations 19
General check-ups at the Doctor, Dentist and Optician 19
Insurance 21
Compulsory Health Insurance Policies 21
Insurance waivers 21

EHIC (European Health Insurance Card) – for students going to EU Countries and Switzerland 21
Visas and Immigration 23
Study abroad in Europe 23
Where to seek advice 23
Preparing for your visa application 23
Mailing your passport 24
International students at Leeds 24
Visa considerations for working abroad 24
Immigration Control 24
Pre-Departure Requirements to Complete for Leeds 25
Requirements for the Study Abroad Office 25
Requirements for your Leeds parent school 25
The Erasmus+ Programme 26
Erasmus+ and Brexit 26
Students going to Switzerland, and to Europe via GE3 26
The Erasmus+ Grant 26
Annex 1 – Embassy Websites 28
Foreign Embassy websites (within the UK) 28
UK Embassies Abroad 28
Annex 2 – University of Leeds Useful Contacts ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Main Contacts at Leeds and Keeping in Touch

All information about your study abroad year will be sent to your University of Leeds email account. Please check this regularly. We recommend switching off the 'clutter' feature in Outlook to avoid emails from the Leeds study abroad office or your host university abroad being sent automatically to this folder. Follow the instructions on the Microsoft Office website to turn off the Clutter feature on your laptop.

The Leeds Study Abroad Office:

The outgoing study abroad team is here to help and support you with all practical aspects of your study abroad year throughout second, third and fourth year.

Address: Ziff Building, Level 11

Drop-in hours: Monday – Friday, 11am – 3pm

Telephone: +44 (0)113 343 7900

Email: outgoingstudyabroad@leeds.ac.uk

Your Leeds Parent School:

Your parent school will assist you with academic and pastoral support while you're preparing for and carrying out your study abroad year.

Find your school study abroad coordinator: click here.

Find general contact information for your school: click here.

The Funding Team (University of Leeds Student Services):

The funding team at Leeds can help with any queries or problems relating to your student loan, including signing 'Course Abroad Forms' for the travel grant.

Address: Ziff Building, Level 9 (Student Services Counter)

Drop-in hours: Monday – Friday, 9am – 4:45pm

Telephone: +44 (0)113 343 2007

Email: funding@leeds.ac.uk

General Data Protection Regulation

All personal information received by the Study Abroad Office will be processed in accordance with the University of Leeds' Code of Practice.

Study Abroad Service Agreement

This agreement explains the actions and responsibilities you, your school and the Study Abroad Office agree to. Make sure you understand, and are happy to do, everything in it.

You will:

- regularly check your University of Leeds emails during the application process and period abroad
- proactively follow application procedures and adhere to all deadlines
- respond promptly to requests for information and documents
- ensure application forms are completed accurately before submission
- attend briefing sessions and orientations - including the compulsory Study Abroad Essentials briefing
- use resources available to research accommodation overseas and make the necessary arrangements to secure accommodation
- declare any disabilities or health conditions that may affect your period abroad as early as possible to ensure appropriate assistance is provided
- do sufficient independent research into your host university and ensure the academic subject offerings available will be appropriate to your interests
- ensure you understand the academic requirements of your year abroad before departure
- inform the Study Abroad Office of any issues that may affect your application
- obtain documents (i.e. visas etc.) necessary to travel to, and study in, your host country
- complete a pre-departure checklist before you leave the UK
- keep in touch with the Study Abroad Office and your school while you are abroad
- provide feedback on your experience on request
- return end of year paperwork as required by the Study Abroad Office
- agree to pay a £100 administration fee if you withdraw after the specified withdrawal deadline
- agree that your placement cannot be changed to a different institution once you have been allocated a study abroad destination
- behave in a professional and responsible manner, with respect for staff and students, both in Leeds and at your host University, as set out in the University of Leeds Learning and Teaching Partnership Agreement

The Study Abroad Office will:

- communicate with you via your University of Leeds email address
- provide you with general advice about the application process for your host university
- provide you with relevant information about your host university
- provide practical country-specific advice
- provide general advice on how to find accommodation overseas
- enable you to find out more detailed information about your host university and host country
- hold briefing sessions and orientations pre-departure briefing sessions
- provide practical support for you while you are abroad
- process your personal information in accordance with the University's Data Protection Code of Practice

Your Leeds school will:

- advise you on academic matters for your studies both prior to and during your period abroad
- confirm your chosen modules are appropriate during the application period and after registration
- provide academic support while you are abroad
- provide pastoral support, if required, while you are abroad
- provide all details about how your year abroad will be assessed

Pre-Departure Programme

The Study Abroad Office runs the following programme of events to help you prepare for your study abroad year. All events are strongly recommended – sign up now on Facebook!

Attendance at a 'Study Abroad Essentials' session is compulsory, and you will be withdrawn from the study abroad year if you do not attend this session.

STUDY ABROAD 2020-2021 PRE-DEPARTURE PROGRAMME

Next Steps	**05/02/2020 2.30-3.30pm**	You've been selected to go abroad, what next? **(Conference Auditorium 2)**
Next Steps (Repeat)	**12/02/2020 2.30-3.30pm**	Just in case you missed it! **(Roger Stevens LT 22)**
Study Abroad Networking	**19/02/2020 4.30-6.30pm**	Meet and get to know your fellow travellers **(Location TBC)**
Country Briefings	**27/02/2020 3-4pm**	Gain a specialist insight into your host country from returning students **(Locations to be confirmed by email)**
Funding & Finance	**04/03/2020 3.30-4.30pm**	Budgeting and student loan advice **(Conference Auditorium 2)**
Travel Tips	**13/03/2020 2-3pm**	Make the most of your study abroad journey **(Worsley SR 8.43X)**
Year Abroad Essentials	**29/04/2020 1.30-3pm COMPULSORY**	**Including insurance, emergency situations & intercultural skills (Michael Sadler Rupert Beckett LT)**
Year Abroad Essentials (Repeat)	**06/05/2020 1.30-3pm COMPULSORY**	**Including insurance, emergency situations & intercultural skills (Michael Sadler Rupert Beckett LT)**
EUROPE ONLY: Erasmus+ Paperwork	**June 2020 TBC**	Everything you need to know to get your grant **(Webinar)**
Study Abroad Ambassador Training	**July 2020 TBC**	Representing the University of Leeds overseas **(Webinar)**

