



WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Department of Sociology

**Study Abroad
Handbook**

2023-24

This handbook outlines the academic procedures and requirements relating to the Sociology Year Abroad. All non-academic information about studying abroad is provided by the International Student Office.

The department endeavours to ensure that the information in this handbook is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Statements of departmental policy are made in good faith and are an honest attempt to describe current practices. Any significant changes to the procedures and requirements detailed in this handbook will be notified to students by email and the electronic copy of the handbook available from the Sociology webpages will be updated accordingly.

We hope that your year abroad is a fulfilling experience both personally and academically. We encourage you to make the most of your year abroad by embracing opportunities to study and travel in the country you have chosen. If you encounter any problems while you are abroad, or have any questions that are not answered in this handbook, please contact the Sociology Department / Director of International Programmes: Dr Silvia Gomes Silvia.Gomes@Warwick.ac.uk or the Student Mobility Team (see contacts below).

1. Key Contacts

1.2. Student Mobility Team Website:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/studentopportunity/studentmobility/studyabroad/>

Address: University House, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 8UW, United Kingdom

Contact Information:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/studentopportunity/studentmobility/about/contact/>

1.3 Emergency Contact Information Website:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/studentopportunity/studentmobility/about/emergencycontacts/>

Telephone: (Warwick Out of Hours Emergency 24 Hour Contact Line): +44 (0)24 7652 2083.

2. Year Abroad Degree Structure

The Sociology Year Abroad is taken as an additional third year between your second and final years (or between your third and final years if you are a Law and Sociology student). It does not count towards your degree classification but will appear on your [Higher Education Achievement Report](#) (HEAR). Upon successful completion (or other Joint Honours degree), the degree awarded will state *with Intercalated Year*. If you fail the Year abroad, you will be transferred back to the 3 year degree programme and the degree certificate will not mention the year abroad.

NB: Where students have not passed the year abroad by the standards of the host institution, successful completion of a Reflective Assignment (see Appendix 2) will enable them to pass the year abroad.

3. Aims of the Year Abroad

1. To demonstrate the ability to study abroad for a year at a host university approved by the Sociology department;
2. To experience and gain a deeper understanding of the social and cultural diversity of the country where you undertake your year abroad;
3. To travel abroad and achieve personal development in preparation for employment and global citizenship;

4. To further your knowledge and understanding of Sociology by taking modules that are not available to study at Warwick;
5. To provide the opportunity to study modules outside of Sociology that might not normally be available to study at Warwick.

4. Learning Outcomes

On completion of this year, students will have:

1. Broadened their knowledge and understanding of their subject specialism(s);
2. Developed the qualities and transferable skills necessary for working or studying in another country and in a different academic system;
3. Developed enhanced oral and written language skills through the demands of study in a different country;
4. Developed transferable skills in sensitivity to diversity in terms of culture and intercultural competencies.
5. Progression from Year 2 to the Year Abroad.

4.1. To undertake the year abroad, a student must normally have passed at least 60 credits and have an overall grade of at least 60.0% in the second year. Students who fail the second year are not permitted to undertake a year abroad. Students who fail the second year and have mitigating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the nature and extent of the mitigation.

4.2. Your ability to progress will be confirmed at the Year 2 Exam Board, which takes place at the end of June or in early July. You will be emailed as soon as possible after the Board to confirm whether you can progress to the Year Abroad.

4.3. If you are departing for your Year Abroad before the Year 2 Exam Board (sometimes the case for students attending universities in the Southern Hemisphere) you will be contacted as soon as your results are processed (before the board sits) to confirm whether you can progress to the Year Abroad. If you are not sure whether you have passed Year 2, you should NOT depart for your year abroad and you should contact the Director of International Programmes as soon as possible.

5. Requirements of the Year Abroad

1. You must pursue the aims of the year abroad as set out above.
2. You must check your Warwick Tabula and email accounts regularly. This is the ONLY way we will contact you.
3. You must keep in regular contact with the Director of International Programmes.
4. You must observe the academic calendar of your host institution and remain at that institution for the full academic year. You may return and/or travel during holiday periods.
5. You must abide by all the rules, regulations and practices of the host institution. This includes submission deadlines, attendance requirements, codes of conduct, use of plagiarism software, etc., as well as non-academic regulations.
6. You must respect the laws and customs of your host country and comply with all requirements of your visa.

