

# Your Year Abroad

in 2018-19  
*and for students planning the Year Abroad for 2019-20*

**School of Modern Languages and Cultures**

**French Studies Appendix**

University of Warwick

**Name:**

**Year Abroad 2018-19**

## **A note on this handbook**

This is the French Studies appendix for the School of Modern Languages and Cultures central Year Abroad handbook. It should be read **in addition** to the School of Modern Languages and Cultures handbook and only read by students who will be spending any part of their Year Abroad in France or a francophone country. This booklet is intended as a guide for use by students.

This handbook does not replace the regulations published in the University Calendar (<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/calendar/>). French Studies reserves the right to modify or cancel any statement in the guide and accepts no responsibility for any consequences of such modification or cancellation. Any problems related to these notes should be discussed with your Personal Tutor or one of the Year Abroad Co-ordinators.

For all queries relating to this handbook, please contact the Director of the Year Abroad in the School, Pierre-Philippe Fraiture ([p-p.fraiture@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:p-p.fraiture@warwick.ac.uk)).

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## Introduction

The “Year Abroad” has become an integral feature of most Modern Languages degrees. No doubt the opportunity of spending such a year abroad was part of the attraction when you opted for studying Modern Languages at Warwick University.

Even so, going abroad for an extended period of time can be a daunting prospect. It is quite normal to feel somewhat apprehensive – especially now that the Year Abroad is becoming a reality. This booklet will **help you organise your Year Abroad** and make the most of the time you will spend in a French or francophone environment. It is also intended **to remind you of your responsibilities** before, during, and after the placement, and of the **requirements** set out by the University of Warwick regarding your period of residence abroad and the academic work you have to carry out while there.

Most of the advice and information in this booklet will be set out in terms of **metropolitan France**. However, unless the context or information is country-specific, the rules and guidelines are **also applicable to any other approved francophone country/region** where you may be spending your Year Abroad. If you are travelling to francophone Africa or to the Caribbean you are advised to consult the Foreign Office website for travel advice.

**So read the whole of this booklet carefully, and take it abroad with you for future reference.** Keep it safe: it should become the core of your own, customised, Year Abroad File.

Every effort has been made to provide accurate and up-to-date information. **Changes may occur**, however, subsequent to this booklet going to press. Adapt or supplement your personalised file according to further details or instructions given to you by the French Studies Secretary, the Year Abroad Co-ordinators, the British Council etc. Have a regular check of the French Studies notice board and website.

**Good preparation is essential for a successful Year Abroad.** The earlier you start and the better you are prepared, the more positive and memorable your Year Abroad experience will be. Start by making an informed choice on how to spend your time in France. Get in touch with the relevant school, university, or company as soon as you have been allocated a specific placement and familiarise yourself with as many aspects as you can of your prospective placement abroad.

### **Students with disabilities:**

If you anticipate any particular issues in completing your year abroad please contact one of the Year Abroad Coordinators and/or your Personal Tutor. Every effort will be made to assist you in completing the requirements of the Year Abroad.



## I Before you go

### 1. Programme requirements

- The **Year Abroad** is an **integrated part of your degree course** in Modern Languages, and should be considered as such.

It is essential that you fulfil all the University's requirements regarding residence abroad (length of stay, submission of work, etc.); failure to do so will result in serious consequences.

You should understand the Year Abroad as a **stay in France or an approved francophone country (region), of a duration that is roughly equal to the length of an academic year at Warwick**, i.e. from end September/early October to end June/early July, or normally no less than eight months.

- Only in the case of language assistants does French Studies regard the duration of a seven-month contract as an acceptable length of stay for the Year Abroad. In all other cases a period of eight months is the usual minimum and nine or ten months is the norm. In any study placement students are expected to complete the full academic year of study including the examination period. Students on an Erasmus exchange who return before the end of the summer exam session in their host university are liable to repay part of their Erasmus grant.
- **“Staying on”**: students who wish to stay on in France at the end of their Year Abroad (e.g. to take up a summer job) do so **on their own initiative and responsibility**. The same principle applies to **“going early”**. A stay in France over the summer months before or following the Year Abroad can **only** be regarded as falling under the aegis of the University if it is part of the student's **pre-arranged** Year Abroad programme which carries the approval of French Studies (e.g. an eleven or twelve-month contract for a work placement).

### 2. Why go abroad? Aims and Outcomes of the Year Abroad in France

The primary objective of your spending an academic year in a francophone environment is the **improvement of your French language skills** (both written and spoken). Even after just a few weeks you will see your command of the French language progress dramatically. The grammatical correctness of your French will improve and your vocabulary will expand. But the long and intensive exposure to, and participation in, the genuine cultural and social contexts of the French language will also help you learn to use the language **appropriately**, with the right register, the right forms of address etc. Moreover living in a francophone country will also **sensitise you to the non-verbal communication** that can precede, accompany or even replace the spoken and written word.

In addition, you will enhance your **academic development** in other ways: you will increase your knowledge and understanding of contemporary French (francophone) society and culture, and according to your interests and activities, you will learn more about French (francophone) literature, history and politics.

Living abroad for eight to ten months will also help your **personal development**. By planning your Year Abroad, managing your time and money, solving problems, and coping with new situations, you will gain independence and increase your self-confidence. These are transferable skills which will almost certainly stand you in good stead for your further career (see also sections II.4 and III.3 below). Do not be dispirited by the challenges: returning students who did not enjoy the Year Abroad as much as they had hoped are often very positive about how their experiences helped their personal development; even those who later describe the Year Abroad the 'highlight of their degree so far' can find the settling-in period a difficult one.

Depending on the type of placement you go on, you are likely to develop a number of **professional skills**, some specific, others transferable. If you are studying at a university or an institute of higher education, you may, for instance, take advanced courses in translation. If you are taking up a post as a language assistant, you will have valuable teaching experience, which outside the teaching profession itself can count as a form of people management, organisational talent or interpersonal communication.

The overall **success of your Year Abroad experience will be difficult to quantify**. But your linguistic progress will be monitored during the year through language tasks, and your increased knowledge generally of French (francophone) culture and society will filter through into your final-year coursework and exams. Most importantly perhaps, the variety of experience you gain during the Year Abroad will help you build your career and prepare you for life after university.

### 3. How it works

The Year Abroad presents you with a unique learning opportunity.

**To achieve this**, the **University of Warwick** has responsibility for providing suitable placements, or for helping you to find one. The University is also responsible for providing the programme framework, preparatory briefing meetings, and relevant information and advice before, during and after the Year Abroad.

**Your input and your commitment** too will determine the smooth running of the programme, and its return in terms of the knowledge and experience you will have gained by the time you come back to Warwick for your final year. The following paragraphs set out what the University may — quite reasonably — expect from you, in organising your placement abroad.

#### 3.1. Before you go

- You are expected to attend **all** briefing meetings and workshops, and to read **all** material provided in preparation of the Year Abroad;
- You are expected to respect and adhere to the guidance, advice and recommendations (written or verbal) offered by tutors with regard to the most suitable option/institution/course of study available to you or to any other of your personal preparatory arrangements for the Year Abroad;
- You are expected to complete all paperwork within set deadlines and to respond in good time to any University, French Studies, School of Modern Languages and Cultures, or Study Abroad team communications (including e-mails) requiring a response; **failure to complete paperwork by the required deadlines will almost certainly jeopardise your year abroad**;

- You are expected to inform French Studies and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures of any major development, or change in circumstances, which may affect your Year Abroad arrangements;
- You are expected to familiarise yourself with details of the work (academic and other) you are to undertake whilst abroad, and with all relevant details regarding submission and assessment;
- You are expected to familiarise yourself with, and learn as much as you can about, the country and/or region of destination before you depart.

### **3.2. On arrival abroad**

You are expected to provide French Studies and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures with accurate details of where you are living and how you can be contacted. Remember to inform French Studies and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures of any changes in these details.

### **3.3. Whilst abroad**

- You are expected to abide by the laws, and show respect for the cultural traditions, of your host country;
- You are expected to respect the rules (including any health and safety advice) of your host institution (including any school or company you may be working for);
- You are expected to take responsibility for your own learning in developing your command of both spoken and written French, and for the development of your knowledge of the culture, history, traditions and social circumstances of the country in which you are staying;
- You are expected to undertake the work or programme of study agreed with French Studies (and where applicable the School of Modern Languages and Cultures) prior to your departure. This includes being aware of, and keeping up with, all assignments set for the Year Abroad, and ensuring that all work for assessment reaches French Studies in good order and within the set deadlines. You must also fulfil the School of Modern Languages' required contact points for the Year Abroad (see appendix 1);
- You are expected to respond in good time to any University, French Studies, School of Modern Languages and Cultures or Study Abroad team communications requiring a response;
- You are expected to notify French Studies, as well as relevant people/offices, of any major problems or emergencies;
- You are expected to notify French Studies and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures of any change in address or circumstances.

### **3.4. On your return to Warwick:**

You are expected to participate in all debriefing and assessment activities regarding your time abroad; if requested, you are expected to participate in briefing meetings held for departing students.

## **4. Options**

### **4.1 Preliminary Remarks**

#### **4.1.1 France or another francophone country/region?**

The vast majority of students will spend their Year Abroad in France. Should you wish to spend your Year Abroad in any other francophone country or region then you should discuss your intentions as early as possible with the lead Year Abroad Co-ordinator, in order to obtain **approval from French Studies**. You may not finalise your plans without such approval. Approval is likely to be given if:

- you can assure us that you will be living and working or studying in a **francophone environment**. This is not as straightforward as it looks: a student planning to work for an international company in Brussels, for

instance, may well end up speaking English 90% of the time at work, in their flat, and out on the town!