students.leeds.ac.uk/studyabroadevents **www.facebook.com/leedsuniabroad**

To-Do List and Key Dates

When?	What?	Started?	Complete
December 2019 - ongoing	**Research** Thoroughly research all aspects of your destination, including location, immunisations, costs and budget.		
January 2020	**Renew your passport** If it expires before the end of your year abroad.		
January – May 2020	**Application** Complete the formal application procedures for your host university when prompted by Study Abroad		
February – May 2020	**Pre-Departure Programme** Sign up for and attend as many sessions as possible from our pre-departure programme		
Friday 28th February 2020	**Withdrawal deadline** Withdrawal fees apply after this date		
February – August 2020	**Accommodation** Apply for accommodation or make a plan for accommodation hunting - when prompted by your research or your host university		
March onwards	**Health and Learning Support** Plan how to manage any health conditions abroad and find out how to ask for support at your host university. Research insurance.		
March 2020	**Student Finance** Re-apply for your student loan and inform student finance that you will be studying abroad.		
March – August 2020	**Acceptance** Receive your formal acceptance notification from your host university. Complete any further actions as instructed by your host university		
April – September 2020	**Immigration** Apply for your student visa if applicable on receiving paperwork from your host university**.**		
Wednesday 29th April OR **Wednesday 6th May 2020**	**Compulsory Pre-Departure Meeting** Attend the 'Study Abroad Essentials' session (part of the pre-departure programme)		
April – September 2020	**Travel Arrangements** Plan your travel once all administrative hurdles (acceptance, visa) have been cleared. Tell your bank you will be living abroad.		
May – June 2020	**Pre-Departure Paperwork** Complete all pre-departure health & safety paperwork for the University of Leeds		
May 2020	**Apply for your student EHIC** If applicable, and dependant on holiday plans.		
July – September 2020	**Erasmus Grant Paperwork** Complete grant paperwork if applicable		
August 2020	**Online Registration** With the University of Leeds, via Minerva		

Researching your Destination

The more you know about what to expect at your host university, city and country before you go, the easier you will find it to settle in.

Use our 'Narrowing Down your Options' checklist for ideas of the different topics to investigate, and dig deeper than you did for your initial application to the programme.

Sources of information include:

- Read all information you are given by both Leeds and your host university
- Look at your host university's folder under 'Host University Catalogue' on the Study Abroad organisation on Minerva. This will be updated throughout Semester 2 with new feedback forms, your host university's website links on course selection, accommodation, term dates and other information for exchange students
- Look at other websites – not just for the host university, but for the town and region in which it is situated
- Read and subscribe to the country-specific advice given by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office
- Familiarise yourself with the topics covered in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office 'Living Abroad' web pages
- Buy or borrow a guidebook
- Look through the 'Diversity Abroad' section in the Study Abroad Office Minerva organisation for ideas on topics to research and sources of information
- Read the feedback forms on the Study Abroad organisation on Minerva – these give invaluable hints, tips and feedback from previous study abroad students
- Contact any other students who are going to the same institution or area as you – meet up before you go, arrange to travel together, help each other with paperwork
- Contact current study abroad students – emails available via the feedback forms on Minerva
- Contact current incoming exchange students in Leeds from your host institution or city
- Read our students' stories on life abroad on our LeedsUniAbroad blog.
- Follow us on facebook and Instagram, and follow your host university abroad as well.
- For UK and international students, the Global Community website connects you to intercultural activities that can bring you a world of different friends, ideas and experiences right here in Leeds.

Accepting your Place / Withdrawing from the Study Abroad Year

You do not need to formally accept your offer of a place on the Study Abroad programme for 2020/21. However, should you no longer wish to take up your place you must confirm your withdrawal in writing with the Study Abroad Office.

If you are still considering whether to take up your place on the Study Abroad programme, it is important to be aware that our withdrawal deadline is Friday 28th February 2020.

Any withdrawals received after this date will incur a £100 withdrawal fee, as per our withdrawal policy. You can read the full withdrawal policy on our website.

Application to your Host University Abroad

You are still required to formally apply to your host university. Host university application deadlines vary significantly. Some host institutions expect students to apply very early in the calendar year while others won't expect applications until much later in the year so don't be concerned if you are not completing your formal application at the same time as friends.

The Study Abroad Office will contact you in due course via your University of Leeds email account and provide you with a personalised '*Study Abroad Application Checklist and Guidelines*' document detailing:

- The deadline for submission of your application – deadlines are strictly enforced
- A list of documents you need to provide as part of the application process and information on how to retrieve them

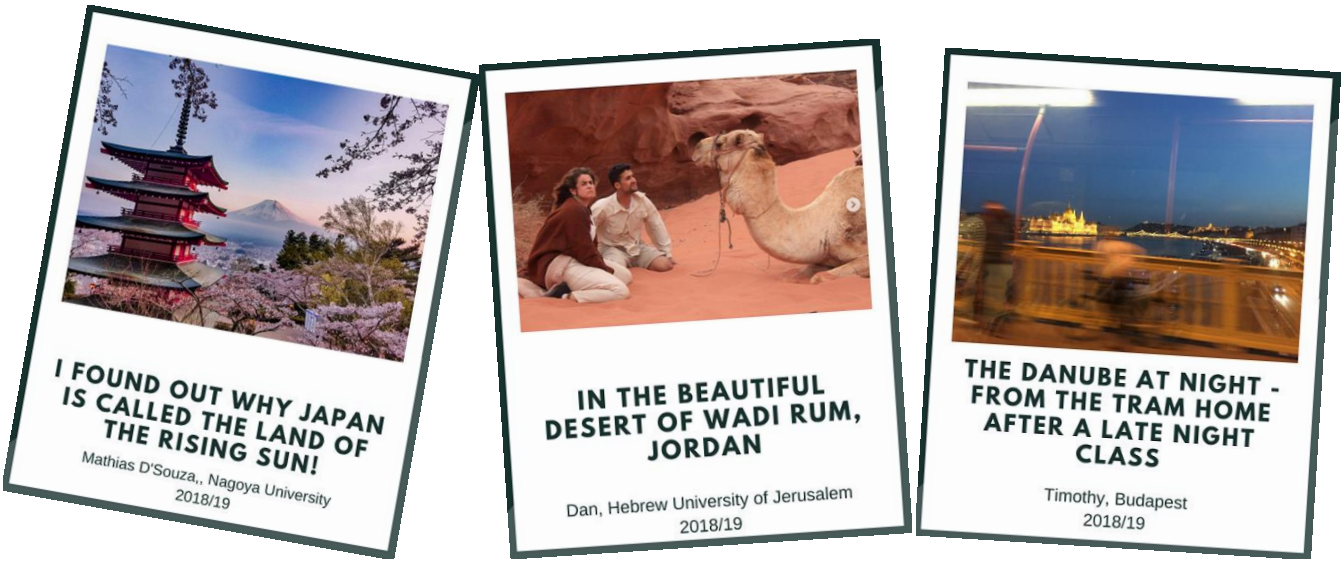
You may also be contacted by your host university with more information on how to apply. If so, follow your host university instructions in the first instance and use the paperwork provided in the '*Study Abroad Application Checklist and Guidelines'* to help you along the way. In this scenario please work to the deadline given by the Leeds Study Abroad Office, which will usually be earlier than the deadline given by your host university.