7. You must complete all forms, and attend all meetings, required by the Sociology Department, the Student Mobility Team (<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/studentopportunity/studentmobility/>), the International Student Office (<https://warwick.ac.uk/study/international>), and your host institution.
8. It is your responsibility to ensure that you take the correct credit load and that your module choices are approved by the Director of International Programmes.
9. You must provide a copy of your transcript from your host institution to the Sociology Office at the latest by the end of August. You are responsible for meeting all requirements necessary for the host institution to release the transcript, including payment of all outstanding fees.
11. You should keep the university informed of your contact details while you are abroad.
12. You will receive instructions regarding the online submission of module preferences for your final year via your Warwick email address. You must follow the instructions carefully as late submission of your choices will reduce your chances of being allocated places on your first choice of modules.
13. You may be visited by a member of Warwick academic or administrative staff during your year abroad. You will be informed of the timing of visits in advance, and we will endeavour to arrange them during the teaching terms at your host institution. You are required to be available for discussion with the member of staff concerned.
14. You may be asked to participate in meetings set up for students preparing for the Year Abroad or to provide advice via email or on a one-to-one basis. University staff will always ask your permission before sharing any of your contact details with other students for this purpose.
15. You must fulfil the academic requirements of the year abroad as laid out in this handbook.

6. Module Choices, Credit Loads, and Assessment

1. You must take the course load and or credits required by the host institution, in line with any requirements of your visa. NB The terminology for credit may vary by institution, and students are responsible for ensuring that they are taking the required number of credits.
2. Note that when you return to Warwick, you may NOT submit work for summative assessment that you submitted for summative assessment whilst you were abroad: this is self-plagiarism.
3. All module choices are subject to confirmation by the Director of International Programmes: Dr Silvia Gomes

7. Application Process

To be eligible, you should be in the second year of a Sociology, Sociology and Criminology, or Sociology joint honours degree (or third year for 4-year Law and Sociology degrees). You must have averaged a 2.i or above in your previous year of study (if you have mitigating circumstances regarding a lower grade, please contact me to discuss this as soon as possible).

Some of the placements are likely to be hotly contested, so you can list up to three choices of placement in order of preference on the form. Please only list placements which you would be willing to take up. Listing fewer placements does not make you any more likely to get your first preference.

As long as you are eligible, placements will be allocated based on your personal statement. The form will accept a statement of up to 4,000 characters. It is a good idea to draft this in a Word document before copying it to the form and checking the length.

Your personal statement should demonstrate:

1. **REASONS** for your choice to undertake a Study Abroad placement, and for your choice(s) of placement, demonstrating you have put thought and consideration into your choice.
2. **RESEARCH** you have done into the placement and the Study Abroad experience, demonstrating initiative and underpinning your reasoned choice.
3. **READINESS** to undertake a Year Abroad, for example, what you think the challenges might be and how you will meet them. You might want to think about studying/living in another language, support networks and friends, travel, finance.

You can find a lot of information on the Student Mobility web pages to help you with background and planning: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/studentopportunity/studentmobility/>

From the Department's side, 2.i expectation is intended to make sure that students are well-prepared to keep up academically with studies at another institution, also in the context of the added challenges of living and studying abroad. Mitigating circumstances can cover a broad range of circumstances, and students should think carefully about whether the circumstances that affected their academic performance in the first year will still be challenging in the lead-up to and during the Year Abroad, and if so, how they would cope with them. That is, undertaking a Year Abroad might not be in a student's best interests if they are facing ongoing challenges to their studies. It is advised that students who did not meet the 2.1 threshold in their overall first year marks due to mitigating circumstances discuss the situation with their Personal Tutor in the first instance, particularly whether they think the circumstances would affect their Year Abroad and how they would handle this.

If the student then wants to go ahead with an application, they should explain within their supporting statement how the circumstances are now such that they will be able to thrive, academically and otherwise, during the Year Abroad. Students should also note that if applying in these circumstances, the Director of International Programmes may consult with the student's Personal Tutor as to whether they believe that the student meets the academic threshold to make the most of the Year Abroad.

Students should also note that host universities may have their own academic requirements which would need to be met to receive a final offer, and this should be checked carefully before applying.

8. Mitigating Circumstances

1. Students should inform the Director of International Programmes of any circumstances that affect their work whilst they are abroad.
2. If students fall ill or have other mitigating circumstances while they are abroad, in the first instance they should follow the policies of the host institution.
3. You are required to keep in contact with the Director of International Programmes and respond to monitoring point requests while you are abroad. This is a mandatory requirement to comply with the stringent University and UKVI requirements. The Department of Sociology, the Director of International Programmes (Silvia Gomes) and the Student Mobility Team will endeavour to support you with any problems you may face.

