**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**

**School of Modern Languages and Cultures:**

**German Studies**

**YEAR ABROAD HANDBOOK:**

**GERMAN STUDIES APPENDIX (2019-2020)**

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**What’s in this Appendix?**

In the following pages, we have tried to include all of the information to help you understand what is required on the year abroad, as well as some hints about making the most of your time and preparing yourself for the final year of your degree.

Other important sources of information are:

* The Year Abroad Moodle page, which includes an FAQ section relevant to SMLC students as well as forms
* The Study Abroad webpages for outbound students: <https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/outbound/> and especially <https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/outbound/studyabroadforms/>
* Emails sent by members of the SMLC and university-wide Study Abroad team
* The website for incoming Erasmus+ students at your host university
* The German government website on working and living in Germany: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/de/>

**Who is responsible for what?**

* Questions about living/studying in Germany: Katie Stone
* Questions about year abroad formalities and regulations: Katie Stone
* For general questions about the year abroad: Katie Stone
* For questions about study placements or British Council placements: Katie Stone
* For information about work placements: Andrea Klaus
* For questions about student finance: Warwick Student Finance Team
* For questions about Erasmus+ funding, forms, and the online language test: The Study Abroad Team
* Wellbeing issues while away: your personal tutor or Katie Stone
* General questions about living in Germany or the day-to-day life of a student/PraktikantIn: your study abroad mentors

Study Placements

* Helen Norman (Konstanz): [h.norman@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:h.norman@warwick.ac.uk)
* Annie Jackson (Mannheim): [A.Jackson.4@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:A.Jackson.4@warwick.ac.uk); +447542391098; <https://www.facebook.com/annie.jackson.3139241>

British Council

* Matt Barber (Mülheim an der Ruhr): [mrpbarber@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mrpbarber@hotmail.co.uk); +447771709847; .me/matthew.barber.1806
* Lara Brett (Frankfurt): +447921020912; L.Brett@warwick.ac.uk

**Checklist for each of your placements (not all items will necessarily apply).**

**You may want to add other items based on your specific placement.**

Pre-departure

Fill in and returned any necessary application forms and other documentation required by my host university, the British Council, or my employer

 Notify my LEA of my study period abroad, and supply them with any necessary documentation

 Make sure that my loan will be paid straight into my bank account

 Check if I am eligible for any further support/higher loan from the LEA; if so, know how to go about applying for it

 Submit the Erasmus+ grant agreement and protocol to my study abroad folder. Complete the Online Linguistic Support. See <https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/outbound/studyabroadforms/studyandworkforms>

 Make sure that I have adequate personal insurance and possessions cover (i.e. fully comprehensive insurance (including accident, personal liability, and travel) whilst I am away). Some companies offer tailored year abroad insurance. Always double check that it covers your needs.

Apply for the relevant EHIC card (if you are studying, you can get a special student EHIC card, also known as a time limited EHIC card). If you plan to travel after your placement, you will also need a normal EHIC card. For more information, see p. 5 of this document. Those on work placements may be required to apply for health insurance through a ‘Krankenkasse’.

 Contact students from my host institution who are studying at Warwick/Warwick students who have studied at my host institution to ask about accommodation.

Work out how much money, and in what form (e.g. travellers cheques/bank cards) I will need to take to cover initial costs (e.g. accommodation, travel, student union registration fees, basic living costs). You may not receive your first salary or Erasmus+ payment for a month (or two!) depending on how long it takes to process your documents.

Find out about the best way to access money whilst abroad. What banking options are most suitable for your needs? What documents will you need to open an account.

Visit the website of your local Meldeamt/Bürgeramt to see how to register, what documents you will need, and whether you need to book an appointment (how far in advance)?

Make a number of passport photographs.

At the start of your placement

Apply for accommodation and receive confirmation.

 Submit your Arrival Placement Plan and Bank Details within 30 days of the start of your placement. See <https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/outbound/studyabroadforms/studyandworkforms>

Complete the SMLC’s online change of address form.

 In October, register your year abroad placement on eVision in week 0-3 of term 1 (and update in week 0-3 of term 2 if necessary). There are special module codes for the different placement types:

**LN203-120** Assistantship Full Year; **LN204-60** Assistantship Part Year; **LN205-120** Study Year Abroad; **LN206-60** Study Abroad Part Year; **LN207-60** Work Placement Part Year; **LN208-120** Work Placement YearFor university placements: check with my department which courses I should follow whilst abroad and what is required of me regarding assessment

For university placements: complete the Learning Agreement and return it to SMLC

For British Council placements: Contact my school(s) to confirm information about my first day and ask about any teaching materials I might take with me.