To finalise your application, don't forget that you will need to complete and return the 'Application Checklist' given to you by the Leeds Study Abroad Office.

Health checks required by host universities

Some host institutions or embassies require exchange students to undertake health examinations, such as a chest x-ray, or obtain additional immunisations such as the MMR vaccine. It is your responsibility to find out whether these requirements are applicable to you. Your host institution may refuse to let you register, charge you a fine, or both if you do not adhere to their requirements.

You will usually have to pay for these checks or vaccines, which are normally available at the Leeds Student Medical Practice.



Acceptance from your Host University

You should expect to receive a letter or email of acceptance from the host university by approximately 6-8 weeks after their application deadline (although exact timings will depend on the host university's processes). Please be patient while waiting for your acceptance and check your Leeds email account regularly for updates on your application status.

Please be reassured that as a pre-selected and nominated exchange student from the University of Leeds it is highly unlikely that your application would not be accepted, provided that you have followed all application procedures promptly and responded to any follow-up correspondence. However, if you are concerned about the status of your application please get in touch with the Study Abroad Office.

Please note that you won't be able to apply for a visa (should you need one) until you have been formally accepted by your host university.

How will I be notified of my acceptance?

Acceptance documents may be sent to you directly.

- If you receive notification directly to your email account or to your home/temporary address, it is important that you forward any information regarding your acceptance to the Study Abroad Office so we can update our records accordingly.

Acceptance documents may be sent to the Study Abroad Office either by email or by post.

- If your host institution sends your acceptance documents to the Study Abroad Office by post, we will email you and ask you to come and collect them from our office during opening hours.
- If we receive notification of your acceptance by email, we will forward any information to your Leeds email account.

Your acceptance letter/email will often include information on any orientation meetings organised by your host university as well as term dates. You may also be required to formally accept the offer of a place. Make sure you read all information carefully and that you make a note of any actions and deadlines.

Student Loan and Budgeting

A study abroad year may usually be more expensive than a year at Leeds but the costs will differ depending on your personal lifestyle and the cost of living in your host country.

Useful Resources for Budgeting

Please also see the general resources listed in the 'Researching your Destination' section of this guide. Testimony from other students is also an invaluable source of information on cost of living and unexpected expenses.

- Our Calculating the Costs of Study Abroad page is designed to give you an idea of the financial considerations of a study abroad year but is not an exhaustive list.
- Leeds Budgeting Abroad Tool
    - As well as understanding the costs associated with a study abroad year, it is important to think about funding sources and budgeting. Our budgeting tool has been designed to help you project the costs of your year abroad.
    - Download the Leeds Budgeting Abroad Tool.
- University of Leeds Study Abroad Blog
    - Read our current outgoing students' blog entries for their tips on financing your year abroad and budgeting.
- If you are thinking of opening a bank account abroad, your host university will be able to advise on what document you may need to provide or what the process to follow is in your host country.
- You may also want to read the Go Overseas guide on financing your year abroad for information on things to consider before you go abroad such as purchasing a pre-paid currency card, avoiding scams, living abroad on a budget and so on.

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees for a full year abroad in 2019/20 were set as follows and it is anticipated students studying abroad in 2020/21 will pay the same.

Home/EU/EEA Students: £1,385

Non-EU/EEA Students: contact the Fees Team

If you study abroad for less than one academic year, you will continue to pay your usual tuition fee to the University of Leeds.

While you do not pay a tuition fee to your host university, some institutions may charge additional non-tuition fees for student facilities such as membership of the Students' Union, insurance, administration fees, etc.

You should make arrangements to pay your Leeds tuition fee with the Fees Office before you move overseas. The easiest way to make payment is by using the online payment facility.

Student Finance Applications

Change of Programme Form

If you are required to transfer onto a different course from the one you initially enrolled on (i.e. if you have opted in to a non-compulsory study abroad year), you will need to complete

a Change of Programme form with your parent school. This updates your university administrative record to include a year abroad. This form does not change your funding but only ensures that your degree certificate and transcript show that you undertook a placement year abroad.

If you are already registered on a four year degree which incorporates a year abroad, you will not need to complete this document. If you're not sure whether this applies to you, please check with your School Study Abroad Coordinator.

Student Loan Application

It is your responsibility and extremely important to complete the student finance application for the year you will be studying abroad as early as possible and state that Study Abroad is a compulsory part of your degree. The application system for 2020/21 student finance should be available from late February or early March 2020.

View a step-by-step loan application guide to help you complete your application.

Come along to our *Finance & Funding* briefing, part of our pre-departure programme, which has been designed to give you more information on budgeting and applying for your student loan.

Register with University of Leeds for 2020/21

Despite studying abroad, you still need to register with the University of Leeds. You can register online through Minerva from 1st August. Student Finance and grant payments will not be paid until you have completed online registration and you will not be covered by the University insurance policy if you do not register.

Set up a Professional Password

If you have problems with your funding whilst you are away, you may need the University to speak to Student Finance to help resolve this.

The funding team can only do this if you have set up a professional password for someone from the University to speak to them on your behalf. Although you may not need to use it, it is important that you set this up before you go abroad by calling your student loan provider.

You will be asked to state the relationship between you and the person who will be speaking to Student Finance on your behalf. Give this as: Funding Advisor

You will be asked for the University name and address
This is: University of Leeds, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, LS2 9JT

Give your student loan provider a password and keep a note of this for yourself

If you do have problems with your funding, phone or email the Funding Team, explain the issue and give them your password. They can then contact Student Finance and discuss your account.

Other Sources of Funding

Travel Grants from SFE

Full-time students who are receiving student finance that depends on their household income (means-tested) may be eligible to apply for reimbursement of some travel costs through SFE. Even if you do not normally qualify for additional funding through means-testing, it may be worth applying for this for your study abroad year, as you may be eligible for some level of travel grant.

