

Psychology Post-offer exchange programme meeting notes

Congratulations on securing a place on the Exchange Programme! This document addresses the next few steps you need to take before going abroad and after you arrive at your host university, and hopefully answers the questions you may have.

- **Will I for sure study abroad next year?**
 - Yes. The offer will not be withdrawn.
 - However, keep in mind it is conditional on:
 - the host university accepting your application (a formality),
 - you passing your Year 2 exams.

- **Who is my exchange coordinator?**
 - We have two exchange coordinators in Psychology. Your main Psychology exchange coordinator depends on your destination:
 - Prof Caroline Watt: North America & Amsterdam
 - Dr Nicolas Chevalier: Madrid, Copenhagen, Trento & Asia-Pacific
 - If you are a joint honours student, you have two exchange coordinators, one in Psychology and one in your other department.
 - If you have an urgent request but your main exchange coordinator is not available, can you contact the other Psychology exchange coordinator?
 - Please always contact your main exchange coordinator first.
 - If, for any reason, they cannot help you in time (e.g., they are on leave), you are welcome to contact the other exchange coordinator, but please always cc your main exchange coordinator on any emails.

- **What shall I do now (i.e., after accepting the offer and before going abroad)?**
 - You will need to download one document, called a Learning Agreement (LA), fill it out, get it approved by your exchange coordinator(s), and upload it back on Mobility Online (MOL)
 - The LA must be downloaded from MOL.
 - After filling out and getting the LA signed by your exchange coordinator(s), you must upload it back on MOL by late July.
 - Please sign the LA first before asking your exchange coordinator(s) to sign it too.
 - If enrolled on the ERASMUS programme, you may want to apply for funding. This is dealt with entirely by Edinburgh Global. Please contact them.
 - Your host university may ask you to fill out and return university-specific documents. These will vary across universities. Contact your exchange coordinator(s) if you need academic advice about course selection, etc. If you are going to the University of California, you will need to submit your campus ranking before finding out where exactly you'll be studying next year. This is a UC-run procedure.

- **What is the Learning Agreement and who needs to sign it?**
 - It is the list of courses that you and your exchange coordinator(s) agree you will take abroad. It is very important, as progression into 4th year will be determined based on this document.
 - It can be downloaded from MOL.
 - You and your main Psychology exchange coordinator need to sign it. If you are a joint-honours student, both your main Psychology exchange coordinator and the exchange coordinator in your other department must sign it.
 - Please always sign the document yourself before asking your exchange coordinator(s) to sign it. Please send us a pdf copy (rather than a picture).
 - It should be uploaded on MOL by late July. Please keep in mind that your exchange coordinators will be in and out of office frequently during the summer. Please factor this in while working on your learning agreement.
 - This is an **iterative** process. You will very likely need to revise and reupload learning agreements throughout your year abroad.
 - Your first learning agreement will necessarily be **tentative**. It needs to be uploaded by late July at the latest.
 - While abroad and after meeting with your exchange coordinator at your host university, you may realise that some of the courses you had initially selected aren't offered anymore, are already full, etc. Therefore, you'll likely need to revise your learning agreement. Please update your course list and seek approval from your home exchange coordinator(s), then upload the new learning agreement on MOL as soon as possible. Ensure you give your home exchange coordinator(s) plenty of time before the host university's deadline to add/drop courses.
 - You will likely need to revise your learning agreement again at the start of semester 2.

- **How many credits do I need to take abroad?**
 - If you are going to Europe, you need to sign up for exactly 60 ECTS.
 - If your destination is outside Europe, please check the number of credits recommended by Edinburgh Global for your host university. Please keep in mind the following info:
 - **For Psychology, you need to sign up for the credit load required by Edinburgh Global** (even though other departments may allow students to sign up for fewer credits, depending on programme-specific policies, and even though your exchange coordinator abroad may tell you it's more credits than what many of their home students take).
 - No reduction in credit load will be granted.
 - We will not sign any Learning Agreements with missing credits, even if you're past your host university's deadline to add courses. Please make sure you give yourself plenty of time to sign up for the right amount of credits at your host university.
 - If you are a joint-honours student, exactly half of your credits must be spent on Psychology courses.

- **What courses should I select?**
 - How many courses/credits should you take? Please refer to the bullet point above. As a single honours student, you need to take all or most of your courses in Psychology. As a joint honours student, you need to spend exactly half of your full credit load on Psychology courses.
 - The courses you take abroad should meet the following criteria:
 - They should be **advanced enough** to show progression in your education. You should take 3rd-year courses at your host university (no 'intro to psych' or 'psych 101' courses). These courses shouldn't repeat any materials that you already covered in Years 1 and 2.
 - They must be **Psychology-relevant**. Most of these courses will be offered through the Psychology/Neuroscience department at your host university. However, some courses offered through other departments may be appropriate if they are clearly psychology-relevant (a typical example is 'Psychology of Music' through a Music department).
 - Can you take outside courses (e.g., 'Danish Language')?
 - If you are a single honours student, you may spend up to 17% of your full credit load (i.e., 10 ECTS) on courses outside psychology.
 - If you are a joint honours student, courses outside your two majors are **not** permitted.
 - What are BPS core areas and should you worry about them?
 - There are 5 British Psychological Society (BPS) psychology core areas: biopsychology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, differential psychology (individual differences), and social psychology.
 - Over your two honours years, you need to take at least one course in each BPS core area in order to seek BPS accreditation. BPS accreditation isn't necessary to graduate from the University of Edinburgh, but it is a requirement if you want to pursue a career as a psychologist in the UK.
 - We recommend that you cover as many BPS core areas as possible while abroad (at least 3). This will give you flexibility while selecting your 4th year courses after returning to Edinburgh.
 - How should you select your courses?
 - Browse your host university's website and make a selection of the courses you would be interested in taking.
 - Send your course selection alongside the detailed syllabus (or at least course description) for each course to your main exchange coordinator.
 - If you're a single honours student, you need approval from your main Psychology exchange coordinator for all your courses. If you're a joint honours student, your psychology courses need to be approved by your main Psychology exchange coordinator and your other courses by your exchange coordinator in your other department.
 - Fill out your learning agreement, sign it, get it signed by your exchange coordinator(s), and upload it on MOL.