9. Progression from the Year Abroad to the Final Year

1. To progress to the final year of study from a year abroad which does not count for credit, students must pass their year abroad. You are expected to pass the year abroad by the standards of the host institution.

2. At the end of your Year Abroad, you must submit your transcript (by the end of August before your final year).

3. The year abroad does not count for credit for Sociology students but will be marked as pass/fail on your HEAR. You can retain a copy of your Year Abroad transcript as evidence of your achievements. Upon successful completion (or other Joint Honours degree), the degree awarded will state “with Intercalated Year”.

4. If you fail the Year abroad, you will be transferred back to the 3 year degree programme and the degree certificate will not mention the year abroad. NB: Where students have not passed the year abroad by the standards of the host institution, successful completion of the Reflective Assignment (see Appendix 2) will enable them to pass the year abroad.

10. Early Return to Warwick

1. Be sure that you are confident about your desire to study abroad and your destination before you go, by doing plenty of research on your destination, discussing it with your family and friends, and talking to former Year Abroad students, your Personal Tutor, and the Director of International Programmes.

2. We understand that your circumstances may change in the weeks and months before you depart, or while you are abroad. If you decide not to go abroad, or to return early, you must notify the Director of International Programmes as soon as possible.

3. If you return (or do not depart) before the start of the Warwick academic year, you will be able to return to Warwick for your third year. However, your module options may be limited.

4. If you return after the start of the Warwick academic year, you may be required to wait until the following academic year to resume your studies.

5. Returning early may also have financial implications. You should contact your Student Finance Company or any Sponsors you receive financial assistance from. If you are receiving additional funding related to your Year Abroad, you should contact the Student Mobility Team.

6. Tier 4 students who undertake but do not wish to complete the year abroad will need to consult with the International Student Office (ISO) and take advice relating to visa issues.

11. Complaints and Problems

1. If something goes wrong while you are abroad, your first point of contact should be your host institution’s support – their security team, study abroad office, complaints procedure, or your academic department, depending on the nature of the issue. We hope that any issues are minor and can be resolved quickly.

2. Do not assume that Warwick will be automatically informed of any issues that arise, so please contact the Director of International Programmes as soon as possible if you have any problems or complaints that you want the Sociology Department to support you with.

Appendix 1:

Information from the Student Mobility Team

Introduction

The guidance in this section is provided by the Student Mobility (SM) Team. The role of the Student Mobility Team is to provide the mechanism for your academic department to set up agreements with partner universities, and to support students in applying to these universities. The University has many different partners worldwide but places are only offered through your academic department. Your academic department will allocate the places available so you will need to apply for a study abroad place through them. Once the places have been allocated, the SM Team will work with you on the formal nomination and application process for your study placement at the partner/host university. Please note that the SM Team does not make decisions on academic matters or on which students are selected as this is undertaken by your academic department.

General Information

1. The SM Team will offer a briefing during the autumn term which will provide information on the options for studying abroad and will introduce you to the Year Abroad. The Study Abroad/Exchanges Coordinator in your academic department will often also arrange department specific briefings as well. These briefings provide different information, so it's recommended that you attend both.
2. Information on the process, FAQs and details on the documentation required can be found on our webpages: <https://www.warwick.ac.uk/studentmobility>.
3. Students going on a year abroad are expected to attend one of the SM Team pre-departure briefings in the summer before they leave; this is where the non-academic information on studying abroad is explained in detail. The SM Team will also upload a copy of this presentation.
4. Drop-in sessions are run by the SM Team on a daily basis and provide an opportunity for you to talk to one of the team (please see the details towards the bottom of our [homepage](#)). You can also get in touch via the [Contact Form](#).
5. Please ensure you respond to all emails from the SM Team in a timely manner and also check your junk folder to ensure any emails from your host university are not missed.

Nomination & Application Process

1. A selection process will be undertaken by your academic department (they will provide information on how to apply & this will take place in the autumn term of the year before the year abroad).
2. The academic department will notify the selected students of which host university they have been allocated to (at this stage, it's not a guaranteed place as students will have to be nominated by the SM Team and then apply and be accepted by the host university).
3. The SM Team will formally nominate the selected students to their allocated host university (the SM Team might also need to request further information from the students in order to nominate). Please note that a nomination is not a guarantee that students will be accepted by the host university.
4. After the formal nomination, students will need to submit an application to the host university. Therefore, it is vital for students to check their emails (including the junk folder)

regularly to ensure they do not miss any communication from the host university or from the SM Team. The SM Team is available to support students during their application however, please note that students themselves are responsible for completing and submitting their application by the deadline provided by the host university. Therefore, students must follow all application instructions carefully, supply all of the information requested by the host university and make sure to keep to their deadlines (it's important to note differences in time zones when it comes to deadlines). Failure to do so will result in the application being unsuccessful. The formal nomination & application process will take place between January & June depending upon the host university (they all have different deadlines).