Register your address with the authorities (“Anmeldung”) within a fortnight (usually) of your arrival. See your local Meldeamt/Bürgeramt for regional regulations.

Throughout the Year

Regularly check your Warwick email account – and any email address you are given through the foreign university or employer – to ensure that you do not miss any vital information.

 Go through the Erasmus+ forms checklist, make diary notes and set reminders for when your grant receipts, mid-term placement plan, and completion documentation are due. See <https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/outbound/studyabroadforms/studyandworkforms>

 Ensure that you meet all monitoring points and submit all year abroad work required by SMLC on time.

Pre-departure

Remember “abzumelden” with the Bürgeramt. Check the website for information on procedures in your specific area.

Submit your completion placement plan, transcript (of study/work), final Erasamus+ grant receipt.

Ensure that you have followed any other legal/departure procedures required by your employer, university, or the British Council.

**ARRIVAL**

**(General)**

It goes without saying that you are legally responsible adults and are expected to comply with the laws of the host country (even by getting a TV license!). Ignorance or not knowing that laws (e.g. to do with streaming, driving, recycling) are different to the UK does not protect you from legal responsibility.

**a)** Once in Germany/Austria/Switzerland open a bank account at a convenient place and let the German school/your bank in England know at once so that your salary/grant can be paid in as soon as possible. You may need proof of address (i.e. a letter from your landlord) and your Meldeschein.

**b)** When you arrive in Germany you will have to register (‘anmelden’) at the local ‘Einwohnermeldeamt’. Forms for this are available from most stationers. You can also download them from the websites of most Meldeämter. It may be useful to print off necessary forms *before* you arrive in Germany.

Check the website of the relevant Meldeamt to check appointment procedures. Sometimes you can simply show up (although note that you may have a long wait). In some large cities, you may need to book an appointment in advance. It is worth checking how things work and how easy it is to get an appointment at the start of summer. In addition, the page on “Anmeldung einer Wohnung” will tell you what documentation you must take with you.

When you are asked how long you wish your residence permit to last, say for at least one year so that you can prolong your stay into the summer if you wish.

In large cities in Germany, Austria or Switzerland you may have to make a separate visit to the ‘Ausländeramt.’

In Austria, landlords and landladies have the necessary forms for registration. University students are also required to produce a ‘Finanzierungsnachweis,’ a form signed by their parents saying that they receive financial support (see the end of this guide).

**c)** For EU citizens: Make sure you have the relevant EHIC card!

Students: apply for a student EHIC card (also known as a time-limited EHIC card). A normal EHIC card will not be considered as valid whilst you are on a study abroad placement. For more information on the application process, go to this link:<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/moving-abroad/studying-abroad/> For your application, you will need an official letter from Warwick confirming you are in higher education. If you have not received this letter by the end of term 3, contact Katie Stone.

If you need medical treatment you will normally have to go to the local AOK (‘Allgemeine Ortskrankenkasse’) with your EHIC and you will be given a certificate (‘Krankenschein’) to give to the doctor: do not allow anyone to keep your EHIC card. If they say they must have it, insist that they take a photocopy of it. You may need it again! At some universities, you may be obliged to join a student insurance scheme.

British Council assistants: You will have insurance deductible from your salary. The information pack you receive from the British Council will provide more information. The BC recommends that you take out more comprehensive insurance, especially if you have specific medical needs.

Students on work placements: You will likely have to apply for insurance. Your employer should be able to advise you on what to do, and whether they have special arrangements with specific insurers.

**d)** There is no need for any official to retain your passport for any length of time. If they absolutely insist on this then you must equally insist on a proper receipt for it.

**e)** During the year abroad, take every possible opportunity to improve knowledge of another foreign language (e.g. French) or to acquire a further language e.g. Spanish, Italian. Inquire at your university or local FE college (‘Volkshochschule’)

**f)** Remember that attendance at our Easter School (Schloss Dhaun) is a compulsory part of the degree course (and fun!). Note that French with German Students or students in China, Japan etc. do not go to Schloss Dhaun.