**and**

- you can show that there is **no unacceptable risk to your safety** (e.g. through acts of war or the threat of terrorism, kidnapping, natural disasters, etc.).

#### **4.1.2 Split Year arrangements:**

Students on joint language degrees (especially French and German, or French and post-A-level Italian) sometimes wish to explore the possibility of spending an equal amount of time in both countries, and no less than 3 months in any one country. If that is the case, you should discuss your plans early on with the Year Abroad Co-ordinators of BOTH language sections. You *may* be allowed to make split year arrangements, if the Year Abroad programme you propose is practically (and financially) feasible. In the past, split year arrangements have involved Erasmus exchange study placements: not all our partner universities are keen, however, on admitting students for just one semester, so you may find that your choice of Erasmus exchanges (or indeed which semester to spend in France) is restricted.

On the whole, there are **two principal pathways** for students spending their Year Abroad in France, i.e. work or study. Under these two categories there are further options you can consider.

## **4.2. Working in France**

### **4.2.1. Working as a language assistant in a (French) school**

This is the main avenue to spend a year in metropolitan France. There are also limited places available in other francophone countries or regions (Corsica, the Caribbean, Belgium, Switzerland). The posters, brochures and websites will tell you more, but here is a summary of the main pluses and minuses of the scheme.

#### Advantages:

- The placements are **fairly easy to organise**, since the assistantship scheme is run by a central, coordinating institution, the British Council.
- The assistantship gives you **valuable work experience** for your CV (people management, presentational skills, time management), **even if you do not intend to pursue a teaching career after graduating**.
- As a language assistant, you will **earn a regular and reasonable wage**, giving you a good degree of financial security during your time in France.
- The modest workload (usually 12 contact hours per week) is such that you have plenty of **spare time** to explore other aspects of French life.
- You can **express a preference** for the region where you wish to be allocated, the type of area (urban or rural) and the age group you'd like to work with (from primary school age children to adults).

#### Prerequisites:

- You need to be in possession of an EU passport.
- You need to have native-speaker command of English.
- You'll also need a good (confidential) reference from your Personal Tutor! References are arranged by the French Studies Office once you have handed in your application form.

#### Disadvantages:

- The scheme is not open to students older than 30, or to those with dependent children.
- You will not get to practice your French language skills as much as the other placements as most of your teaching will be done in English language.
- You do not have total control over the type of placement you will get, or over its location. **You might be based in the countryside or in an isolated location, so having a driving licence is essential.** But not ending up where you'd initially hoped you'd be, does not mean you cannot make a big success of your assistantship. *Bien au contraire!*

Application procedure:

The time schedule for completing applications online is tight. Instructions will be circulated early in the Autumn Term. Please read these carefully and respect the deadlines stipulated (you will normally need to complete the online application process by week 8 of the Autumn Term).

The British Council's online application process will be updated in October 2018 (see <https://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad/outside-uk/english-language-assistants>).

*Note 1:* The assistantship often seems an attractive pathway to a Year Abroad in Canada (Québec) – Potential applicants should note that the 35 or so language assistant posts are predominantly in **small towns in rural areas of the province**. There are only ever a few posts in Quebec City, and none in Montreal. Candidates should bear in mind the **severe winter temperatures, length of the winter, isolation of the towns where posts exist and limited network of public transport**. Moreover, although the salary is considerably higher than in France, **students will not qualify for either the Erasmus fee waiver or the Erasmus placement grant (see section 6.2, below, on financial arrangements for the Year Abroad)**. The same applies for the Caribbean.

So a year in Quebec as a language assistant is only likely to be a success for those who are particularly outgoing, adaptable, resourceful and communicative. If you are interested in this option, you should consult the further details and case studies available on the British Council website:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad/outside-uk/english-language-assistants/canada>

The standard contract for language assistant in French schools is for seven months.

#### **4.2.2 Other types of work placements (student-negotiated)**

French Studies allows **students to arrange their own work placement** (usually an internship or *stage*) in France. You will need a lot of energy and determination, and a clear idea of how your particular skills could make you employable abroad. Because of recent changes to French employment law, it is very likely that you will require two placements in order to successfully complete the Year Abroad. One placement may run for the current maximum length in France of six months, while the other may run, for two-three months (making eight-nine months in total). However, there are other financial implications which you should consider before choosing this pathway: the Erasmus Plus funding rules and regulations change on a regular basis and may mean that the placement a student is undertaking in January must be the final placement of the year. In other words, you may have to choose a shorter placement for the first three months of the Year Abroad and a longer placement from January. Placements (under current Erasmus Plus regulations) must last for a minimum

of three months to be eligible for funding. Please note that these regulations are decided by the European Union and therefore you should discuss these funding implications with the work placement co-ordinator.

If it is your intention to pursue this particular pathway, you must discuss your plans by the end of week 3 with the Year Abroad work placement co-ordinator and possibly your Personal Tutor. At any rate, you may not finalise your arrangements without the **agreement of French Studies (and, if necessary, the School of Modern Languages and Cultures)**. Your placement will have to be signed off by the French Studies work placement co-ordinator. Your plans are likely to be acceptable if:

- you can demonstrate you will be living and working in a **francophone** environment;
- the kind of work you intend to do has some **intellectual content** or particular challenge to it;
- your **employment conditions** will be safe and reasonable, and described in a written contract.
- You are aware of any financial implications the placement may have for you.

In the past most students have found office work, but they have worked in a variety of places, from banks, to the opera, television stations and voluntary organisations. **Jobs that are not likely to be acceptable as a Year Abroad programme are: working as an *au pair*; waiting tables in cafés or restaurants; heavy manual labour...**

Please note that a *stage* involves a **learner's contract** or **convention de stage**. As a **stagiaire** you are often not entitled to a full wage, so check whether your remuneration will actually cover your living expenses. If, for example, you will be living and working in Paris, your *stagiaire* wage of around €450 per month will not be sufficient to survive in Paris without additional financial support (e.g. Student Loan; Erasmus Plus grant).

You must **give French Studies a copy of your contract and Conditions of Employment, or of your *Convention de stage*, normally by week 5 of the summer term**. The University-approved model for the *convention* (in English and French) [is available at this link](#). The *Convention de Stage* is approved for the University by the Director of the Academic Office. The work placement will be approved internally by the work placement co-ordinator. Please note that your prospective employer must be happy to use the Warwick-approved *Convention de stage*. This is a non-negotiable requisite for the placement to be approved.

#### Advantages:

- Meeting a challenge like this one can be a real **bonus to your CV**.
- As the initiative rests with you, **you are in control** of your choice of area, and field of work.

#### Prerequisites:

- These will vary from placement to placement. Find out exactly what the job you are seeking entails. Also check with your prospective employer, and, if necessary the French Embassy, whether, in addition to your passport, you need a work permit and/or visa.
- You must be able to satisfy French Studies that your plans constitute a **serious and feasible Year Abroad programme** (see above).

#### Disadvantages:

- Work placements are **often hard to organise**. You may need to spend a lot of time making multiple applications, and this can be a frustrating process. Deals can fall through at quite an advanced stage of the application, even after you have in effect taken up the job.
- **You are responsible for negotiating acceptable work conditions and remuneration with your prospective employer.** *In the case of problems, you do not have recourse to a back-up institution like the British Council, a university's International Office etc.* French Studies will advise you as best it can but may only be able to offer you very limited help.

#### Application procedure:

You will need to tailor your application(s) according to the position you are seeking. The School of Modern Languages and Cultures Office keeps information on previous placements used by our students and details of any suitable posts in France signalled to the School of Modern Languages and Cultures in the course of the year will be conveyed by email to students known to be looking for work in France. Please make yourself known to the work placement co-ordinator by **Monday Week 3 of Term 1** so that they can forward you any information about possible placements. In general, it is advisable to seek a work placement with a large and/or reputable company or organisation which has previous experience with, or standard procedures for stagiaires (interns). [The University expects its students to receive a reasonable wage or remuneration for the work that they do, and in accordance with the law of the country they work in.](#) The Careers Centre have books and leaflets available and are able to offer assistance when seeking a placement. Please see contact details at the back of this booklet.

You must have a firm plan of a placement (e.g. an email exchange with the relevant employer) by the **beginning of week 5 term 1** at the latest and you must have contacted the work placement co-ordinator about it. This will give you sufficient time to apply to the British Council assistantship if you do not have any firm plans for the work placement.

### **4.3. Studying in France or Belgium**

#### **4.3.1 Erasmus Exchange Study Placements**

Like the language assistantships, the Erasmus Exchange study placements provide **a fairly straightforward way into France**. Placements are limited in number, but most years supply and demand are well matched to each other. Some exchanges are more popular than others, however, and **French Studies will usually have to arbitrate on the allocation of placements**.

If you are interested in the Erasmus exchange study programme, you should be aware that **life at French universities differs in many respects from student life at Warwick**. For instance, French students tend to have much less personal contact with their tutors; at the very least, contact is likely to be much more formal. Different emphases and approaches to teaching and studying will usually mean larger class sizes and more 'lecture' type classes than you are used to. Finally, many French students continue to live at home whilst attending university or return home for the weekend rather than stay at university for the whole term. This can make campuses and university residences very quiet places at the weekend! However, if you are an adaptable sort of person and ready to make friends right from the start, the Erasmus exchange study programme can offer you a unique insight into French culture, with much exposure to the French language.