You will be automatically sent a Course Abroad Form if you are eligible. If you don't receive it and feel you are eligible please contact the SFE Helpline.

Find out more about Travel Grants.

University of Leeds Scholarships

If you receive a scholarship from the University of Leeds, please contact the scholarship administrator to find out whether you will be entitled to receive the scholarship during your year abroad. Not all scholarships will be applicable to a year abroad.

Leeds Financial Support

Please note that the 'Leeds Financial Support' package is not available during a study abroad year.

External Scholarships

There are a limited number of scholarships available to students studying overseas. These are all funded by organisations unattached to the University of Leeds on an application basis and should not be relied upon as a guaranteed source of funding.

Erasmus+ Funding

Students studying abroad in Europe via the Erasmus+ scheme should also read the additional information about Erasmus+ funding from page 26.

Accommodation

The Study Abroad Office can't directly help you find accommodation and doesn't monitor the housing situation in the many international destinations where Leeds students study. You are responsible for all your accommodation arrangements and costs, as explained in the Study abroad agreement.

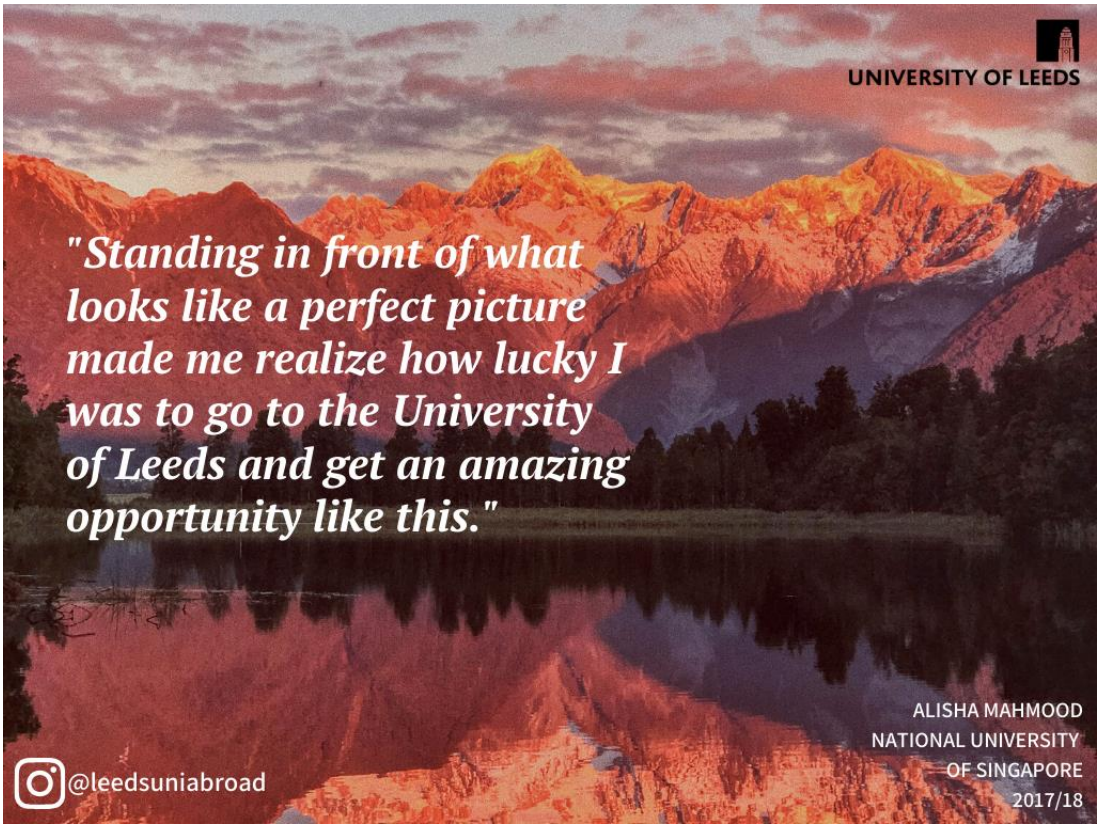
We recommend that you carefully read the advice given on Minerva in the host university fact sheets, and on our accommodation page on the Study Abroad website and consider the below options to help you find somewhere to live abroad.

Host university accommodation

You may be able to apply for university-owned accommodation at your host university, such as a room in university residences. The host university's website can normally tell you what's on offer. In some cases you will apply completely separately from your application for admission, and you may not need to wait to be accepted. In some locations this is recommended due to the scarcity of private housing. Take advice from former study abroad students (usually via the feedback on Minerva), and your host university.

Host university advice on private accommodation

Most host universities will be able to provide you with some guidance on private housing in the area, but their levels of assistance will vary. You should also be able to find information on any services the host university provides on the accommodation or housing office section of their website. You should also take advice from former study abroad students (usually via the feedback on Minerva), and your host university. We can also put you in touch with incoming exchange students, who are currently completing their exchange at Leeds and will be returning to your host university.



Preparing for Your Academic Studies Abroad

Your School Study Abroad Coordinator will usually organise a meeting during semester 2 to explain the academic requirements of your study abroad year. This is additional to the Pre-Departure Programme organised by the Study Abroad Office, so please look out for this meeting and don't miss it.

If you are planning to take a Horizon year abroad, you will be invited to a similar meeting by the Study Abroad Office to explain the requirements of the Horizon programme.

Different Schools at Leeds have different requirements for their students so it is essential that you understand the requirements for your own School. Do not assume that the requirements for other Leeds students will necessarily apply to you.

Which modules can I take abroad?

Your Leeds School Study Abroad Coordinator will approve your module choices and advise you on what you need to do to pass the study abroad year (e.g. credit load, level of study). It is important that you know what is expected of you by both your host university and your parent school here at Leeds.

You should research which modules you would like to follow while abroad by consulting your host university's fact sheet and course/module catalogue. Use the links in the Study Abroad Office Minerva organisation, where you can also find details of normal credit loads. Information related to restricted subject areas will normally be clearly listed on the host university's website, under the 'Incoming Exchange students' section. Bear in mind that published restrictions are not normally flexible and should be taken seriously.