**g)** Make yourselves familiar with the Health and Safety regulations (Sicherheitsbestimmungen) of your Placement Provider (university, school, work placement), and (if applicable) accommodation provider (i.e. student halls). Student halls should have a safety regulations information (Feuerbestimmungen) in each room. For Universities enquire with the Akademisches Auslandsamt. Students on work placements should enquire about Sicherheitsbestimmungen/ Feuerbestimmungen with their employer (HR department). Assistants should enquire with the Sekretariat of their schools.

**UNIVERSITIES**

1. BEFORE YOU LEAVE

**a)** We, and your LEA, expect you to attend the German university for a period equivalent to the Warwick academic year.

Clearly, you are entitled to come home for a short break at Christmas and in the event of particular family celebrations or crises. Please inform your tutor if you have to interrupt your studies in this way. It is expected that you will spend most of the time between the two semesters abroad.

**b)** Accommodation: Where possible opt for a larger Studentenwohnheim as they are likely to offer more social life. While the exchange universities try to house all visiting students in student accommodation, they do not guarantee a room. If you have not been notified of your accommodation by mid-summer (end of July-mid August), contact the International Office of your exchange university.

Useful websites for finding private accommodation in Germany:

* http://www.wg-gesucht.de/
* http://www.studenten-wg.de/
* http://www.easy-wg.de/
* http://www.mitwohnzentrale.de/
* <https://www.immobilienscout24.de>

If you are looking for a room in a Wohngemeinschaft, it might be easier to secure one once you are abroad. People are more likely to offer you a room if they have met you and know they get on with you. Perhaps offer to speak to them via skype as an alternative?

Other sources of information:

* Local Facebook groups
* Noticeboards in local universities
* Current YA students (you might be able to take over their room or they might have friends looking for a flatmate)
* Local, privately-owned Studentenwohnheime (often advertised via the “Unterkunft” pages of Uni websites)
* Gastfamilien

**Please be aware of scams:** There are obvious risks involved if you rent somewhere without seeing it in person! Always sign a contract! Be aware of your legal rights (“Mietrechte”)!

Every year, students say that they wish they had not rushed into signing a rental contract. If you stay in a cheap Airbnb or a hostel for the first week or two, and visit flats in person, you might find that you find something better in the long-run.

**c)** Take with you a photocopy (authenticated) of your ‘A’ level certificates and 6 passport photographs.

2. ONCE THERE

**a)** The main source of help and information is going to be the ‘Akademisches Auslandsamt’ or ‘International Office.’ Some universities have special Erasmus offices in your host department, which is likely to be “Anglistik” or the humanities faculty more generally. Get in touch with them at once, and call in regularly to check details of forthcoming events (especially trips). Also contact the Erasmus exchange coordinator. These two are the first points of contact for problems of administrative or academic nature, as well as your Year Abroad coordinator at Warwick.

**b)** Students are expected to enrol for at least one German language course per semester, unless there is nothing suitable at your university, are expensive, or are over-subscribed. Sometimes German classes are offered in a special language centre, sometimes as part of the ‘Deutsch als Fremdsprache’ department. The DaF department may offer other courses that would be useful to you, especially if you are considering a career in teaching or further language study.

You may also find translation courses on offer in the English department. Some of our students even sign-up for translation classes between German and their other language!

**c)** Look out for readings of writers at the university/ bookshops and other cultural events, visits from politicians, etc.

3. RE-ENROLLING (OR NOT) FOR A SECOND SEMESTER

The procedures vary from semester to semester, sometimes you will be automatically enrolled for the whole academic year, sometimes you will have to confirm that you intend to stay on to study for the summer semester. Likewise, each university will have different deadlines (usually towards the end of the winter semester).

Please make sure you know when this deadline is, especially if you are hoping to find a work placement for after the winter semester, or if you change your mind and decide to study for the whole year instead. Usually, if you use the search function on your university’s website, you will be able to find more detailed information about re-enrolling/re-registering/Rückmeldung zum Semester/Verlängerung des ERASMUS-Aufenthaltes. If you have questions, your contact in the international office at the host university will be able to provide further information.

Sometimes you require a letter or email from the year abroad co-ordinator (Katie Stone) approving your plans.

**STUDY REQUIREMENTS**

* As a student on an ERASMUS exchange, you are expected to take 30 ECTS (i.e. credits) per semester. Don’t worry if you struggle to hit 30 ECTs exactly: many modules are worth only 5 or 6 ECTS.
* You are expected to take at least one German language course per semester.
* The majority of courses should be taught through the medium of German.
* You are expected to regularly attend and participate in your classes. At the end of each semester, you should get the ‘Teilnahmeschein’ at the back of this handbook signed by every one of your tutors. Please bring this and any transcripts to Schloss Dhaun.