#### Advantages:

- The scheme is **suitable for mature students**;
- Placements are longer than an assistantship, so you have more exposure to French language and culture;
- You are not liable for any tuition fees for the institution abroad;
- An Erasmus mobility grant covers most of the *extra* expense associated with living abroad;
- Your “transcript of studies” will be a worthwhile addition to your CV;
- The scheme lends itself to “Split Year” arrangements, for students on joint language degrees (restrictions apply: see section 4.1.2 above).

#### Prerequisites:

- You must be an EU citizen or the national of certain associated countries (check with the Study Abroad team if you are unsure).
- You must satisfy French Studies that you will be a worthy “ambassador” for Warwick, as the continuation of the exchanges depends largely on the good will of the partner institutions.

#### Disadvantages:

- There is a limited number of places;
- Despite the grant, you will still have to pay for most of your maintenance costs, in other words, your normal funding arrangements still apply;
- The differences in student and administrative culture can be a bit of a shock.

For 2018-19, French Studies at Warwick has exchanges with universities at Grenoble, Caen, Dijon, Paris (Paris-X, Nanterre and Paris-IV, Sorbonne, and Université de Paris Est Créteil), Montpellier, Bordeaux, Martinique, Strasbourg and Brussels (Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et Interprètes at Université Libre de Bruxelles). Occasionally French Studies students can use ‘dormant’ or unused exchanges that other departments have with French universities. If necessary, the Year Abroad Co-ordinators and the Study Abroad team can explore this possibility with you. Applications, once they have been allocated and approved by French Studies, are handled by the Study Abroad team, in close collaboration with French Studies.

Students planning on undertaking an Erasmus study placement should first fill in for French Studies the ‘Erasmus Study Placement Application Form’ that can be downloaded from the ‘Planning your year abroad’ page.

This form should be returned to the Outgoing Erasmus Exchange Coordinator and the overall Year Abroad Coordinator by **the deadline that will be communicated to you in the beginning of term**. You must also indicate your order of preference for all other universities, in case your first choice cannot be allocated. French Studies will review the list of candidates in terms of preference, suitability and available places (first-year exam performance across all modules will be the prime criterion). If you receive French Studies approval you will then finalise your application with the help of the Study Abroad team. This involves completing the enrolment and registration paperwork required by your host university in France. **Failure to complete this paperwork by the deadlines can jeopardise your Year Abroad and hence your degree.**

For the study programme you are required to undertake as an Erasmus Exchange Student, see appendix 2.

#### **4.3.2 Other types of study placements (student-negotiated):**

French Studies **very occasionally** allows **students to make their own study arrangements** in France. As for student-negotiated work placements, you will have to be well-motivated as well as demonstrate resilience and initiative. It can also be an expensive option.

You are advised to discuss your intentions early on with the relevant Year Abroad Coordinator, and possibly your Personal Tutor. At any rate, you may not finalise your arrangements without the agreement of the Department. Your plans are likely to be acceptable, if:

- you can demonstrate you will be living and studying in a **francophone** environment;
- the course or programme of study you intend to undertake will make **a real contribution to your personal and academic development**;
- there will be **no unacceptable risk to your safety and well-being**.
- you show awareness of the possible financial implications the placement may have for you.

If you choose to follow this pathway, various options are open to you. In the past, Warwick French students have taken courses at the University of London in Paris, at French Universities without Erasmus links and other specialist institutions including language schools.

- **University of London Institute in Paris:**  
ULIP is a satellite of the University of London; it therefore is quite separate - and different - from French universities and other French institutes of higher education. Please find out more up-to-date information from the web, <http://ulip.london.ac.uk/>, the French Studies notice board and/or the Year Abroad Coordinators.
- **French universities, and other institutes of higher education** (without Erasmus links): there is a range of literature and documentation you could consult to find out more about enrolling at a French university. You should try first the websites of the institutions concerned.

So as not to start searching blindly, it makes sense to **ponder, in advance, your motives** for wishing to make your own study arrangements, rather than opt for, say, an Erasmus study exchange or indeed a language assistantship. Make a list of what is important: type of course; the type of certificate you hope to obtain; region; reputation of the institute...

#### Advantages:

- As the initiative rests with you, **you are in control** of your choice of university/institute, region, course etc.
- If you choose a “*filière diplômante* », you can add an extra qualification to your CV.
- This arrangement **can be suitable for mature students** (finances permitting).

#### Prerequisites:

- These may **vary** from placement to placement. Find out exactly what the placement you are seeking entails.
- You must be able to satisfy French Studies that your plans constitute **a serious and feasible Year Abroad programme** (as detailed above).

#### Disadvantages:

- The placements can be **difficult to organise** in terms of practical and financial arrangements (see also the sections on 'Accommodation' and 'Finances').
- You may well be quite on your own 'out there', especially at the beginning, since there may not be any of your Warwick contemporaries at the same institute, or even in the same region. In the case of problems, you would not have recourse to the Study Abroad team in the same way that Erasmus students do; French Studies may only be able to offer you limited assistance.
- This can be an **expensive** option, as you will be liable to pay both the foreign institution's fees as well as the year abroad fee (15% of full fees) to Warwick; you will also not be eligible for the Erasmus grant; finally, your student loan for your tuition fees will not cover the fee payable to the institution abroad.

You can start **applying** once you have obtained approval from French Studies. Applications are your responsibility, although the Year Abroad Coordinator may be able to help.

**To sum up: language assistantships and Erasmus study placements are the most straightforward pathways for the Year Abroad in France. Erasmus study placements and any variations or alternative placements (split year; in other francophone country; student negotiated work or study placements) must carry the approval of French Studies.**

#### **5. Assessment of the Year Abroad:**

Many students worry about how their Year Abroad will "count" towards their degree. French Studies sets great store by offering its students a variety of options and flexibility in the students' Year Abroad programmes: how does one compare a successful language assistantship with, say, an Erasmus study exchange or a student-negotiated work placement? It is not possible to award a "separate mark" for your Year Abroad; many of the Year Abroad outcomes are at any rate not quantifiable.

This does not mean that your Year Abroad is immaterial to your university education: on the contrary, **it is an integrated part of the curriculum, that will help you acquire and develop the necessary skills and knowledge, which ultimately will enable you to graduate from our University.** In other words, the satisfactory completion of a serious Year Abroad programme is a course requirement, and failing to complete the normal minimum of 8 months abroad (or 7 months for language assistants) could put your degree in jeopardy (see "Programme Requirements"). Moreover, a number of assessment/evaluation methods and mechanisms are in place to help you (and us) gauge the progress you make by spending a year in the country whose language and culture you are studying.

They include the following:

- The **French language work** that you undertake whilst abroad is a form of coursework. The Year Abroad Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) will support you in your completion of this language work, which is subject to

formative assessment. You will submit your work and receive detailed constructive evaluation of it on the VLE.

- More generally, your **improved language and communication skills** should enhance your performance in the final-year language exams (e.g. orals), and so too will other aspects of your development contribute to, or filter through to, the final year's summative assessment (exams, essays, etc.).
- The **Year Abroad Report Form**, which you complete in the final term of your Year Abroad, will help you **reflect** on the contribution the Year Abroad experience has made towards your personal development.

**Placement providers** (the British Council, the school or company you work for, your host university) also play a role in the evaluation process. **Language assistants** normally receive an evaluation report from their school, and **those on other work placements** (internships, *stages*) should similarly **ask their manager for a report of their time with the company or institute**. Students on Erasmus exchanges or other study placements will benefit from the assessment procedures of their host university, and should obtain a **transcript of studies** (or a *diplôme*, or *certificat*, according to the kind of study programme you undertake).

## 6. Practical advice for all students going abroad

### 6.1 Paperwork

Getting the paperwork together for your Year Abroad, before you even set foot in France, can seem like a bureaucratic headache. It needn't be, as long as you try to be organised, and start in plenty of time. Here follows a list of the main documents you need to obtain or complete before leaving for France.

- **Confirmation of Warwick student status:** ensure that you take your **Warwick Student/Library Card** with you. If you anticipate that you will also require a letter confirming your student status i.e. that you are a full-time/part-time registered student studying for a (named) degree at Warwick, then please ask the Study Abroad team in good time before you leave.
- **Passport:** check you have a valid passport, which will not need renewing during your Year Abroad, and remember to take it with you. If renewal is needed, make sure you apply for it in good time. When in France, you are required by law always to carry identification on you.
- **Visas:** non-EU citizens may need a visa to enter France and/or to spend an extended period there. EU and non-EU citizens may similarly require a visa when working or studying in a non-EU country (e.g. Canada, Switzerland...) for an extended period. Check whether you need a visa with the French (Canadian, Swiss...) embassy/consulate, and, if necessary, apply for one in good time. **Note that this may change after the 31st of October.**
- If you drive, remember to take your **driving licence** with you. Check whether it will be valid in France: if you do not already have an international, or European driving licence, apply for one in good time. When driving in France, you should always carry your licence with you.
- If you are working, you may need a certified **translation into French of your FULL birth certificate**. Procedures for this have recently been

revised, and French public authorities now require a translation produced by an authorised translator in France (for which payment is required). The British Council will inform you of requirements in this respect prior to your departure.