Enrolling in modules abroad

Universities abroad have different module enrolment procedures. Some will expect you to list your preferred modules (sometimes referred to as classes, courses, units or papers) during the application process, and will pre-enrol you. Others will send you details about module enrolment together with your acceptance package, or over the summer. Others still will have a manual enrolment system and you will not be able to register for classes until you are physically at the host university. You may find details of the process for your university on their fact sheet (in the Study Abroad Minerva Organisation) or by asking third/fourth year Leeds students.

How study abroad counts towards your degree

If you are taking an optional, additional year abroad then your marks from your host university will not usually count towards the classification of your Leeds degree. If you pass the year you will obtain an 'International' enhanced degree title, e.g. 'BA History (International)'. If you were to fail the year overseas, it is normally possible to revert to a three year degree programme. However, a failed year abroad will still show on your final Leeds transcript.

If your study abroad year is integrated into your degree then you may find the marks you achieve at your host university do count towards your degree.

Language Skills

Whether you are studying in another language and need to build up your confidence and academic vocabulary, or will be taught in English but want to learn the basics, there are various ways for you to improve your language skills in advance of your study abroad year. See below some top tips on language courses, programmes and informal international groups you could join to improve or practice a language:

- Enrol on a discovery module
- Use the resources available at the Language Zone
- Join language exchanges and language groups
- Join the Leeds Erasmus and International Exchange Society
- Attend Global Café
- Sign up to attend a pre-sessional language course at your host institution
- Sign up to a private language course before you leave the UK
- Apply for the subsidised Summer Schools Programme through the Study Abroad Office
- If you are studying in Europe, take advantage of the Erasmus+ online linguistic support from July (subject to the UK's participation in the Erasmus+ programme)
- See more information on the Languages page on the Study Abroad website.

Subject to the UK's continued participation in the Erasmus+ programme, students studying in Europe via Erasmus+ will have access to the EU's online linguistic support system. This involves taking a language placement test and then receiving access to an online language course. If the UK remains in the programme then access to the Erasmus+ language placement test will be provided in July 2020, together with the Erasmus+ paperwork.

Courses are currently offered in Czech, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish at the following levels:

CEFR levels A1 to B1 for Dutch, French, German, Italian, and Spanish.

CEFR levels A1 to B2 in Portuguese

CEFR level A1 to A2 in Czech

CEFR level A1 in Bulgarian, Danish, Greek, Hungarian, Polish, Slovenian, Finnish and Swedish

Health Conditions (including Mental Health), Disabilities and Learning Support Needs

The University of Leeds wishes to ensure you are well supported and safe whilst on placement or study abroad, so we ask everyone to let us know of any health, mental health or disability related issues that might have an impact on their time abroad. It is important that you tell us this information as early as possible, so that we can talk to you about any support arrangements you might need.

You may have already disclosed this information as part of your online application to study abroad. If so, the Study Abroad Office will get in touch with you, your School Study Abroad Coordinator and your School Disability Contact to assist you when making arrangements for your time abroad – if you have given your consent.

You need to consider your time abroad as a whole, not just the studying aspect that is the main reason for going. The points below give you an idea of what you should be thinking about.

- What about the social/residential aspects of your time abroad?
- How do you think living in a different country will impact on your disability or health condition?
- Think about how you will cope:
    - With a different culture
    - With a different language
    - With unexpected issues that may cause increased anxiety
    - Without your usual support network of friends and family
    - If access to public transport is not as easily available as it is in Leeds/the UK
    - Without ongoing access to your GP/prescribing doctor. The NHS usually only issues a 3 month supply of prescription medication, with a doctor's note. Will you be able to get any necessary medication abroad?
    - Without ongoing access to a clinician such as a regular counsellor or mental health adviser
    - With accommodation if you have accessible accommodation needs
- Be aware that whilst the University's travel insurance provides cover for pre-existing conditions, if you are on regular medication or need routine check-ups, these costs will not be covered.
- How do you think studying at a different University, in a different country, will impact on your disability or health condition?
- Think about how you will cope, for example:
    - With larger classes where lectures may not be recorded, and notes are not provided in advance
    - If there are different expectations relating to deadlines, extensions and access to tutors
    - If you cannot get regular access to counselling or mental health support

All of the information you give us will be shared only with the appropriate persons at the University of Leeds and your host organisation, on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Examples of the people at Leeds who might be informed are the Study Abroad Office, Disability Services, School Study Abroad Coordinators, School Disability Contacts and School Student Support Officers.

If you are undecided about disclosing information and the impact this may have on studying abroad, you may talk in confidence to a member of Student Counselling & Wellbeing or a member of the Disability Services Team.

Study abroad host universities may not be able to accommodate all reported individual needs or circumstances, but it will be easier to put a support network in place if you let us know as far in advance as possible of any disability or health condition. We may also be able to provide remote support from Leeds.

We will work with you, your department and other parts of the University, such as Disability Services, to make sure you're well prepared for going abroad.

If you have very specific support needs because of your disability or health condition, such as accessible accommodation or personal assistance support, it is your responsibility to let us know. This is so that we can start to put support in place as soon as possible, which can take up to a year in some cases.

Who should you talk to?

Your School or Department

Students applying to study abroad through the Study Abroad Office should contact their School Study Abroad Coordinator and/or their School Disability Contact.

Student Education teams in each School can confirm who the Disability Contact is within each School.

Disability Services

If you currently receive support through the Disability Services Team, please speak to your Disability Coordinator about your plans to study abroad, so that they can discuss how you can get support and liaise with your department.

If you don't currently receive support from Disability Services, but would like to discuss how they can help you with your study abroad. There are regular drop-in sessions every day during term time.

Student Counselling & Wellbeing

If you have any concerns about your emotional, psychological or mental health, have a mental health related diagnosis or have any particular personal problems, Student Counselling & Wellbeing can provide a range of services to help you prepare for your time abroad before you go.

There are also useful services to access while you are away, such as Big White Wall 24/7 and online support.

Study Abroad Office

The Study Abroad Office can give general advice about how to access support while abroad and - if available - contact details of student services at host institutions, such as disability support services or counselling centres.

Disability Related Funding

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA):

If you are in receipt of DSA, this funding will usually continue during your period of study abroad. However, if you are in receipt of the maximum allowance, and your study period exceeds the length of a Leeds academic year, you may need to find additional sources of funding to cover that extra period.

If you have specific questions about disability support funding you should address these to the University of Leeds Disability Services Team.