How to put together a timetable

Each university publishes a Vorlesungsverzeichnis, a prospectus that lists every module and lecture taking place across the university. You will normally find all information, i.e. module description, reading list, time, location and teacher of the module on the individual department’s website.

Please note that modules in German universities don’t come with lectures attached. Lectures are independent events. At some universities, they accompany the rest of the department’s teaching offering, but do not come with ECTs attached. Sometimes, you can attend a lecture series and then take an assessment to receive ECTs. You can go to as many lectures as you like and in any department you like. Lectures at German universities are open to the public.

A Proseminar is directed at students of years 1-2. Normally, Proseminare in the humanities are assessed by a Hausarbeit of about 3000 words.

A Hauptseminar is directed at Finalists and thus has a higher level and higher demands. It is usually assessed by a Hausarbeit of about 5000 words.

An Übung is generally a reading module focusing on a particular issue, topic or problem, frequently assessed by a test or a Referat.

**BRITISH COUNCIL ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Duties as an Assistant are not particularly arduous; you are required to teach or assist in 12 lessons a week, with one day per week holiday. On arrival at your school you will be allocated a Vertrauenslehrer who should look after you and help you with any problems you may experience.

The British Council also issues regulations about your responsibilities and rights and will send you a booklet with advice for Teaching Assistants in July/August before you leave. You can also get a lot of very helpful tips and material from their website: www.britishcouncil.org/languageassistant

In Germany the pay is about Euro 800; in Austria the rate of pay is slightly higher at Euro 1000 per month. It is possible to supplement this by giving private lessons after school. This also improves your knowledge of English grammar no end.

Remember, however, that you are in a position of responsibility – and that you must behave appropriately. If you are ill or have problems that prevent you from attending your school, it is essential that you let them know as soon as possible so that they can make any necessary arrangements to cover for you.

The British Council is only the facilitator of applications and allocations on behalf of the local partner organization: Pädagogischer Austauschdienst (Germany) and the Servicestelle für Mobilitätsprogramme des Bundesministeriums für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung (Austria). Once you arrive, then, this local partner will be your main point of contact for queries.

If you really have insurmountable problems with your school that cannot be sorted out via your Vertrauenslehrer you should contact your Year Abroad co-ordinator immediately.

ACCOMMODATION

Your school may be able to help you find accommodation or offer you temporary accommodation. However, it is not your mentor’s job to do so! Even the most engaged mentor might not have needed to search for accommodation for years and may therefore have few suggestions. Nonetheless, when you first contact them, you should ask if they can offer any assistance, or if they have any contacts. Previous language assistants at the school may be willing to offer advice.

In the early stages, your school may be able to ask teachers and parents if they can put you up temporarily, or if they have contacts who might be able to help you find somewhere to live. Make use of noticeboards, newsletters, and email lists for staff and parents.

Another option is to apply for private rented accommodation in a shared flat or on your own (depending on the affordability of the location) via websites such as wg-gesucht.de / easy-wg.de/ mitwohnzentrale.de. There are also sometimes spare rooms in the halls of residence of local universities or nurses’ homes attached to nearby hospitals. In some university towns, private companies run Studentenwohnheime. For local tips, it is sometimes worth looking at the accommodation/Unterkunft advice on the website of the nearest university.

If you are looking for a room in a Wohngemeinschaft, it might be easier to secure one once you are abroad. People are more likely to offer you a room if they have met you and know they get on with you. Perhaps offer to speak to them via skype as an alternative?

Other sources of information:

* Local Facebook groups
* Noticeboards in local universities
* Current YA students (you might be able to take over their room or they might have friends looking for a flatmate)
* Local, privately-owned Studentenwohnheime (often advertised via the “Unterkunft” pages of Uni websites)
* Gastfamilien

**Please be aware of scams:** There are obvious risks involved if you rent somewhere without seeing it in person! Always sign a contract! Be aware of your legal rights (“Mietrechte”)!

Every year, students say that they wish they had not rushed into signing a rental contract. If you stay in a cheap Airbnb or a hostel for the first week or two, and visit flats in person, you might find that you find something better in the long-run.