- **ICPC (International Child Protection Certificate):** If you will be working as a British Council language assistant, you will need to apply for an ICPC before you go to France. You will receive further information on this procedure from the British Council in the summer term before your departure.
- **EHIC:** Before you leave, remember to **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 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 the relevant study placement coordinator in the SMLC. **Note that this may change after the 31st of October.**
- **Insurance:** you should make sure that you take out fully comprehensive insurance before you start your Year Abroad. Outbound Study Abroad students are eligible to be covered by the University of Warwick's Travel Insurance, details of which can be found here: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/finance/insurance/keypolicies/traveloverseas/> This is not, however, a health insurance, for which you should obtain separate cover. Alternatively, you may wish to obtain a complete insurance yourself. Prices vary and it is worth shopping around and reading the small print before purchasing. Points to consider:
  - Check whether the policy covers a *continuous* stay abroad and that it amply covers the entire period you will be in France. If the policy requires you to come back to the UK for a minimum period of, say, two weeks every three months, it is unlikely to be suitable.
  - If you lose any luggage, money, etc. it is essential to report the fact to the police at once in order to have the required documentation for the Insurance Company. The small print of your insurance documents will describe this procedure.
  - Make a note of the **serial numbers** of any cameras, laptops etc. you are taking abroad with you, and keep a list (with copies left in safe places) of the numbers of your **credit/debit cards**. Do not forget to note (in several places) the phone number(s) for the emergency cancellation of your cards in the case of loss or theft.
- **Health care:** make sure you seek advice from your regular GP with regard to personal and general health recommendations. If you require regular prescriptions or other special treatment you should carry a letter from your GP outlining your needs. Check with your insurance company and/or your employer whether you would be covered for any **pre-existing medical condition** you may have.
- **Photographs:** you are likely to need several passport-size photographs soon after you arrive in France, so take some spare photos with you. Having them to hand may save you a lot of time.

- **ISIC:** getting an International Student Identity Card in the UK will help you get discounts for cinema tickets, museums, and rail travel in France.
- **Photocopies:** it is advisable to take a photocopy of your passport, EHIC card, insurance policy and other vital documents, in case they should be damaged, lost or stolen while you are abroad. Keep them in a safe place, separately from the originals. Such photocopies are also often required by the local authorities, so take them along when you are dealing with your residence permit, etc.
- **E-mail:** You are required to keep your Warwick e-mail address going, even whilst you are abroad. If you wish to use any other e-mail provider, you should set up an adequate forwarding system from your Warwick e-mail address.

**Please note that students who forward e-mail to external email accounts which quickly become full risk missing important communications from their department and the University. If you choose to access your University email in this way you should be aware of the need to manage your external account carefully.**

- **Final-Year Accommodation:** if you wish to apply for **campus accommodation for your final year at Warwick**, the Accommodation Office will be in touch with all students during the Year Abroad.

**The list above does not include any placement-specific documents**, such as Erasmus learning agreements, or those relating to the allocation of language assistantships, etc. (for such documents, you can use the relevant **checklist in the Erasmus handbook** that the Study Abroad team will give you around the end of the Spring Term of your second year)

## **6.2 Financial arrangements**

Some frequently asked money questions:

### **Q: What fees will I pay to Warwick?**

All students on the year abroad will be charged a fee at the rate of 15% of full fees to Warwick (£1,350 for 2018-19) but for full details, please see the following link: [https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/finance/fees/study\\_abroad\\_fees\\_18-19.pdf](https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/finance/fees/study_abroad_fees_18-19.pdf) Home/EU students in receipt of a Warwick National Scholarship will receive a fee waiver to cover the year abroad fee.

Those on an Erasmus study exchange will not have to pay fees to the university they are attending abroad.

### **Q. Will I continue to receive my student loan (and maintenance grant)?**

If you are currently eligible for a student loan then normally you will still be able to claim this during your Year Abroad. However, if you choose to work as a language assistant, or undertake a work placement, then you may not be eligible for the full amount of the loan because Student Finance England (SFE) may take your salary into account. Moreover, if you currently receive **any additional**

**payment for maintenance reasons** (i.e. the former maintenance grant) in addition to your loan, it is likely that you will either receive a significantly reduced amount or nothing of this at all if you are being paid a salary while in France. If you are concerned about this you should check with the Student Loans Company (SLC) on the precise financial implications of your proposed year abroad plan before committing to it. If you do receive a bursary or grant in addition to your loan and wish to continue to do so then you may find it most financially advantageous to opt for an Erasmus study placement because if you do you will normally continue to receive your maintenance grant.

If you choose to do a **non-Erasmus**, independently organised student placement, you will not be eligible for a tuition fee loan from the UK Government to cover the fees of the institution abroad.

If you are considering such a pathway, you should check in advance on its financial implications.

### **Q. Are there any additional sources of funding?**

In addition to your student loan (and, in some cases, maintenance grant and bursary), the main source of funding for the Year Abroad is the **Erasmus Plus scheme**, which forms part of the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme. The Erasmus Plus scheme provides a mobility grant for eligible students who undertake Year Abroad placements that meet its criteria (approx. €400 per month in 2018-19 for students studying in France and around €450 per month for those working). This **Erasmus Plus grant** is intended to provide some **extra help** with the additional costs of living abroad but it will not be nearly enough to cover all your expenses during the year so you should still make whatever financial arrangements you would normally make in preparation for a year of university study. **Note that this may change after the 31st of October.**

The level of the Erasmus Plus grant is set each year by the UK national agency and in principle can vary significantly, up or down, from one year to the next, so please bear this in mind. Unfortunately past experience tells us that the exact level of the grant is not usually set until the summer immediately before you leave for France. There may also be a delay between you commencing your Year Abroad and the payment of Erasmus Plus grants. Normally the level of the grant for work placements (including language assistantships) is slightly more than the level for study placements. The amount of grant for the year may be paid in two or three instalments. This first instalment should be during the first few weeks after you arrive in France and your host university, school or employer has confirmed your arrival and completion dates. Please note that **not all students and not all placements are eligible for Erasmus Plus scheme funding**. Please continue reading the answers to the next three questions to find out more.

### **Q. Am I eligible for Erasmus Plus scheme funding?**

If you are an EU national working as a language assistant within the EU, or undertaking an Erasmus Plus eligible work placement within the EU, or undertaking an Erasmus study placement, then you will be eligible for the Erasmus Plus grant. Non-EU nationals and students working as language assistants or on other work placements outside the EU (e.g. Canada, Switzerland, Senegal) are not eligible for the grant. Please note that there are additional eligibility criteria for work placements that are covered in the answer to the next two questions. **Note that this may change after the 31st of October.**

### **Q. Is my work placement eligible for Erasmus Plus funding?**

Not all work placements are eligible for Erasmus funding. Your placement must take place within the EU and it must be at least 3 months long. Since we require you to spend a minimum of 8 months abroad if you are undertaking a work placement, this will not normally be a problem. However, if you are undertaking multiple placements in order to make up the 8 months and you wish to qualify for an Erasmus grant you should ensure that each placement lasts **a minimum of 3 months** and that they are **consecutive** (that there are no gaps between placements). Funding is normally available for a maximum of 12 months. If in doubt you should discuss this with the Year Abroad Coordinator responsible for work placements. Please note that under current (subject to change) Erasmus Plus funding guidelines, you should notify the Study Abroad team before the January of the year in question whether you intend to complete any further placements later that year (e.g. after completion of the BC assistantship, if you wish to work at an eligible placement over the summer). **Note that this may change after the 31st of October.**

### **Q. Do I need to complete any paperwork to qualify for Erasmus Plus scheme funding?**

Yes, and you must do so by the required deadlines. The Erasmus Plus scheme is mainly administered by our Study Abroad team (based in University House). You will be required to complete an Erasmus training agreement and if you are on a student-negotiated work placement then you will also have to provide the Study Abroad team with a copy of your contract, if you have one, and your completed *Convention de stage*. If you are on a study placement then you will also have to complete additional paperwork once you arrive at the host university. You should check on the Study Abroad team website about additional paperwork they may require. **Note that this may change after the 31st of October.**

### **Q. Do I pay French tuition fees if I have arranged my own study placement?**

If you are undertaking a student-negotiated work placement you will normally also take on any tuition fees that may be levied in France (unless you have successfully applied for any grants that may be available) and, in addition, you will have to pay the standard year abroad fee (15% of full fees) to Warwick. Please note also, as mentioned in section 4.3.2 above, that you will not be eligible for a tuition fee loan from the UK Government to cover the fees of the institution abroad.

### **Q. Can Warwick help me with the cost of my year abroad?**

Unfortunately, French Studies does not have additional funds available to assist with students' expenses relating to the year abroad. If you are in severe financial difficulty then you may be eligible for a hardship loan, either from the Student Loans Company, or from the University's hardship fund. Contact the Student Funding Team for more information:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/funding>

**Make sure you have a clear idea of where you stand financially well before you leave. Consider right from the start what financial implications your preferred Year Abroad programme may have, and check with the relevant offices about any figures, payments, or arrangements you are not sure of.**

## Money matters

You will need to **take money with you** to tide you over until either your loan/grant comes through or until your first wages are paid (they could be delayed). Apart from basic living costs this amount will need to cover any registration fees and accommodation/rent; you are likely to have to pay two months' rent in advance, as well as a deposit. You should take some of this money in **cash**, in Euros; it may be handy to have some banknotes in small denominations as well as small change on arrival. For the bulk of this money, you would do better to provide other means of payment:

- **Credit/debit cards** can be used for payments in large shops, as well as in many hotels and restaurants. A number of bankcards and credit cards (Maestro and VISA in particular) can also be used with the right PIN (*code*) to draw money from cashpoints in France directly from your account in the UK. Check with your bank on the costs involved. Also make sure that you have made all necessary arrangements to pay your credit card bill when it arrives every month at your home address in the UK.
- **Money can be transferred** (by your parents, or whoever you decide to employ for the purpose) by International Money Order, or by direct transfer from a UK bank to any French bank of your choice, where it can be withdrawn in the form of cash. Service charges will normally apply.
- You can open a **French bank account** and have your bank or your agents (normally your parents) transfer your money, grant, etc. directly into it. Ask your UK bank, in good time, whether it has a special arrangement with any particular French bank (ask to speak to the Branch manager or the International Accounts Manager and explain your situation). You will require proof of identity, address and income (or student status) to open an account. If you are working in France, check with your employer (school) how your salary will be paid, before opening an account locally.