Erasmus+ Special Needs Funding

This is available for students studying abroad in Europe as part of the Erasmus+ programme. If you have a complex disability or exceptional special needs then you may be entitled to extra Erasmus+ funding to cover associated costs on your Erasmus+ placement in Europe. A formal application has to be made for this funding and strict eligibility criteria apply. You should also be aware that you may not receive any payment until part way through your placement. In previous years, Leeds students have been successful in gaining funds towards the costs of travel, accommodation, counselling sessions at the host institution and salary for support assistants. Please contact the Study Abroad Office as early as possible if you think you may be eligible for this additional funding.

Other sources of funding:

Disability Rights UK has information and advice on their website, including a factsheet which contains useful information for students.

Travel

Passports

Every student going on study abroad must have a valid passport to travel. This should have at least 6 months left before expiry from the date that you return to the UK. If you need to apply for a passport or renew one, make sure you leave sufficient time to do this.

Booking flights

The Study Abroad Office does not recommend that you book your flight until you have received official acceptance from your host institution and secured your visa. However, if you do decide to take the risk (for example, to secure a cheap deal), you are advised to find out if your airline allows you to cancel or alter departure dates and how much this will cost you.

Research travel costs early on and include them in your budget for the year. Factor the cost of return travel to your host country and consider whether you will want to visit home during the holidays. A study abroad year is a fantastic opportunity to explore a new region of the world, so also think about how you might fund travelling and excursions before, during and after your period abroad.

We also strongly recommend you budget for, or ensure you have a way to pay for, an unexpected trip home in case of emergency.

Immunisations

It is very important to check which immunisations are required by your destination country as some countries refuse entry if you do not meet their immunisation standards. Note that some host universities have their own immunisation requirements, based on local legislation.

Details of immunisations required by universities are usually included in acceptance materials, which should give you sufficient time to obtain the required documentation or vaccinations before your start date. Your host institution may refuse to let you register, charge you a fine, or both if you do not adhere to their requirements.

You should seek medical advice on immunisation as soon as you can, as some vaccinations need an initial shot followed by a booster. You may also need to leave several weeks between different immunisations.

If you plan to travel during or after your studies abroad, you may also prefer to obtain any necessary vaccinations for the countries you plan to travel to during the holidays. Speak to your doctor's surgery about the requirements for your destination(s).

General check-ups at the Doctor, Dentist and Optician

We recommend that you see your GP, dentist and optician over the next few months before you travel to check your general health. It is much easier to get necessary health care in the UK where you know the system.

If you wear glasses or contact lenses, it is advised that you have a check-up with your optician for an up-to-date prescription.

Make sure you have a check-up with your dentist before you leave the country and get any work done in order to try to eliminate the possibility of having problems overseas. Bear in mind that the University travel insurance policy only covers treatment for the relief of pain so fillings, extractions, crowns etc will not be covered.

If you take any prescription medicine (including contraception), speak to your doctor about whether your medication is available in your host country, and how you can access it. Note that you cannot take more than 15 days' medication overseas without a doctor's letter outlining your condition and treatment regime. With a doctor's letter, you can take up to 3 months' worth of medication. It is always advisable to ask your doctor to prepare a letter for you, as this will support the transition to your new doctor abroad.

Check the National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) and NHS Choices advice about travelling with medicines and contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country you are travelling to if you need more information.

Insurance

All Leeds students are automatically insured by the University Travel Insurance policy with Aviva. The policy is a bespoke University policy and provides comprehensive benefits with very few exclusions. The information below sets out the key points:

- Cover is automatic and free – you do not have to apply for it
- The maximum duration of the cover is 12 months (if you are going to Australia/NZ, the policy is extended due to the summer break falling between semesters.
- Travel for personal holidays is allowed within the 12 months although this is limited to trips in the 'region' of where the study is taking place. Check any travel destinations with the insurance team at the University of Leeds in advance of travelling to ensure you are covered
- A Summary of Cover document is available on the Insurance website. You should have this document with you for reference and for the emergency assistance details
- All activities are insured which includes extreme sports. Please use reputable companies for high risk activities
- There is an exclusion for electronic devices under the Personal Effects section. Electronic devices are generally anything which requires charging or has a plug attached. Laptops are covered though.
- All claims should go through the Insurance Section at Leeds, i.e. completed claim forms and supporting documents should be sent to insurance@leeds.ac.uk.
- Any queries should be directed to the Insurance Office 0113 343 6029 or insurance@leeds.ac.uk

Compulsory Health Insurance Policies

You may also be required to purchase an additional health insurance policy, either nationwide or university-specific, depending on local legislation. This is particularly often the case if you are travelling outside of Europe. The Insurance page on our website will give you an idea of insurance costs in countries that are known to operate mandatory insurance policies, but it is your responsibility to research the exact requirements of your host university.

Insurance waivers

In the past, some host universities have agreed to accept the University of Leeds insurance policy as a waiver for their own policy. However, host university policies change each year and the vast majority of destinations require all international students to purchase a local policy. If you would like to enquire about the possibility of an insurance waiver, please contact your host university directly once you have been fully accepted as an exchange student.

EHIC (European Health Insurance Card) – for students going to EU Countries and Switzerland

Currently, if you are normally resident in the UK but plan to study in another EEA country you should also obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). An EHIC is free and it could

save you a lot of money – and hassle – if you need medical help while you're away. Some European universities will also want to see proof of this card when you are registering. The EHIC entitles you to the same emergency health care provision as a national of the particular country you are in. If you do not have the necessary documentation you will be asked to pay for all medical costs and then make a claim to receive some of the costs incurred – this process can be lengthy and complicated.

Do not rely on the EHIC to cover all your medical expenses. We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the University of Leeds insurance policy to fill any gaps in cover provided by the EHIC, or look into supplementary private insurance if that is more appropriate to your situation.

NHS rules mean that if you are going to on a study or work placement abroad within the European Economic Area or Switzerland which will last more than six weeks, you must apply for a special Student EHIC. If you have a regular EHIC, it will not be valid for your placement abroad. You will be provided with a letter by the Study Abroad Office towards the end of semester 2 which will facilitate your application for a student EHIC.

Visas and Immigration

If you are travelling beyond The European Union/EEA, or studying in the EU but do not have an EU passport, you will be required to obtain a student visa or study permit for your host country. It is your responsibility to take the necessary steps to acquire a student visa and you should do this as soon as you have been accepted by your host institution so that your arrival is not delayed. In most cases, you will need to wait until you have received a formal acceptance letter before you can apply for a student visa.

Your host university or the relevant embassy should be able to advise you on whether you need to apply for a residence permit and how to obtain it.