INDUCTION COURSE

For ELAs in Germany and Austria, there is a compulsory induction course, either in the late summer or immediately prior to the start of your placement. Not only does it provide information about the school system and lesson-planning advice, but it offers you a chance to get to known other assistants in your area. You will also learn valuable information on aspects of German bureaucracy such as registering, insurance and the ‘Gesundheitsamt’. There is also a chance to learn about the services offered to Assistants by the British Council, teach a practice lesson and stock up on free teaching materials. Use the opportunity to network and find assistants in your Bundesland. Maybe arrange to meet up at the end of your first month so that you have something to look forward to.

TEACHING MATERIALS

Local newspapers, postcards, guidebooks, university prospectuses, travel brochures of Britain, posters of anything British, videos of popular T.V. shows, N.M.E. or anything else relating to British music, videos of the charts show, anything about rugby or cricket, magazines. Get wised up on the British political system if you aren’t already!

FITTING IN

* Talk to the staff, don’t wait for them to come to you
* Talk to the ‘Oberstufe’, most of year 13 will only be 1 year younger than you
* Get involved in everything at school (i.e. drama group, school newspaper etc). If you’re musical, join a choir, orchestra, band etc. If there is not a club, start one.

**WORK PLACEMENTS**

For work placements, there are fewer standards applicable to all and your employers will communicate about the specific documents that you need.

You should also inform yourself about legal requirements for employees in Germany or Austria via websites such as:

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/einreiseundaufenthalt/02-lernen-und-arbeiten>

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/de/>

<https://www.migration.gv.at/de/leben-und-arbeiten-in-oesterreich/arbeiten/beschaeftigungsformen/>

<https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/leben_in_oesterreich/aufenthalt/4/1.html>

as well as a wide range of “ex pat” websites for people moving to these countries, not to mention books.

In general, you will need to think about:

* Whether you are liable for taxes, applying for a tax identification number, etc. and if you will need to file a tax return
* Whether you will be making social security contributions
* What health insurance is required

**FINANCES**

ERASMUS+ FUNDING

* 300-400 Euro per month depending on placement type and country (max: 9 months)
* You are automatically enrolled for Erasmus+ funding if you are a student at an EU university doing a placement in another EU country
* Each work placement must be at least 3 months long to continue receiving Erasmus+ funding…and there must be maximum 1 month gap between any placements
* Payments in 2 instalments: 70% after arrival (Nov/Dec) and 30% after you've completed your placement.

(Only if you submit the required forms on time!)

Erasmus+ funding is administered and managed by the Study Abroad team. Please contact them or see <https://warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/outbound/> for answers to questions about funding matters.

OTHER ISSUES

* Currently a reduced tuition fee is payable to the University of Warwick during your year abroad. And you do not pay any tuition fees to your host university (although there may be a modest enrolment fee). Please visit the [Warwick Student Finance](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/finance/fees/ugtuitionfees/) pages for the latest tuition fee rates for study or work placements.
* Be prepared for bureaucratic delays – you might not get your first salary for a couple of months if your tax no. etc. could not be processed before the monthly payroll cut-off date
* Erasmus+ funding may not come in until the end of November/early December (70% initially, and then 30% at the end of your placement)
* Plan ahead: start saving; get a summer job; what would your contingency be?

NEED EXTRA SUPPORT?

* The university’s Study Abroad has a limited emergency fund
* Emergency Loans are available from University Hardship Funds: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/funding/hardshipfunds/emergencyloans/>

**HOW TO MEET PEOPLE**

Meeting Germans can be a difficult task and you’ll find that a lot of German students will go home over the weekend. German universities have no centralised Students’ Union and social life is not organised around nightlife. If you’re an assistant, especially in a small town, it’s somewhat easier as everyone will want to get to know you. In any case, you’ll have to be proactive to establish a social life in Germany.

* Join a ‘Verein’ (sports, music, line dancing, rambling, ultimate frisby, handball)
* Take classes at the local university or Volkshochschule, which offer a wide range of sports and ‘educational’ courses (including languages) at a reasonable cost
* Form your own reading/discussion group (via the schwarze Brett in the University Depts) You’ll find that Germans love debating/discussing things!
* Search for ‘Vereine’ on the website of your state or town
* Google websites or Facebook groups for newbies in your area (i.e. “Neu in Berlin)
* Get a part-time job or become involved in local charity work
* Buy a ‘Bahncard’ and travel

**TOP TIPS**

* Be proactive! Put yourself out there!
* Don’t be easily offended! If you really do make a fool of yourself, you never have to see that person again.
* Insist on speaking German, if only for designated periods of time!
* If you have lots of Erasmus friends, arrange regular nights out where you only talk German to each other!
* See everything as an opportunity to make connections; helping someone could lead to a friendship or useful contact.
* Don’t be snobby: you never know who will make your year abroad

**MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR YEAR ABROAD**

*If you go on your year abroad thinking it will be awful…*

*…it probably will be awful.*

Think of it this way: you have a year with no pressure do whatever you like…try a new subject, pick up a new hobby, travel…and focus on your language skills.