- Can the course list be changed later? Yes. In fact, it will likely have to be revised after getting abroad (see bullet points above).
- **How about 'Research Methods and Statistics' (RMS) courses abroad?**
 - RMS equivalent courses count as Psychology courses.
 - What would be a suitable equivalent to RMS2?
 - It should be an advanced statistics course that covers ANOVAs/GLMs and regressions and/or factor analysis/data reduction.
 - It cannot be an introductory course covering, for example, experimental designs, descriptive stats, and non-parametric tests (i.e., RMS1-equivalent course).
 - Although it is a plus, the course doesn't need to be based on R (Matlab, SPSS, and other stats packages are fine).
 - More advanced stats courses may be approved as suitable replacement for RMS2, but please discuss with your main exchange coordinator.
 - What would be a suitable equivalent to RMS3?
 - It should cover qualitative research methods (e.g., discourse analysis, interviews, observations, etc.).
 - It should cover a range of qualitative research methods and address epistemological issues related to qualitative research (i.e., the course cannot focus exclusively on one qualitative research method).
 - As many Psychology departments abroad do not offer courses on qualitative research methods, it may be helpful to check out courses offered through other departments (e.g., Sociology, Anthropology, Geography, etc.).
 - What if there aren't any suitable replacements for RMS2 and/or RMS3?
 - We highly recommend you take RMS2/3-equivalent courses abroad. However, if no suitable equivalents to RMS2 and/or RMS3 are offered abroad, it is fine for you to take only psychology courses abroad (in this case, we highly recommend you try to cover all 5 BPS core areas). You will then need to take RMS2 and/or RMS3 in your 4th Year.
- **Who can advise me about funding?**
 - Funding applications are dealt with by Edinburgh Global. Please contact them.
- **What if I change my mind or have issues abroad? Can I discontinue my exchange programme early?**
 - If, for some reason, you no longer can or want to study abroad next year, please let your exchange coordinator(s) know asap. Before going abroad, it should be relatively straightforward to cancel your exchange programme and let you follow your 3rd year at Edinburgh.
 - After starting the academic year abroad, if, for exceptional reasons, you need/want to discontinue your year abroad early, please get in touch with your exchange coordinator(s) and Edinburgh Global asap. Bear in mind that there is no straightforward procedure to abort your exchange programme. Your conditions of return to Edinburgh will need to be approved by your

exchange coordinator(s), Edinburgh Global officers, College officers, and PPLS Teaching officers. Depending on your specific circumstances, you may be able to follow semester 2 in Edinburgh or you may need to repeat your entire 3rd year.

- **What shall I do when I arrive abroad?**
 - Attendance confirmation at Edinburgh: As paradoxical as it may sound, we still need to confirm your attendance at Edinburgh. To do so, please email PPLS Student Support Officers once you've arrived abroad, so they can confirm your attendance.
 - Meet with your local exchange coordinator and amend your course list. Get the new course list approved by your home exchange coordinator(s) before signing up for courses.
 - Upload your revised learning agreement on MOL.

- **How can I find accommodation abroad?**
 - It is your responsibility to find accommodation abroad.
 - Some universities offer help with accommodation. Please contact them and Edinburgh Global for further information.

- **What if I fail my exams? Do my marks abroad count?**
 - To progress onto 4th year, you must:
 - have signed up for the required number of credits abroad,
 - and passed courses corresponding to at least 2 thirds of your full credit load.
 - If you fail an exam, your host university will offer you the possibility to resit it in most cases. If not, keep in mind that you can still progress onto 4th year on aggregate if you've obtained at least 2 thirds of the full credit load.
 - Your marks abroad do not count towards your degree classification (i.e., your degree classification is entirely dependent on your 4th year marks). However, obtaining at least 2 thirds of your full credit load is necessary to progress onto 4th year.

- **How shall I to prepare for my honours dissertation from abroad?**
 - Psychology honours dissertation topics are usually released by late March. Once they are out, you have about a month to contact potential supervisors and submit your supervisor ranking. You should find out which supervisor you have been assigned in May/June.
 - After the dissertation topics have been released, we recommend you go through the list, contact potential supervisors by email, and request a Skype meeting with them whenever possible.
 - For any additional information, please contact Dr Kasia Banas.
 - If you are a combined honours student and are planning on doing your honours dissertation outside Psychology, please contact your other department for details about their own procedure. Please keep in mind that, if you elect to do your honours dissertation outside Psychology, you will not be eligible for BPS accreditation.

- **Do I have access to the PPLS writing centre from abroad?**
 - Absolutely! You can book an online appointment.
 - Would you like to talk to somebody about your 3rd-year project in psychology? The PPLS Writing Centre is now offering online consultation sessions through video chat. These are the same one-on-one sessions you'd get if you were on campus, but with the additional flexibility you need when abroad. To book a session with one of our PhD tutors, visit the centre's website at <https://writingcentre.ppls.ed.ac.uk/>, access the "Appointments" page, and then select the button "Online video appointments". You will be taken to a booking portal with a more thorough description of what to expect. This service is limited to students spending their third year abroad.

- **Any further questions?**
 - Please contact Prof Caroline Watt (caroline.watt@ed.ac.uk) or Dr Nic Chevalier (nicolas.chevalier@ed.ac.uk).

15th March 2019