Study abroad in Europe

The rules on travel to the EU may change when the UK leaves the EU. Please see the University's Brexit Information for Students web page, where we will keep you updated on issues relating to study abroad.

Some European countries require all students, whether or not you are an EU national, to apply for a residence permit on arrival in the country. Please check whether this is a requirement set by your host country – your host university will be able to help you with this process, and advise you on any documents you may need to provide.

Where to seek advice

The Leeds Study Abroad team are not qualified to offer detailed immigration advice. Immigration legislation changes frequently, so while it can be useful to talk with past students about their experiences, please ensure you follow current guidance from and check costs involved with a qualified source, such as:

- The Study Abroad visas web page
- The UK-based embassy or consulate of your host country
- An immigration adviser at your host university abroad

Preparing for your visa application

Proving that you have sufficient funds to support yourself throughout your study abroad year is part of the visa application for some countries. The amount required varies from country to country and can sometimes be quite high.

It is important to research financial evidence requirements early on, which is why it is something we ask students to do before they apply to study abroad ideally. Students selected for the USA, Hong Kong and some Japanese universities should be prepared to provide this evidence at the point of formal application to the host university (as early as February).

Several countries require a police report or an ACRO certificate as part of the visa application process. You must apply for an ACRO certificate in good time, but bear in mind that your certificate must normally be less than three months old at the time you apply for your visa.

It is advisable to inform the Study Abroad Office as early as possible of anything which may affect your visa application. For example, if you have a criminal record (even if it is for minor offences) it may affect or delay your application considerably. We can assist you in seeking further advice on your case.

Things to research in advance:

- Cost of your visa
- Documents to provide with your application
- Whether you need to evidence your finances, and how much you need to show
- Whether you will need to submit a medical examination
- Typical timings for processing your visa application
- Whether you need to hand in your passport with your application (which would impact on any travel plans you have for summer 2020)

Mailing your passport

You should never send your passport via ordinary mail. If the embassy you are applying to requires your original passport (rather than a photocopy), then be sure to use Special Delivery envelopes which can be bought at the Post Office. You will need one Special Delivery envelope to mail your passport there, and a second self-addressed one so that the embassy can return your passport to you securely.

Visa considerations for working abroad

Many students do paid work while they are studying abroad, but we don't recommend that you depend on this as a source of funding. Get advice from your host university and the relevant embassy website about permission to work abroad and contact past students to ask about availability of student jobs.

International students at Leeds

If you don't hold a British passport, you may not be able to apply for your visa through a UK-based consulate and you may need to return to your country of citizenship to apply for your visa. It is your responsibility to check the requirements for your nationality.

UKVI requires universities in the UK to monitor the attendance of students holding Tier 4 General Student visas, and this must continue during a Study Abroad programme. If you have any questions about attendance monitoring please contact your Leeds parent school.

You many need to extend your existing Tier 4 visa for the time spent at your host university so that you have immigration permission to return to the UK during your study abroad placement. As of the summer of 2018, this Tier 4 visa extension can be completed within the UK rather than returning to your home country. Any enquiries about this process should be addressed to immigration advisers in the International Student Advice Team.

Immigration Control

Make sure you carry the following things in your hand luggage when you travel: your passport, all your immigration paperwork, your letter of acceptance from your host university, any bank letters that you have as evidence of your ability to fund your year, any letters relating to/prescriptions for medication you are carrying.

Pre-Departure Requirements to Complete for Leeds

You will be required to attend meetings and submit paperwork for both the central Study Abroad Office and also your parent school at Leeds. Look out for communications from both parties about meetings and requirements and if you're confused about whether you need to do something, do just ask!

Requirements for the Study Abroad Office

- Application Checklist
  - Send this back to the Study Abroad office by email or in hard copy once you have completed the application to your host university
- 'Study Abroad Essentials' Meeting
  - This is the one compulsory session in our pre-departure programme, and you will be withdrawn from the study abroad year if you do not attend
- Pre-departure Checklist
  - Complete this online via the link you are sent after attending 'Study Abroad Essentials'. Failure to submit may result in support for your study abroad year being withdrawn
- Erasmus+ Grant Paperwork, if applicable
  - As per the instructions in the paperwork pack you will receive in July

Requirements for your Leeds parent school

These will vary from school to school so you should contact your School Study Abroad Coordinator if you are not sure you have completed everything you need for your parent school.

- Change of Programme Form
  - This document allows your Parent School at Leeds to change your degree programme to one which incorporates the period abroad. This affects your Student Finance funding, including your maintenance loan – for more information, please see Student Finance Applications.
- Risk Awareness Form
  - The University of Leeds has a health and safety policy to support you before and during your study abroad programme – the Risk Awareness Form is part of this.
  - The form is an opportunity to consider a range of issues you may face whilst living and studying abroad. By considering these before you set off on your studies, we hope you will be able to find answers to important questions while you still have easy access to resources here at the University of Leeds. For further guidance on completing this form, please see Risk Management of Study Abroad.
- Academic Guidance Meeting
  - Your School Study Abroad Coordinator will usually hold a meeting during semester 2 to explain the academic requirements of your period abroad. This meeting is in addition to the Study Abroad Office's pre-departure programme and may be compulsory – please check with your school if you are unable to attend.

The Erasmus+ Programme

Students taking part in an exchange within Europe in recent years have done so under the Erasmus+ Programme, so it is important that you understand how it works. Erasmus+ is the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. It has an overall aim of increasing student mobility across Europe and investing in knowledge, skills and competences which will benefit individuals, institutions, organisations and society as a whole by contributing to growth and ensuring prosperity and social inclusion in Europe and beyond. One of its main objectives is strengthening linguistic skills and the support of language learning.

Erasmus+ and Brexit

If you have been selected for an exchange in Europe, then you have been selected in good faith that the exchange relationship between the University of Leeds and your host university abroad will continue regardless of the outcome of the Brexit negotiations.

At the time of publication there is no guarantee British universities will still be in the Erasmus scheme for the 2020/21 academic year. However, we are working with our Higher Education partners in Europe and the UK to ensure your study placement can go ahead, regardless of whether this is part of the Erasmus+ programme or not. Whilst the implications of Brexit on your European study placement are not under our control, be reassured that we are doing everything possible to continue our European exchanges. Please regularly check this webpage for the latest information on how Brexit may affect your study abroad placement: www.leeds.ac.uk/brexit.

Students going to Switzerland, and to European universities via GE3

Students going to Switzerland, and Engineering students going to European universities via the Global Engineering Education Exchange Consortium (GE3) are not eligible to receive the Erasmus+ funding.