Before you go away, write a list of three things goals for your year abroad and how you can achieve them. If you do so, then you will always be able to look back on your year abroad as an experience that has been productive and positive, even if there are elements that did not work out as planned.

Above all, your year abroad is a vital step on your journey towards fluency in German. However, fluency is not automatic and will not happen by osmosis. If you want to attain a high degree of linguistic competence by time you leave Warwick, you need to use the year abroad to:

1. Continuing to improve and practice your grammar;
2. Continuing to learn vocabulary (some suggest that C1 German means recognizing and being able to use 8000 words….)
3. Find ways to build your vocabulary. Read the news regularly: read a couple of online articles a day, or a newspaper once a month. Get up to date with the newest books, films, etc.
4. Improve your hearing skills. You could listen to Deutsche Welle or the Deutschland Funk stations for highbrow discussions and news. But just switching on the TV and watching Germany’s Next Top Model or the music channel will help too.
5. Most students feel least confident with their speaking skills. The only way to improve, however, is to talk to others.
   * Don’t just say “danke” at shops, make conversation with the cashier.
   * Talk to the person sat next to you at work or in a lecture…or in a café if you’re brave
   * Find clubs or opportunities to chat in German
   * If you’re surrounded by other Erasmus+ students, organize “German-only” nights out
   * If your friends insist on speaking English to you, keep replying in German.
   * If you’re nervous, prepare conversation starters or look up words that you might use to describe what you did at the weekend, what you thought of the TV last night etc.

**Final year**

Your Year Abroad experience feeds into Formative and Summative Assessment in the Final Year in the following ways: German Language Essay, Oral Exam, Conversation Class and Year Abroad Report.

Report: On returning you will have to fill in a report form on your Year Abroad and the specific nature of your experience (ELA, university, work placement).

Oral Exam and German Essay: Your experience in Germany will feed into both the oral exam and the German essay insofar as the intercultural knowledge acquired in the Year Abroad can be reflected in your choice of Oral Exam Topic and be demonstrated in the German Essay in relation to the chosen essay question.

**NOTES ON READING FOR STUDENTS SPENDING A YEAR ABROAD**

READING LISTS

You will find out about your module options at Schloss Dhaun. Once your module selections have been finalized, usually by June, you will be able to access the required reading.

One of the many purposes of the year abroad is to give you an opportunity to prepare well for your final year at Warwick. We expect you to read the various prescribed texts before your return, so you can spend the academic year at Warwick refining your knowledge and preparing written work.

The penalty for not doing this is obvious. You will find it difficult to keep up and to revise adequately in time for the summer examinations. As you will see from the reading lists provided by the Department, all courses carry with them a lot of reading, and in many cases there are very weighty and lengthy novels which need time before they can be adequately understood.

\*The Department does its best to adhere to timetables for courses but can never make an absolute guarantee about the order in which texts might be taught, nor, in some cases the choice of texts themselves.

PLANNING AHEAD

Your final year will be a heavy one, and the pressure may be increased by the important process of job application, which can be a time consuming one. You can help yourself by planning your final year whilst you are in your year abroad, so that you can benefit from teaching once back at Warwick and be relaxed enough to develop your own ideas.

**THE YEAR ABROAD AND THE FUTURE**

The governmental Office for Students encourages university departments to consider their responsibilities to provide development opportunities in the necessary transferable skills required by any graduate in the working world. The challenge is to identify which skills should be integral to the teaching process and which should be facilitated outside the formal curriculum with the encouragement of academics, the careers service and/or employers. The Year Abroad is an ideal opportunity for students to develop these skills, to be aware of their level of development and to record events that indicate their acquisition.

Recent research has identified self-reliance skills as being the most valuable, enabling the student/graduate to manage the process of effective learning and career progression.