5. The host university will then notify students on whether their application has been successful or not.

Diversity and Inclusion

All of our partnership agreements include a diversity and inclusion statement: *The parties, recognising the value of sustaining and advancing a safe and welcoming learning environment, strive to treat both employees and students with respect and dignity, treat them fairly with regards to all assessments, choices and procedures, and to give them encouragement to reach their full potential. Therefore, the parties strive to treat all its members, and visitors, fairly and aim to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, race and nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, religious beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, sexual orientation, spent criminal convictions, age or any other inappropriate ground.*

Tuition Fees & Student Finance

1. As you are part of a reciprocal exchange programme, you do not pay any academic tuition fee to your host university during your year abroad, but you do continue to pay tuition fees to Warwick (usually 15% of the standard tuition fee - further details can be found on the following [webpage: https://warwick.ac.uk/services/finance/studentfinance/fees/ugtuitionfees2017onwards/icyear](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/finance/studentfinance/fees/ugtuitionfees2017onwards/icyear))
2. If you receive any loan from Student Finance England, they will be notified of your name if you are going overseas and the host university's term dates. This will ensure that Student Finance England are aware that you should be charged the reduced study abroad fee rather than the standard level of tuition fee
3. If the host university's term starts more than one month before the Warwick academic year, Student Finance England will aim to pay your funds (tuition fee and any maintenance loan) at an earlier date, but please do not rely on this, as the payments may not be made until the start of Warwick's term. So there might be a gap between when you start your term at your host university, and when your funding starts; you will need to plan & budget for this in advance
4. Sponsorship: if you are being sponsored to study at Warwick, it has been in our experience that not all sponsors will agree to a year abroad. Therefore, before you start the process, you are advised to contact your sponsor and check on their position
5. It's possible that you might receive a grant from Student Finance England to cover some of your travel expenses if you permanently live in England. Please see the following [webpage](#) for further details.

Funding

The Student Mobility team is delighted to confirm that students who are going overseas in the 2023/4 and 2024/5 academic years who are undertaking a study abroad programme either for either work or study will be eligible to receive a minimum of £600 towards their international experience. It is very likely that this funding will be allocated after you have already started your placement so please ensure you have a sufficient level of funds to support yourself without this funding until December.

Immigration/Visas

1. You will most likely need a visa to study or work in your host country
2. It is your responsibility to ensure you obtain the correct immigration permission for your year abroad in good time. It is a legal process and we are not qualified to provide immigration advice but your host university should be able to provide you with advice and guidance (just like how Warwick has an Immigration Team who are qualified to provide advice to international students)
3. Use the list of foreign embassies in the UK to find the website for the UK-based embassy of the host country: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-embassies-in-the-uk> The embassy's website will tell you whether people of your nationality need to apply for a visa to study there. The FCDO also provide useful information: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>
4. Use the travel checklist from the FCDO on planning and preparation: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-checklist>
5. Check the travel advice for your host country (you can also sign up for email updates): <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>
6. You should also seek guidance from your host university, who will be able to issue any documentation you require and guide you through the process of obtaining appropriate visa documentation for your purpose of travel. Your host university should have advice and guidance on applying for visas

Student Visa (previously known as Tier 4 Visa) Holders

1. All students are encouraged to take part in study abroad. A student who has entered Warwick on a student visa is eligible for study abroad and will be supported throughout the process
2. There may be additional requirements for student visa holders, so you should contact the Immigration Team (<https://warwick.ac.uk/study/international/immigration/>) for advice before applying for a year abroad
3. During the pre-departure briefing, you will be advised of any processes (such as meeting the monitoring points for Engagement/Attendance Monitoring) you will need to complete

Insurance

1. You will be covered free of charge by the University's Overseas Business Travel Insurance whilst you are studying abroad however, this only covers emergency medical expenses and is not private health insurance hence it's strongly recommended for students to secure additional travel insurance. Please also note that the University's Overseas Business Travel Insurance is not for the loss or damage of mobile phones or computers and travel costs due to Covid-19 are not covered. You will be required to complete a risk assessment before you travel.
2. Please view the details of the policy at: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/finance/insurance/keypolicies/traveloverseas/>