Finally, bear in mind that life in the major cities, especially Paris, and tourist areas is likely to be expensive. So, go easy on the spending, especially at the beginning. Should you be **in real financial difficulties**, you can apply for a hardship loan from the Students Loan Company. You can also contact Student Funding at Warwick to apply for their emergency loan (currently £500). It is also advisable to enquire about loans and overdrafts with your UK bank, before leaving. In some cases, e.g. if your wages are paid late, it is possible to arrange a temporary overdraft with a French bank: explain your situation and show them your *arrêté de nomination* (allocation of a language assistantship), or any other relevant document. Unauthorised overdrafts are illegal under French law.

### 6.3 Contacting your host institution

As soon as you have the details of your placement (*arrêté de nomination* for language assistants), you should contact the school, university, institution or workplace where you will be spending your Year Abroad. Try to find out who the *responsable* is, within the organisation, for a placement like yours (*assistant d'anglais, étudiant Erasmus, stagiaire* etc.). You may wish to clarify a number of points, or simply touch base. It is also a good idea to ask them whether they can offer you any accommodation (or can help you find any), and to alert them of when you intend to arrive. Remember, however, that contact with the *responsable* is likely to be much more formal than the (normally) friendly, personalised "service" you get at Warwick. So be polite and keep to the point.

It is worth emailing or telephoning the **local tourist office** to ask for a town map, a plan of bus routes, and some details of the area, so that it will be easier to find your way around. Much of this information is also increasingly available on the web.

## **6.4 Arranging accommodation**

Finding accommodation for your Year Abroad is possibly one of the most stressful aspects of the whole experience. It can be difficult, time-consuming and expensive. This section seeks to give you some idea of what you can expect when looking for accommodation in France so that you can go abroad fore-warned and fore-armed. You may find it easier to use the online version if you are investigating websites (see the link on the right-hand side of the 'Planning your Year Abroad' page). The information on these pages is largely compiled from student responses to an accommodation questionnaire sent out during the year abroad. You will receive a copy of this questionnaire when you are abroad and do please take the time to respond in full as this is the only way that we can provide accurate and up-to-date advice for outgoing students.

### **Private accommodation**

#### **How to find private accommodation**

Visit letting agencies; read the local press; telephone places advertised in the press; look for adverts on notice boards (in schools, local businesses, etc); go by word of mouth – use whatever local contacts you can find at your school, university or work place. If going on a study placement, it can be useful to make friends with the students who have come to Warwick from your future host-institution.

#### **What can you do before you go abroad?**

Look at web sites that may have useful information: [www.cidj.com](http://www.cidj.com), <http://www.unhaj.org/>, [www.anil.org](http://www.anil.org), <http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/>, [www.pap.fr](http://www.pap.fr), [www.jannonce.fr](http://www.jannonce.fr), [www.alouer.com](http://www.alouer.com), [www.leboncoin.fr](http://www.leboncoin.fr), [www.centralparisrentals.com](http://www.centralparisrentals.com), <http://www.estudines.com/uk/>, <http://www.mon-logement-etudiant.fr/>, <http://www.pasdecalais-habitat.fr/>

You should obviously bear in mind that it can be difficult to get a real sense of a place simply by looking at pictures on a web page. Be aware, that there is always the possibility of fraud with offers of accommodation advertised and reserved online, as students have found in the past, and you should be suspicious if asked to hand over a large amount of cash without the security of a contract.

If you are interested in a flat- or house-share ('*colocation*'), you can look on: <http://www.colocation.fr/recherche.php>, <http://www.colocforum.net/>, <http://www.appartager.com/>

## When should you start looking?

One to two weeks before you start work should be long enough to find somewhere to live, but it is likely to be a very busy, stressful, and potentially expensive time. Some students have found they needed to return for repeat visits before they could find something suitable. Bear in mind, too, that if you are based in a university town, the local students may already have taken many of the available rooms and apartments by the end of August.

You might look at a dozen or more properties before you find something suitable. In some places, especially smaller towns, there may be quite a limited supply of furnished apartments (*meublés*), which could further lengthen your search – it would obviously be very expensive to furnish your own flat and very impractical to bring your own furniture with you. You are also advised not to sign a contract for the whole year without having seen the accommodation and having satisfied yourself that you are happy with all arrangements. Deposits and rent paid in advance may make it difficult to change, so explore various possibilities and look around before deciding.

If possible get a French pay-as-you-go mobile before you start phoning around – one student accumulated a bill of £570 on her UK mobile! Under EU legislation, roaming charges within the EU have been abolished, so you could continue to use your UK phone, but bear in mind that costs of making calls to French numbers may still be relatively high.

## Cost

Rents: Rents can obviously vary widely depending on the type of accommodation sought and the area. Our recent students abroad have typically paid rents in a range somewhere between €300 and €700 per month (though students in Paris have paid more).

Here are some examples of rents according to property type and location for the most recent year's cohort available. Those renting rooms in University residences have paid €241 (Dijon), 325€ (Amiens) and €400 (Strasbourg). Students rented rooms in Foyers de Jeunes Travailleurs for €323 (Picardy) and €482 (Nancy); those renting apartments as flatshares paid 300€ (excluding bills) in Rouen; €350 in Savoie, €168 in Lille, €430 in Nantes, and 325 dollars in St-Georges, Quebec. Lodging with a landlord cost 200€ in Rouen, while accommodation provided by the school for a language assistant cost €111 in Soissons. Paris tends to be more expensive: one student paid €770 for an apartment in central Paris, but recommended the investment since the cheaper areas are also known to be less safe. Rooms with landlords in Paris can be much cheaper (€300-€350).

Note that hard copies of recent accommodation responses to the end of year report form are available in the School office.

Deposit: you should typically expect to pay one month's rent as a security deposit, sometimes two. Some landlords may demand a month's rent in advance *as well as* a deposit.

Agency fees: these can often be equivalent to another month's rent.

Financial assistance (normally *allocation de logement*) is often available for students and those on low income from the Caisse d'Allocations Familiales (CAF, <http://www.caf.fr/>). You have to pay your rent in advance and then apply for a rebate. As examples of the potential savings involved, from a rent in university halls of €200 per month, one student got back 90€ per month; another student paying rent for private accommodation of €490 received €190 back each month (figures from 2010-11); a student paying 300€ a month for a shared flat in Martinique received 80€ back each month.

### Administration

You are likely to need a lot of documentation in order to rent a property in France. This may include: your *arrêté de nomination* stating your posting as a language assistant in a local school; your passport; a French bank account with a *relevé d'identité bancaire* or *R.I.B.*; a letter confirming that your parents will pay your rent if you cannot, and documentation of the last 3 years of income for your parents.

If you rent private accommodation in France, whether from a landlord or in a foyer, you should note that you may be expected to pay **taxe d'habitation** in the region of €400 for the year, in addition to your rent. You should find out from your prospective landlord whether or not this tax is already included in the rent before you sign the contract and the contract should stipulate whether or not it is so included. If the tax is not included in the rent then you are likely to be billed by the French authorities shortly after the end of your contract term.

The majority of agencies and many landlords will require you to provide a guarantor with a French bank account in case you should default on payment of your rent – this is considered to be a legal requirement. If you explain your situation, the agency may waive this requirement and accept a transfer of funds from a UK account as payment of deposit. Some people, but not all, may accept a family friend with a French bank account as guarantor. There are companies and organisations that specialise in providing guarantor services for foreign nationals seeking accommodation in France and that will act as guarantor if the necessary paperwork is filled in between the tenant and the landlord. For some types of accommodation, you may be required to take out a particular form of insurance — if so, check carefully whether or not you are signing up for a repeat payment (some students found that they were being chased by a debt collection agency after their return to Warwick).

Agencies may also require you to have a French bank account in order to pay your rent, but typically you will not be able to open a bank account without a French address, thus finding yourself in a Catch-22 situation. The only real way around this is to explain your situation patiently to both the bank and the letting agency and show them proof of your status as employee or student in the hope that they will be willing to show some flexibility. It can take a little while to set up a bank account so, if at all possible, it is worth going to France in August to search for accommodation and open an account at that stage, so that it will be ready to receive your salary and pay your rent when you start work in September/October.

There are plenty of landlords who are more relaxed about administration and will not require a guarantor, but you may have to look for longer, and ask around locally, in order to find one. Similarly, some agencies (especially in larger, university towns) will have experience of dealing with foreign applicants and may be able to suggest solutions or direct you towards landlords.

## University halls of residence

If you are going on an Erasmus exchange to a French university, you may be offered a room in a hall of residence. Currently, Montpellier, Caen, Dijon and Grenoble offer rooms in residence; Bordeaux, Martinique and Paris IV do not. Paris X may offer campus accommodation, but students are advised not to take it for reasons of security.