Self-Awareness: Ability to identify skills, values, interests and other personal attributes. Ability to pinpoint core strengths and "differentiating factors". Evidence of abilities (e.g. summary statement, record of achievement or "portfolio"). Willingness to seek feedback from others, and ability to give constructive feedback; to identify areas for personal, academic and professional development, monitor, achieve and evaluate them.

Action Planning: Ability to plan a course of action that addresses the questions: Where am I now? Where do I want to be? How do I get there? Ability to implement an action plan by organising time effectively, identifying steps needed to reach the goal and preparing contingency plans; to monitor and evaluate progress against specific objectives.

Exploring and Creating Opportunities: Ability to identify, create, investigate and seize opportunities; Research skills to identify possible sources of nformation/help/support.

Coping with Uncertainty: Ability to adapt goals in light of changing circumstances; to move from taking tiny risks to larger ones.

Matching and Decision Making: Understanding of personal priorities and constraints (internal and external). Ability to match opportunities to core skills, knowledge, values, interests; to make an informed decision based on the available opportunities.

Development Focus: Understanding of preferred method and style of learning. Reflection on learning from experiences; Ability to learn from own mistakes and those of others. Commitment to lifelong learning.

Self-Confidence: Underlying confidence in abilities, based on past successes; personal sense of self-worth, not dependent on performance.

Political Awareness and Negotiation - Understanding of the hidden tensions and power struggles within organisations. Awareness of the location of power and influence within organisations. Ability to negotiate.

Networking: Awareness of the need to develop networks of contacts. Ability to define, develop and maintain a support network for advice and information.

Self-Promotion and Skills Transfer: Ability to define and promote own strengths in a convincing way, selling "benefits" not simply "features". Ability to apply skills learnt to new contexts.

**In light of this description, think about how you might use your year abroad experiences to answer common job application and interview questions such as:**

1. We need people who can deliver results consistently and are prepared to meet goals sometimes at the expense of personal commitments. Please give an example of determination and describe the results of your actions.
2. Working with change is a fact of life at ABC plc. When did you experience something totally new? What did you learn and what was the outcome?
3. We encourage you to take personal responsibility and demonstrate initiative. When have you taken this opportunity in the recent past?
4. Please write about your experiences in the last 5 years describing the situation, the actions you took and the results you achieve when you:
   1. Set yourself a demanding goal and overcame obstacles
   2. As leader, set directions for a group, gained their commitment and worked with them to achieve results
   3. Had to think through a complex problem, analyse data, develop options and implement a solution
   4. Worked effectively with people of different backgrounds or views to accomplish an important result
   5. Came up with a new idea or new way to get better results
5. What have you most enjoyed about your course?
6. Describe your work approach
7. What skills have you developed in your course?
8. What influenced you in your choice of course/University?
9. What evidence can you give of your suitability for this work?
10. What did you learn about yourself in your year abroad?
11. Describe some of the difficulties you had to overcome?
12. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
13. What takes up most of your time when not studying?
14. What gives you most satisfaction in these activities?
15. Do you hold any positions of responsibility?
16. In your role as "X" what contribution have you made?
17. What has been your most significant achievement?
18. What influenced your choice of vacation work?
19. What sort of responsibility were you given?
20. What did you find most/least interesting about the work?
21. What skills and abilities did you develop in this time?
22. What feedback were you given on your performance?

For more information, see the Student Careers and Go Global pages

The Careers Service at The University of Warwick may seem a long way away when you are abroad. It is no longer a quick trip to the third floor library whilst returning piles of well-read library books. However, there is a lot you can do from abroad with the help of the web. The following information outlines useful web sites and suggestions for Career preparation including how to make the most of local contacts.

From week one of the Autumn Term in your final year there will be many Careers activities you can take advantage of, including employer presentations, careers fairs, and graduate recruitment opportunities. To get the most out of these events it makes sense to prepare ahead of time. Many students miss application deadlines or presentations due to lack of planning. The timetable of events will be on the Careers Web site.

What can you productively organise whilst you are abroad?

Whether you want to go into postgraduate work, the work place or explore other opportunities you will need an awareness of your skills – strengths and weaknesses. You are gaining valuable skills from your time in Germany/Switzerland/Austria and your degree. These can be used in application forms, at interviews or to decide which skills you would like to use in your future Career.

The German/Austrian/Swiss approach to recruitment

If you are interested in working in the country you are currently residing in after graduation, take this opportunity to find out how recruitment is conducted.