3. There are some countries where it's mandatory to take out additional health insurance (eg: Canada, USA) and your host university may also require you to purchase specific insurance as well so please check and follow their instructions on this.
4. Remember to factor the cost of additional insurance into your budget as costs can vary considerably and you will need to check on an individual basis.
5. If travelling to Europe, it's recommended to apply for a free of charge Student Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) which will allow you to access medically necessary state-provided healthcare, however, it may not cover all health costs and is not a substitute for travel insurance. Please visit the following webpage for further information: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>. If you will be studying in more than one country, you will need to get in touch separately for the second country, please see towards the bottom of the following page for details: <https://nhsbsa-live.powerappsportals.com/knowledgebase/article/KA-26811/en-us>

You are required to familiarise yourself & keep up to date with the advice from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO): <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> (there's an option to sign up to email alerts for the country you will be going to) and also your host university so ensure you are checking your email inbox on a regular basis. It's also very important to ensure that your contact and placement details are up to date on your eVision online portal and that you have completed the risk assessment before you travel.

Accommodation

Organising accommodation is your responsibility and you might need to find your own private accommodation. Information on accommodation will be available on the host university's website and they may also provide you with details during the application process. Depending upon the host university, some might offer accommodation on campus whilst for others, students live off campus. The level of support for accommodation can vary considerably and you are advised to work closely with your host university and be wary of scams, do not sign anything until you are sure of what you are paying for. Different countries and universities will expect certain standards of behaviour and adherence to protocols for their accommodation; it's essential that you make sure you are clear about the rules and regulations.

Wellbeing

1. If you have any concerns about applying for a year abroad or require support whilst overseas, please do get in touch with Warwick Wellbeing Support Services: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/wss> . You will still be able to use [Report + Support](#) whilst abroad as well. You will also be able to access support services at your host university during your time there too.
2. If you have a disability, it's useful to let the host university know in advance, to enable alternative arrangements to be made if required – for example, additional time for examinations. We recommend contacting Warwick Wellbeing Support Services who will then be able to liaise with the host university as needed.

Two Placements in One Year

Some academic departments may allow students to split their year abroad into two, so instead of studying in one country for the year, they might allow students to study in two different countries (one semester in each country). If you are considering this, please note that you will not have confirmation and approval of your second semester study abroad placement before you have left Warwick as the nomination & application process for second semester placements takes place in the autumn term **during** your year abroad. We have also found from experience, that students who undertake two study abroad placements in one year often face more challenges in terms of securing accommodation and visas. If your academic department allow you this option, please make sure to check the term dates of each host university to ensure that the dates will be compatible and there is no overlap.

Change of Plans

If you need to change your plans, travel or programme of study, you must inform both the Student Mobility Team at Warwick and the Study Abroad/Exchanges Coordinator in your academic department as soon as possible. Similarly, if you become ill, please notify the Student Mobility Team and your academic department.

Frequently Asked Questions

If you are interested in finding out more, please visit our [FAQs](#) or join one of our drop-in sessions (details towards the bottom of our [homepage](#)) Please also like & follow us [@warwickstudyabroad](#) on Instagram!

Appendix 2: Reflective Assignment

In case of not achieving the required credits to proceed to the final year, the Sociology Department will request a 3000-word reflective essay on the study abroad experience to make up for missing credits. The award will be a Pass/Fail mark.

1. Purpose

This assignment is designed to enable you to demonstrate that you have met the learning outcomes of the year abroad, which are that on completion of this year students will have:

1. Broadened their knowledge and understanding of their subject specialism(s);
2. Developed the qualities and transferable skills necessary for working or studying in another country and in a different academic system;
3. Developed enhanced oral and written language skills through the demands of study in a different country;
4. Developed transferable skills in sensitivity to diversity in terms of culture and intercultural competencies.

Being able to articulate what you have gained from your year abroad is an important part of your personal development and will be useful to you whether you go on to employment or further study.

2. Content

You can reflect on any combination of the following to demonstrate that you have met the learning outcomes of the year abroad.

1. The host institution and country you studied in, and the different academic and cultural environments you encountered;
2. The academic knowledge that you have gained, or any new perspectives you now bring to Sociology (and/or your joint degree, if applicable);
3. Your personal development, including the language skills (if applicable) or any intercultural sensitivities you have gained;
4. Any skills you have developed that may be useful in later life, or in your future career.

3. Support for completing the assignment will be provided by the Director of International Programmes. There is also a range of resources available on the Year Abroad webpages.

4. Marking Criteria

Assignments will be marked with regard to the Sociology Department undergraduate [marking criteria](#), but will be awarded marks of either Pass or Fail only.