However, usually students going to a Swiss university may receive comparable funding directly from their host university. Further information about this will usually be provided by your host university once you have applied. There is no parallel scheme for GE3 students.

The Erasmus+ Grant

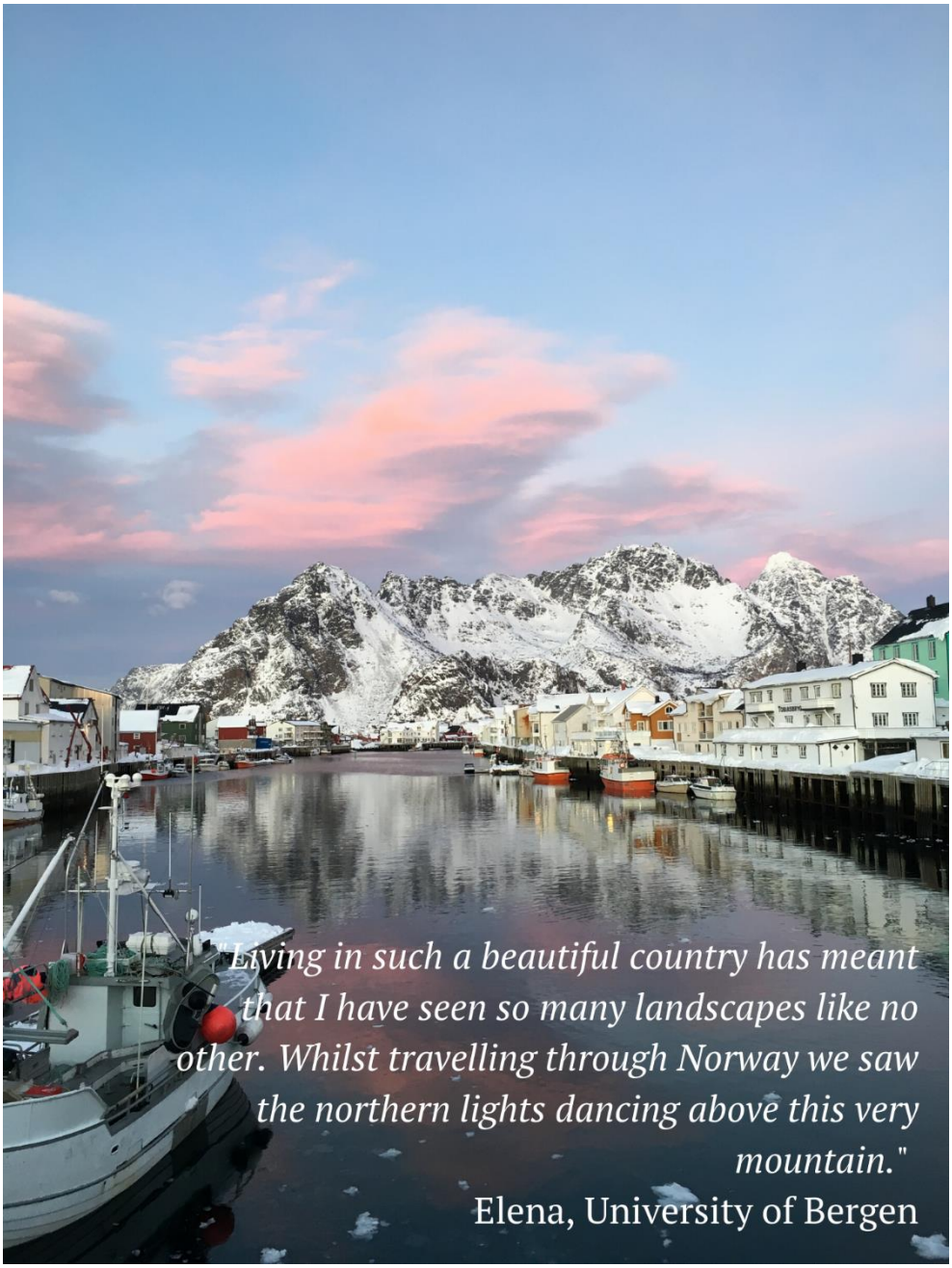
Further information about Erasmus+ funding, requirements of the programme and Brexit implications for funding can be found at: http://students.leeds.ac.uk/erasmusgrant

In previous years all students, regardless of their nationality, studying as Erasmus+ exchange students for 90 days or more, and who comply with relevant paperwork requirements, have been eligible for the non-repayable Erasmus+ grant. Once your application to your host university has been made to the Study Abroad Office your grant will be arranged for you.

Provided that the UK is able to participate in the Erasmus+ Scheme for the 2020/21 academic year, students studying abroad for the full academic year will receive an Erasmus paperwork pack in July. All paperwork needs to be completed before you can receive any funding. Failure to complete the paperwork means you will not receive an Erasmus+ grant.

As part of the pre-departure programme the Study Abroad Office will run a session which will cover all aspects of the Erasmus+ grant and required paperwork for 2020/21. If you are studying abroad in semester two, or for the term abroad after Easter, you will receive your Erasmus paperwork packs approximately two months prior to the placement commencing.

Please Note: if you are overpaid for any reason, eg due to miscalculation, misleading or incorrect information or because of any errors made by payment staff, then you are required to repay the relevant amount of grant money. This is because the grant is provided to assist students in both studying and working abroad each year and must be distributed in a consistent, fair and transparent way. Any grant money incorrectly retained by one student prevents that grant money from being given to another student.



Annex 1 – Embassy Websites

Foreign Embassy websites (within the UK)

Argentina	Australia	Austria	Belgium
Canada	Chile	China	Czech Republic
Denmark	Finland	France	Germany
Greece	Hong Kong	Hungary	Iceland
Indonesia	Israel	Italy	Japan
Malaysia	Mexico	Morocco	Netherlands
New Zealand	Netherlands	Norway	Poland
Portugal	Singapore	South Africa	South Korea
Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Taiwan
Thailand	Turkey	USA	Vietnam

UK Embassies Abroad

Argentina	Australia	Austria	Belgium
Canada	Chile	China	Czech Republic
Denmark	Finland	France	Germany
Greece	Hong Kong	Hungary	Iceland
Indonesia	Israel	Italy	Japan
Malaysia	Mexico	Morocco	New Zealand
Norway	Poland	Portugal	Singapore
South Africa	South Korea	Switzerland	Taiwan
Thailand	Turkey	USA	Vietnam