CV’s, covering letters and interviews differ from country to country. For instance: In Germany your work experience section of your CV must include details of the size of the company and the nature of the business. The Swiss are less overly ambitious at interview than the British. They have two forms of CV – one for English and one for German.

This is also the time to check out possible employment opportunities.

In Germany, the Chamber of Commerce is also a good place to research firms and industries, as are the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and websites such as [www.berufswelt.de](http://www.berufswelt.de) / [www.absolventa.de](http://www.absolventa.de) / [www.arbeitsamt.de](http://www.arbeitsamt.de) / [www.wdr.de](http://www.wdr.de) / [www.dv-job.de](http://www.dv-job.de) / [www.deutscher-stellenmarkt.de](http://www.deutscher-stellenmarkt.de) / [www.heise.de](http://www.heise.de). Also look at trade publications.

In Austria, the Saturday edition of some newspapers contain job adverts. Try *Kurier*, *Der Standard* and *Die Presse* as well as regional papers. Useful websites include [www.ams.or.at](http://www.ams.or.at) / [www.jobnews.at](http://www.jobnews.at) / [www.jenewelt.at](http://www.jenewelt.at) / [www.job-consult.com](http://www.job-consult.com) / www.dv-job.at

In Switzerland, try the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung* and regional papers, or websites like [www.swissclick\jobclick.ch /](http://www.swissclick\jobclick.ch%20/) [www.jobindex.ch](http://www.jobindex.ch) / [www.swisswebjobs.ch](http://www.swisswebjobs.ch) / [www.jobnet.ch](http://www.jobnet.ch). Make sure you look into work permits and taxation.

**Postgraduate study**

If you are interested in postgraduate study immediately after your undergraduate degree it’s a good idea to start looking into this in your penultimate year.

Before your summer break make sure you:

* Look into the courses available. The Prospects web site www.prospects.ac.uk contains a directory of all taught postgraduate opportunities in the UK;
* Talk to your tutors;
* Write to admissions tutors;
* Know When deadlines for applications and available funding (if required).

If you would like to do a research degree you may need to consider writing a proposal for submission to possible funding bodies.

Details of postgraduate study in Germany and Austria can be found at www.daad.de (for Germany) and [www.oead.ac.at](http://www.oead.ac.at) (for Austria).

**WELLBEING**

Please remember that your wellbeing on your year abroad is our utmost priority and we are happy to advise and guide you as far as we can. While on your year abroad, you can continue to access the same supports as while you are in Warwick, including arranging phone conversations with your personal tutor.

You can also use the Wellbeing Support Services and arrange skype consultations.

If you have wellbeing concerns and are a student, your German or Austrian university will likely have a support service for health and wellbeing matters.

Outside of universities, you have access to a range of services, depending on the sort of cover provided by your health insurance. You should be covered for state-provided mental health support via your EHIC (<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/healthcare-when-travelling-abroad/healthcare-in-germany/>).

As an initial point of contact, a Psychosoziale Beratungsstelle or Psychosoziales Zentrum might be useful (<https://www.berlin.de/special/gesundheit-und-beauty/adressen/psychosoziale-beratung/>).

The website of the Krankenkasse AOK also explains different steps you can take and you can search there for relevant doctors: <https://www.aok.de/pk/nordost/inhalt/ambulante-psychotherapie-7/>.

You can also search for English-language support here: <https://www.therapie.de/therapeutensuche/ergebnisse/?ort=berlin&sprache=3>

For more information, the following documents provide helpful starting points and contacts:

* <https://www.bapk.de/fileadmin/user_files/bapk/projekte/bapk_ratgeber_02_gesundheitssystem_ENGL_v2_FERTIG.pdf> .
* <http://www.dwz-psychotherapie.de/wp-content/uploads/Psychiatrie-Berlin-Englisch.pdf>

If difficulties arise, please know that we will support you in any way we can.

In case of emergencies, please note the following numbers:

* Warwick campus security (24 hours): 00 44 (0)24 7652 2222
* European/Switzerland emergency number: 112

**FINANZIERUNGSNACHWEIS**

**(May be needed to open a bank account and for other authorities)**

Hiermit bestätige ich, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, wohnhaft \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Ort Datum

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Unterschrift

**Teilnahmescheine für Erasmus-Studierende**

Name: Gastuniversität:

**Kurstitel**

**Wintersemester/Sommersemester SWS (hours per week) ECTs**

**Kurstyp:** Vorlesung / Übung / PS / HS / sonstige

**Prüfungsleistung(en):**

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