French university halls of residence tend to be very basic in comparison to British residences, and the older ones may look quite dilapidated. Occasionally, students have had concerns about security, as campus buildings are unlikely to be as secure in France as they are in the UK. You will probably get a basic study bedroom with toilet and bathroom facilities on a shared corridor. Kitchen facilities will be minimal, if they are present at all: expect no more than a single hot plate for heating pre-prepared dishes, and no fridge. This is because most French students are expected to eat in the campus cafeteria (the '*restau-U*') and go home at weekends. Kitchens will certainly not serve as communal gathering-spaces in the same way that they do in UK residences. As a result, some students have found French residences to be rather anti-social places.

The great advantage of student residences in France is that they are usually very cheap — sometimes as little as €240 per month (although some are considerably more). They are also obviously very practically located and many students have spent a perfectly happy year living in them. Some residences are nicer than others, and it may be a good idea to contact current and former students abroad for advice — although you may find that the university does not give you a choice of residence.

Note for students going to Caen: university accommodation is automatically allocated until the end of May. However, exams take place in June. Make sure you **state on your application that you need accommodation until the end of June** in order to be able to sit the exams and try to avoid their Le Bisey residence if you can. Note, however, that students in the past have found it easier and more agreeable to stay in private rented accommodation in town rather than in the university accommodation at Caen.

## Language assistants

Rooms in school: language assistants are sometimes offered rooms to rent in or near to the school where they will be working. These are usually similar to university study bedrooms although sometimes they may be more like full apartments. This is usually quite a cheap option — recently, for example, students were paying in the region of €195 per month for this type of accommodation, including bills.

The advantages of living in this type of accommodation are that it is generally cheap and practical; there will often be other school staff living in the same building which may give more of a sense of belonging to the school. The contract is usually informal without the need for extensive documentation.

Be wary, however, of sharing with other English-language assistants in the school or town, as this is likely to limit your exposure to French.

Lodging with a family: if you wish to lodge with a French family, it is probably best to ask around at your school or place of work for a personal recommendation. In this scenario, you will typically have a bedroom of your

own, however one student had the whole floor of a house with a private bathroom! Rents in this case will usually include bills and meals: typical rates are between €200 and €350. With this type of arrangement, there is often no formal contract, no deposit, and no particular documentation required. You have the advantage of speaking French all the time and experiencing French family life, and your hosts are likely to be a useful source of local knowledge and will provide you with company, which may help to combat homesickness. On the other hand, this option is probably not for you if you value your independence very highly.

### **Some remarks on specific locations**

Corsica: many landlords and agencies in Corsica are seemingly wary of foreigners and unwilling to let to British people. Also, properties are often let for a minimum of three years, so a year or part-year contract will not be considered. There also appear to be very few furnished flats available. The Institut Régional d'Administration de Bastia (école de formation professionnelle de fonctionnaires) often has lists of apartments in the town to let to students of the school. The Vieux Port area of Bastia comes particularly highly recommended.

Grenoble: in Grenoble, go to the Espace Logement Etudiant (which can be found on Boulevard Agutte Sambat – off the corner of Place Victor Hugo, towards a big Habitat shop) which has noticeboards with lots of accommodation offers, maps, information and computers for use in finding somewhere to live. Areas recommended to look for accommodation, aside from the city centre, are Ile Verte and Flandrin Valmy. The city's Youth Hostel has been described as "very nice and fairly cheap" and may be a good accommodation option while you are looking for a permanent room. It is however situated some way out of the centre and so may not be convenient for very long.

Martinique: students found the local paper, the 9.7.2, very useful in finding accommodation. Accommodation can usually be found in Schoelcher, the town next to the island capital, Fort-de-France, in proximity to the university. Students are advised to avoid staying in Fort-de-France itself.

La Réunion: useful information is available in *Le Quotidien gratuit*, a free local paper with lots of small ads that comes out every Thursday.

## **6.5 Travel arrangements**

### **Tickets**

Shop around for advice and quotes on any international travel deals available. Find out what the best way and times to travel are, and whether you are eligible for discounts. Discuss your requirements with the travel agent of your choice as soon as your placement details have been confirmed. Think about when and if you want to book return tickets: returns are mostly cheaper, and travel over the Christmas and Easter periods is often heavily booked in advance. Consider the type of ticket you purchase and ask about conditions of purchase. Retain receipts and/or tickets for future reference.

## What to pack?

Apart from your toothbrush and the necessary paperwork, it is entirely up to you how and what you pack! Think ahead about what you might need, how much luggage you are allowed to take, and how much you can handle if travelling on your own. Is it possible to send a suitcase or trunk separately? And, not unimportantly, have you got the wherewithal to transport your documents and wallet safely?

Just two practical tips: it is advisable to include

- **A medical kit:** with some plasters, disinfectant, bandages, pain-killers and cold/flu medicine, a remedy against diarrhoea, your regular medication (if any),... as well as a spare pair of glasses, and a spare prescription for contact lenses. Be careful: some medicines that are registered in one country, are not necessarily legal in another (especially outside the EU): if you are unsure, check it out well before you travel to avoid any unpleasantness with customs officers.
- **A sheet sleeping bag** (fold a sheet in half and sew up the side): if you have a room in a school or hall of residence there may be blankets, but you will not always have linen provided.

Note: some further advice related to specific types of placements (Language Assistantships, Erasmus) can be found in the Appendices.
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## II. Whilst abroad

### 1. On arrival:

1. When you arrive in France, you should **report immediately to the relevant office or responsable**. They will be able to offer you invaluable advice on what to do next. Remember that their availability will normally be limited to office hours (9.00-12.30 ; 1.30-5.00), or school hours (ca. 8.30-16.00), Monday to Friday. Moreover, your arrival is likely to coincide with one of the busiest times in the year – so don't waste their time. If you arrive at the week-end, you may have to stay temporarily in a hotel, youth hostel, or *chambre d'hôte*.

2. Finalise your **registration** (as a student) or, if you are working, your work contract or **convention de stage**. Language assistants: get your **arrêté de nomination** signed by the school. All those in employment must fill in their **Social Security forms** at the same time, so you are insured.

3. Familiarise yourself with your surroundings and finalise your **accommodation** arrangements. Make sure to get an **attestation de logement** (proof of where you are living, signed by the school/landlord): you need this document for the Social Security, to open a bank account.

4. Open a local **bank account**, if you think you need one (all language assistants do). Get copies of your **relevé d'identité bancaire (R.I.B.)**: you will need it for your wages to be paid in time. Language assistants also need it to claim back travel costs for the *stage*.

**5. Carte de séjour:** EU nationals do not immediately require a *carte de séjour* for living and working in France for a period of up to one year. In the event you do require a *carte de séjour* it is advisable to apply for this at your local *prefecture*. You may need it in certain circumstances (for example if you are taking a long-haul flight from France, particularly to the US). Take all documents with you and be ready to queue for hours. Once you have applied, you will get a temporary document (*récépissé*), which you then swap for your *carte de séjour* after about two months. Students have reported, however, that the *carte de séjour* costs about 25 Euros; so, unless you need it to claim back rent or jet off to far-flung places (see above), it may not be worth changing your *récépissé* for the real thing as long as you are an EU national (EU nationals have the right to work abroad for one year with no other documentation than their passport). If you do eventually need the *carte de séjour*, you can pick it up as and when you need it.

N.B. Non-EU nationals are advised to check the conditions for working in France with the French embassy, *before* leaving the UK.

6. Setting up a **telephone**: this is very easy to do, by going to a France Telecom Shop. You can rent a telephone very cheaply and get a 'Friends and Family'-type discount. You will need proof of address and bank account details. If you intend to use a mobile phone, check on all the charges that apply for national and international calls – it is likely to be cheaper to get a phone that works on a French network, rather than making international calls via a UK-registered mobile. It may simply be cheaper and easier to purchase a pay as you go mobile on a French network. Similarly, find out locally what the best options are for Internet access (necessary for access to the Departmental website and your Warwick e-mail).

7. Do not forget to let French Studies (and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures) know your **full contact details in France** (including phone numbers and e-mail address – the latter should be your Warwick e-mail).

## 2. Academic work requirements

All students reading for a degree involving French at Warwick are required to undertake a number of academic tasks whilst abroad, so that their learning of the French language and culture can be monitored and enhanced. This language work also prepares you for your final-year language modules. (This work is in addition to the programme of study you may already be undertaking at a French university, ULIP etc.) The tasks are provided before departure and can be viewed through the Year Abroad Moodle page. **Make sure you follow these instructions when you are abroad as well as the calendar with the deadlines for the submission of work.**

Students who are on a joint language degree and do not spend their Year Abroad (or only part of it) in France are also required to undertake similar tasks.

## 3. Advice on language development

In general, **take every opportunity to hear, speak, read and write French.** Make an effort to speak French at all times (so try not to stick with your English-speaking friends all the time). Read at least one weekly magazine and newspaper regularly. Go to the theatre and cinema if you can afford it. Listen to the radio and watch television selectively if you can. Above all, make as many French friends as you can, and listen and talk to them as much as possible. Be sensitive to accents, regional idiosyncrasies, and non-verbal forms of communication. Try to write exercises, essays or letters in French, and have a French friend correct them for you in exchange for correcting his/her work in English.

