ERASMUS+ AND INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PRE-DEPARTURE BRIEFING 2020/2021

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

INTRODUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW

International and Student Experience (part of AAS) – Sarah Ward (Assistant Registrar – International and Student Experience)

45 minute presentation by Sarah

- Where you see the symbol **€** the information is relevant for Erasmus students
- Where you see the symbol ✈the information is relevant to International Exchange
- Where you see ☑ the information is relevant to both

WHAT TO DO…NOW, OVER THE SUMMER, ON ARRIVAL, DURING YOUR STAY AND ON RETURN

FUNDING, PAPERWORK, INSURANCE, AND LANGUAGE

€ ERASMUS FUNDING

- **For the academic year 2020-21, the grant equates to €130 more per month than the minimum amount set by the European Commission**
- **Group 1 countries** Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden= **€420 per month**
- **Group 2 countries** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia= **€370 per month**
- an additional **€120 per month** for disadvantaged students with an annual household income of <£25,000

- **80%** within 30 days of the completion of your grant agreement. **20%** at the end of your stay **(**on submission of first instalment grant receipt, on-line language assessments, on-line student report and fully competed learning agreement)
- If term dates are not accurate you may not get a second instalment

✈ INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE FUNDING

No funds available via the Conservatoire ☹

☑ OTHER FUNDING

- **UK Student loan**
- **Existing Conservatoire scholarship**
- **Charities, trusts and other organisations (see the Fees and Funding pages on the RCS website at https://www.rcs.ac.uk/apply/finance/feesandfunding/external-funding/ and the portal at https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/funding-finance/**
- **www.fundmytravel.com**
- **https://globalgraduates.com/**

☑ WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW…

Let all relevant staff know of your intentions to go on exchange

Deal with your student loan and other financial issues

Pass your re-sits otherwise you may not be able to go on exchange

Note contact details of I&SE staff

- Sarah and Pauline at international@rcs.ac.uk

☑ OVER THE SUMMER YOU NEED TO…

- Think about accommodation (student halls or a flat). Your receiving institution will help you.
- Consider costs and start saving if necessary (or possible!)
- Organise extra health and travel insurance
  - Conservatoire insurance through AON (summary on the portal) or your own policy. Conservatoire policy only covers you from the first date of your mobility until the last. It does not cover you for any activity before or after these dates.
- **Covid – 19 Advice – Do not make any financial commitments until your host institution has confirmed that you can enrol as a student**

- € European Health Insurance Card
  - There will be no changes to healthcare access for UK nationals visiting or living in the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland before 31 December 2020.
  - NHS rules mean that if you are going to on a study mobility abroad within the European Economic Area 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 mobility abroad. To understand how to apply please read the information produced by the University of Leeds which is on the portal
- ✈ International Exchange students will have to take out the policy aligned to the host HEI
- ☑ https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

☑ OVER THE SUMMER YOU ALSO NEED TO…

- Book travel BUT Do not book flights until:
  - Current government advice changes. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) currently advises British nationals against all but essential international travel. This advice is being kept under constant review
  - you know your start date
  - you have been issued with your visa, if you need one
- Organise insurance – health, instrument, etc.
- Ensure you have a laptop to access on-line learning in your host country
- Keep regularly checking the Portal
- Read the Exchange Student Handbook (on the Portal!)
- Complete your online learning agreement even if the paper version was done as part of the application process
- Matriculate at RCS on-line as usual – very important!
- € Start learning the language of your host country.
- € Erasmus students should complete the on-line language assessment (before and after your mobility) if you've been sent the log-in details. Complete the on-line language course if invited to do so.

CONSERVATOIRE PAPERWORK - OVERVIEW

☑Learning Agreement

€ Grant Agreement

€ Erasmus+ grant receipts

✈ Confirmation of Arrival

☑ Contact Details form

€ Erasmus Report form – online

☑ LEARNING AGREEMENT

Everybody needs to complete the online version BEFORE going on exchange

- Shows the modules you are taking and amount of credit
- Signed electronically by Responsible Person at RCS, Responsible Person at receiving institution and the student (in that order). I&SE will control this process.
- Amendments can be made electronically too.
- Sample LA on portal
- Take the full load of credit. 30 ECTS per semester
- Forms the basis of your Transcript of Records. Transcript sent directly to me **and** you. Some institutions insist that students request their own.
- Any study carried out that is not on the Learning Agreement is unauthorised. **DUE TO COVID-19 MANY OF YOUR MODULES MAY HAVE TO BE TAKEN AS ONLINE LEARNING IN THE HOST COUNTRY**
- Grade conversion information will be added to the portal