One particular stumbling block in communicating in French, is finding the right form of address. First impressions do count! When meeting someone or when writing a letter to him/her, it is important from the very beginning of the encounter to strike the right chord on the register scale. First words create first impressions and will therefore affect the subsequent attitude of your correspondent or interlocutor. The tables below are meant to help you set off on the right footing.

NB: Testing these tables against the practices you actually encounter in France could be a useful part of your oral/aural language work. You may also wish to note when and with whom people shake hands and/or exchange kisses (on the cheek).

## 1) FORMS OF ADDRESS

In speech	INFORMAL	STANDARD	FORMAL
On meeting	Salut!  Tu vas bien? Vous allez bien?  (Comment) ça va? Ça marche? Ça boum? Ça gaze?	Bonjour, Monsieur/ M a d a m e / Mademoiselle/ jeune homme etc. Comment vas-tu? Comment allez-vous?	Monsieur/Madame se porte bien?
On leave-taking	Salut! Ciao! Tchao!	au revoir (Monsieur/ M a d a m e / Mademoiselle) au plaisir (de vous revoir) bonne journée / soirée à bientôt à tout de suite à la semaine prochaine, etc. bon retour bon voyage bonne route bonne chance	Adieu (very dramatic or regional)
In letter	INFORMAL	STANDARD	FORMAL
Introduction	Cher Jean/Chère Jeanne	Cher Monsieur/ Chère M a d a m e / Mademoiselle [after first contact] Mon cher Jean/Ma chère Jeanne Cher (Chère) Collègue	M o n s i e u r / M a d a m e / Mademoiselle,  M o n s i e u r / l e Directeur/ le Premier Ministre/le Président
Conclusion	à bientôt grosses bises salut	" f o r m u l e    d e politesse" amicalement	" f o r m u l e    d e politesse" (see letter-writing instructions from second-year language and oral classes).

**2) VOUSOIEMENT - TUTOIEMENT** : *Examples of the use of tu and polite vous*

<b>Context</b>	<b>Typical usage by two speakers</b>
Adult strangers meeting for the first time in formal contexts: e.g. business meetings, interviews, dealing with state administration and services.	Both use <b>vous</b> , often adding Monsieur or Madame (Monsieur/Madame Dupont is regarded as less formal).
Adults meeting in informal contexts: e.g. neighbours, socialising, shopping.	Initially both use <b>vous</b> , but with continued contact it is likely that they will change to <b>tu</b> , especially with young adults (under 40)
Professional superior and inferior; university teachers and students	Generally both use <b>vous</b> , but in some organisations the inferior may use <b>vous</b> , and the superior <b>tu</b>
Professional equals	Both use <b>tu</b> , but older speakers (50-ish or over) may use <b>vous</b>
Immediate family	Both use <b>tu</b>
Distant relatives: e.g. second cousins, great aunts/uncles, etc.	Both use <b>tu</b> , but there is a tendency to use <b>vous</b> when older family members are involved
Friends	Typically <b>tu</b> but older speakers (50-ish or over) may use <b>vous</b> . This does not necessarily indicate less warmth in the friendship.
Adults to young children	Adults use <b>tu</b> to young children up to early adolescence. When very young they will respond with <b>tu</b> , but as they grow older they are expected to learn when and where <b>vous</b> is required of them.
Teachers and pupils	Teachers typically use <b>tu</b> to children under 14 and <b>vous</b> to older pupils, but some teachers continue to use <b>tu</b> , either to express their superiority over their pupils, or solidarity with them. The younger the teacher, the greater the likelihood that <b>tu</b> will be used. Pupils typically use <b>vous</b> to teachers, occasionally <b>tu</b> . Under tens are rarely expected to say <b>vous</b> to their teacher. At university it is always <b>vous</b> .
Students	Both use <b>tu</b> from the first meeting.

**4. Careers: making the most of your Year Abroad**

For many, the Year in France will be the highlight of their degree course, a truly formative experience. Indeed, your Year Abroad, as well as being fun, can offer you **opportunities to develop your career**.

When it comes to making applications for graduate jobs and work experience, recruiters look for evidence that you would make an effective employee. Many students use their experiences on a Year Abroad to back up their claims to have the necessary profile and skills. You will get the chance to **develop skills** such as:

- **Adaptability:** as you are only there for an academic year, you will need to get used to life in France pretty quickly, demonstrating you can cope with change and adjust to new situations.
- **Problem-solving:** day-to-day challenges like finding your way around a new town and a new university/school/workplace will test your analytical skills and resilience.
- **Communication:** using another language in a range of social and academic settings will help you develop your interpersonal skills.
- **Confidence:** many students see the main benefit of their Year Abroad in the development of their self-belief.

If you are **working** in France, you will also be developing more job-specific skills: as a teaching assistant, you may develop leadership qualities and people management. If you work in an office, you may gain a valuable insight in administration, learn to adopt the right telephone manner etc.

If you are **studying** in France, a careful choice of courses may help you acquire new kinds of knowledge, or teach you new approaches to learning (see the guidelines on selecting your programme of studies). Make sure to bring back a *transcript of studies*: you can add it to your CV.

Some of those who opt to study during their Year Abroad take **part-time** jobs. This is allowed by French Studies, so long as the job conditions are fair and safe, and the job does not interfere with your agreed programme of study. French Studies will not be in a position to assist you in this, however.

**Being aware of this learning** whilst it is happening helps you to make the most of it later, so it is useful to **keep a diary or some notes** of how you are developing. Forums on the Year Abroad Moodle page will regularly prompt you to undertake this kind of reflection. Being in a new environment also gives you a chance to learn things about yourself, such as how you respond to change and to specific situations. This can provide useful insights for the future when you are making decisions about what sort of work you would want to do. You may find it is your calling to stand in front of a class.

If you think you might want to work in France in the longer term, your Year Abroad gives you the chance to track down information, which may not be available on your return. Make the most of your time in France to **develop contacts** and **find out how French organisations operate**, especially their recruitment practices and their views of UK graduates. Things to find out include:

- Which organisations typically recruit graduates? What skills and qualifications do they look for?
- Which sectors are recruiting well at the moment? What jobs are advertised for English native speakers?
- How and when should you apply? Where are vacancies advertised? What documentation will you need? What do a French CV and letter of application look like?
- Check local papers, university notice boards, recruitment agencies...
- Talk to your fellow-students, colleagues, friends, landlords etc. The grapevine is a great source of information.
- Are there any professionally qualified people whom you might ask for a job reference (*références*, f. pl.)? Ask them whether they would be willing to act as your referee (*pouvoir fournir des références*), how and when you should contact them, and what supplementary information they might need.
- Keep a record: it might be one or two years before you need this information.

## 5. Safety and welfare issues

During your Year Abroad you will learn many things beyond just improving your language skills. The learning experiences will differ according to your individual background and personality as well as the Year Abroad programme you have chosen. No doubt you will have both positive and negative experiences. It is the latter kind that the following paragraphs want to address, in order to promote well-being and enjoyment in the Year Abroad.

Your welfare during your Year Abroad is of prime concern to French Studies and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures. French Studies and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures will do everything in their power to

help you deal with problems, or - better still - to prevent problems from occurring. Often too the British Council, the Study Abroad team at Warwick or our partner university, or even your employer can offer help and advice. In most cases, however, **you** are best placed (and can reasonably be expected) to sort things out. When problems do occur, follow the procedures set out under point 6, “problems and queries” (page 33).

### Come prepared!

- Did you check you have the **appropriate insurance(s)** to cover illness, accidents, etc. both whilst you are at work/studying and during your leisure-time?
- If you are working (as an assistant or otherwise), did you check that your **contract or “convention de stage”** gives a clear work description and stipulates working conditions? When in doubt, clarify these in advance, or with a *responsable* at the earliest opportunity.
- Did you bring a **list of useful addresses and telephone numbers**, not just those of friends (incl. French Studies and the School of Modern Languages and Cultures) and family (to keep in touch), but also that of the British Embassy and British Consulate (e.g. in case your passport is stolen), your bank and credit card company (e.g. in case you lose your payment card) etc.? Make a duplicate to keep in a safe place.
- Did you bring your **regular medication**? A spare pair of glasses? ...

### Personal Safety

When it comes to personal safety, *prevention* is the best remedy. Whilst women students are often perceived to be at greater risk, the following advice is intended for both **men and women**.

Basically, for your Year Abroad, the same ground-rules for personal safety apply in France (or Belgium, Switzerland, Canada...) as in Britain. But even if you are used to ‘looking after yourself’, you may still feel more vulnerable abroad than you would at home. So, it makes sense to take **extra care**.

#### Halls of residence and other forms of accommodation:

- Unfortunately, student halls of residence are often an easy target for intruders (thieves and prowlers) – not just in France! Remember to **KEEP YOUR DOOR LOCKED** at all times, especially at night and **even when you leave the room for a very short while** (e.g. to go to the kitchen, or to have a chat in a neighbour’s room). Check who has a spare key, in case you lock yourself out, and how to raise the alarm, if need be.
- When you first arrive, the accommodation offered by a school or university may not live up to your expectations despite the best efforts of French Studies, the School of Modern Languages and Cultures, the Study Abroad team, the British Council or the French *Académie*, who all insist on adequate security: **if you feel the accommodation is not particularly safe, immediately make your concerns known** to the *responsable* and see whether there are any solutions or alternatives. You may find that the room on offer is the best starting-point from which to find another room or flat to rent (though not at the price of your personal safety!).

- If you make your own arrangements, check out the safety features of your flat, room or house. Is there a fire escape? A smoke-alarm? Can the curtains be fully drawn, or the shutters completely shut after dark? Who is responsible for the maintenance of gas heaters, electric appliances etc.? What is the insurance cover?