€ GRANT AGREEMENT

- This is your funding contract
- Two copies (one for RCS and one for you)
- Permits the release of Erasmus funding
- Shows the responsibilities of all three parties (you, the Conservatoire and the receiving institution)
- Your Erasmus mobility is invalid without it
- Must be completed and signed prior to departure
- You cannot go on Erasmus unless this document is completed

€ ERASMUS+ GRANT RECEIPTS

- You will get two grant payments.
- Evidence that you have received both instalments is required. Both forms are on the portal
- Grant is calculated in EUROS but paid into your account in POUNDS STERLING unless you have a EURO currency bank account.

☑ **Confirmation of Arrival Form –** evidence that you have arrived and registered at the host partner institution

☑ **Contact Details Form –** we need to know where you are living

€ On-line Report

- URL to be forwarded to you once you have finished your exchange. The email is automatically generated from the European Commission's on-line mobility tool. Please do not delete the email. Check your spam folder for it!
- You will be issued with guidance on how to complete the form part-way through your mobility.

€ LANGUAGE

- Start learning now
- A language user can develop various degrees of competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening and to help describe them the CEFR has provided a set of six Common Reference Levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr
- You will need to take an on-line test before your mobility starts and when it has finished. This will be via Erasmus OLS Native English speakers studying in English will be exempt, as will native speakers of the language of the country they are going to
- You may be expected to attain a specific level before starting your study placement. You will be offered a free on-line language course via Erasmus OLS
- Use free of charge resources like BBC Languages and Open University Learning Space. Check the RCS on-line library resources
- If your host institution is able to offer classroom-based language lessons and there is a cost, let me know! There may be a budget to pay for it for you!

☑ EXCHANGE STUDENT HANDBOOK

- Provides more detail than today.
- Instructions for before, during and after your exchange.
- Useful contact details.

ERASMUS REPORT (EU SURVEY)

Sent to you via email from the British Council.

- **What were your main motivations for studying abroad?**
- **Quality of Studies**
- **Foreign Language Skills and Linguistic Support**
- **Personal Development**
- **Future Prospects of Education, Training and Work**
- **Practical and Organisational Arrangements**
- **Accommodation and Infrastructure**
- **Academic Recognition**
- Was your Learning Agreement signed by all parties before the start of the mobility?
- Was your Learning Agreement changed during your mobility period?
- Did you manage to agree on the changes with the sending and receiving institutions within seven weeks from the start of the semester?

ON ARRIVAL

☑ Attend orientation events and language classes as instructed by your host institution

☑ Complete and return Confirmation of Arrival form

☑ Complete and return Contact Details form

☑ Ask for confirmation that you will be assessed and graded. Ask to see a copy of their Diploma Supplement.

☑ Finalise your learning agreement if there are any exceptional changes and amend it online. Your host HEI will have a deadline for module changes somewhere between 2 and 5 weeks after the start of your studies

☑ Get your paperwork signed off and ask your coordinator to send it to:

international@rcs.ac.uk

DURING THE YEAR

€ Complete and return the first instalment grant receipt.

☑ Attend all classes and complete all assessments – whether in person or online

☑ Promote the Conservatoire – you are an ambassador!!

☑ Check the exchange student handbook and the Student Portal before contacting I&SE with questions.

☑ Don’t keep problems to yourself. You can still access Conservatoire services.

HEALTH INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH

www.studentminds.org.uk/yearabroad.html

Read the Erasmus and Exchange Handbook

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-finland#healthcare

ON YOUR RETURN

€ Return paperwork (On-line Report Form and 2nd instalment grant receipt)

☑ Meet with your Programme Leader or Coordinator to feedback about your exchange. Can you use any of your experiences on mobility in your studies?

☑ Respond with Feedback if requested by staff

☑ Volunteer to assist with future Erasmus and International Exchange events

HELPFUL TIPS!

Work hard and pass your exams! Tell me immediately if you find out that you will not be assessed!

Keep all documents you are given! They are also on the portal at https://portal.rcs.ac.uk/erasmus-and-international-exchange/

Check your Conservatoire email address regularly

- Options (formerly Choice) selection

Stay in touch!

Blog!

Respect the different culture!

Travel as much as you can (if possible!)

GOOD LUCK AND BON VOYAGE!!

Please let me know if you have any problems at all, no matter how small!

international@rcs.ac.uk