#### When out and about:

Awareness of your surroundings and a few simple precautions can make all the difference to your safety. Be streetwise and bear the following checklist in mind:

- Ascertain **the nature of the neighbourhood** you are living in or going to: is it safe (by day/after dark)?
- Check the **street-lighting** (how much of it, and where?)
- Take a note of the **last bus times**. Is it wise to take the very last bus or metro?
- Take a note of the **cost and location of taxis** for when you've missed the last bus.
- Take a note of the **emergency number(s)** for police, ambulance and fire service. Make sure you have a phone card or the appropriate change to make a call. Or, if you have a mobile phone, is it charged and does it work in that area?
- Take a **screech alarm** with you (available from the Students' Union, Education and Welfare Office): it will give you confidence – hopefully you'll never have to use it. Carry it in your hand or pocket (not your handbag or rucksack), where it's ready for use.

#### And remember the basic rules:

- Try to look as if you know where you're going. Walk purposefully.
- Strength often lies in numbers: avoid going out on your own at night, or even by day in certain unsafe areas.
- Women: carry a sensible handbag. Men: maybe your back pocket is not the best place to carry a wallet. Bear in mind that your mobile phones, cameras, and designer sunglasses are as covetable to thieves and pickpockets abroad as they are in Britain.
- Do not put all your money and payment cards in one place. In particularly busy and/or touristy places a moneybelt may be advisable.

## **A note on sexism and sexual harassment**

Although attitudes to sexism and sexual harassment are changing in France as they are in Britain, sexist remarks and sexual harassment may still occur. Female tourists and foreign students may particularly find themselves at the receiving end of it, but men can be the object of unwanted attention too.

Sexism and sexual harassment can feel even more intimidating in a foreign country than at home, because of incomplete knowledge of social codes and of language. If this relative vulnerability is exploited, it can spoil a good time – and that is unacceptable.

Here is what you can do:

- To avoid the worst, **be aware of possible threats** to your personal safety (without becoming neurotic) by using the checklist mentioned above. Take the same precautions as you would in your own country (e.g. do not invite strangers in to your flat for private language lessons; do not accept lifts from strangers - better still: do not hitchhike at all).
- Become a keen observer of **social codes and conducts**: try to learn, by absorption, a few effective ways of reacting to, or rebuffing, indiscretions, unwanted attention, indecent proposals. Maintaining total indifference and/or avoiding eye contact is often the best answer. Imagine how you (or a French person in your position) would deal with any unpleasantness if it occurred: having a few phrases ready in your mind will mean you are not lost for words at a crucial moment. But remember: the correct body language can be just as expressive.
- If need be, give a clear message in a raised voice and walk away.
- You should not hesitate to **contact local French police** (in an emergency: 112) to make your concerns known: harassment is an offence in France as in Britain. Please also ask advice of local figures of trust (especially women), and of your personal tutor/the year abroad Co-ordinator.

## **6. Keeping in touch with Warwick**

You will be in touch with Warwick, or Warwick with you, at various points in the year. Some communication will occur as a matter of course, but there will also be other opportunities for contact between you and the University.

### Regular contact:

Remember that you need to inform French Studies of **your contact details**, and of any changes in your circumstances that may occur. You are also required to submit your **language assignments** by set dates using the Year Abroad Moodle page: they will be marked and returned to you electronically in about six weeks (see the separate instructions for language work). You will also be invited to contribute to discussion forums on the Moodle page at regular intervals during the year.

Towards the end of your stay in France, French Studies will send you information via email about the **option choices** for your Final Year. If you want to have an idea of current reading lists, then please check the French Studies

website (though bear in mind that it is not possible before the Easter vacation to say which modules will and will not be running the following year).

#### Pastoral care:

French Studies is not in a position to pay a personal visit to each student in every location. That does not mean we do not care about our students in France, however. You will have been allocated a **personal tutor** at Warwick, whom you may contact in the case of a problem or to let us know all is well (see below). Your tutor will also contact you periodically to check that all is well. You are asked to respond in as timely a manner as possible to such correspondence with your personal tutor. Students in a particular region, city or town, **may also be invited to meet with a member of staff** who will be in the area on Year Abroad business, or for other professional purposes (e.g. research, conference...) (time and circumstances permitting). Having an informal chat with you about your Year Abroad, whilst you are in the middle of it, gives us a better idea of how we can help you and the next cohort of Year Abroad students.

#### Contact points:

As for the other years in your degree, French Studies is required to report to the University any students who miss designated “monitoring points” designed to confirm students’ participation and engagement in the degree. These “monitoring points” apply exclusively to students on tier 4 visas from the UK Home Office. Other students are expected to comply with our “contact points” throughout the year.

**For a full list of these monitoring points, see Appendix 1.**

#### Problems and queries

For simple queries regarding course regulations, reading lists, deadlines etc., the **French Studies, School of Modern Languages and Cultures or University website** may provide the answer. These also contains links to other useful websites (e.g. lists of language schools). So look there first.

If there is a **specific problem** for which you need to seek help or advice from a member of staff, you can contact French Studies by e-mail, phone, post or fax (see the list of contact addresses).

- Your first port of call would normally be your **personal tutor**, who may forward or discuss your case with the Year Abroad Coordinator and/or the Senior Tutor and/or the Director of Student Wellbeing and/or the Head of Department.
- It may be a good idea to check whether the person you wish to contact does not happen to be on leave (there will be a replacement, in that case). **Out of term**, academic staff may be away on research business, so e-mails may not be dealt with immediately; the **School Year Abroad Secretary** may be able to advise you on the best way of proceeding: always clearly leave your name and a contact number.
- Please do not ask a family member to contact French Studies for you, unless it is absolutely necessary. We are not legally allowed to speak about you and your placement to anyone other than you unless we have received express written permission to do so from you in advance. We can sometime

Speak in very general terms to a concerned parent or carer, but in most cases, when we need to address a problem and discuss an appropriate course of action, we are obliged to **communicate with you directly**.

We do not just want to hear from you if and when you have a problem. It is always a real pleasure for us to receive a postcard, or a brief e-mail that tells us how you are getting on.

#### In need of company?

The **Warwick Alumni** groups in Belgium and France are very active: they meet up regularly for a drink in a pub or café, for a meal, lectures or special visits (mainly in Brussels and Paris). The groups reunite both English and French speakers, and have a wide age spread, including recent graduates and former Erasmus students. Warwick students on their Year Abroad are welcome to attend their meetings: these are relaxed social occasions, where you can practice your French and - who knows - make useful contacts... Just send an e-mail to the contact person for the Paris (or Brussels) group, telling them who you are, and you'll be added their electronic mailing list. (See the address list at the end of this brochure).

## 7. Some practical points

### Libraries

Make sure you make full use of any library facility your city may offer. If you are in or near a major city, such as Paris, Lyon or Bordeaux, you may well have the chance of reading and studying in some of France's most famous libraries. Major libraries will also host exhibitions and lectures which may be worth visiting: in Paris, it is worth checking out the immense Bibliothèque François Mitterrand, but the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève and the library in the Centre Pompidou may prove more suited for your reading/research purposes. You can find the addresses of local libraries online, and in some town guides such as *Paris par arrondissement*. You can also ask the teachers in your school, fellow students at university and colleagues at work, where to go. When applying for a library card, you will need identification and evidence of your student status, so bring your Warwick and French student card (if you have one). There may be a fee to pay.

### Travel in France

As soon as you arrive, get acquainted with the peculiarities and availability of local transport. If you do not already have a map of bus and/metro routes, get one immediately from a metro station, the *office de tourisme*, or even a local newsagent. Enquire about travel passes and season tickets if you are staying in one place for a long time. You should also find out about student discounts, special travel cards for young people, etc. (take your ISIC card with you!). Do not forget to validate your ticket before boarding trains (*composter le billet*).

TIP: always ask if there is a student discount, even if there is not one advertised.

While in France you should try to get to know your own town and region as best you can. But you should also take advantage of your year to travel to other areas and reconnoitre the major cities.

### Medical Care

If you need to see a doctor, you will have to pay about 20€ for a consultation and anywhere between ca. 20€ - 30€ for your prescription. But the doctor will give you a form to fill in which you send with your R.I.B. to the local Social Security Office, who will refund you about 70% of the cost. You won't get sick pay until you've worked at least 13 weeks, however. (If you are in a school you can see the school nurse first and ask him/her to recommend a doctor).

### III. Back in Warwick

#### 1. Preparation

You must make sure that you have taken care of all the necessary preparation before you get back to Warwick. This includes **academic matters** (e.g. choice of options) and **personal arrangements** (e.g. accommodation).

Make sure you have carried out all the required **course preparation** (e.g. preparatory language work) and that you bring the necessary books, notes and other documentation with you.

#### 2. Life after the Year Abroad

It may feel quite strange to be back at Warwick after a year "out" in France. You will have to adapt again to Warwick's ways of teaching, to essay deadlines, etc. Getting involved in the **French Society** may be a good way of getting back into the swing of university life.

Before you return from France, you will be asked to complete a Year Abroad Report form and an anonymous questionnaire. The **Year Abroad Report Form** is intended to encourage **reflection** on your Year Abroad experience, and as an additional way of monitoring whether you have fulfilled your Residence Abroad requirements. The report will be filed in the French Studies student records for staff use: it may, for instance, be helpful for any job references you ask us to write. This form also gives you a chance to provide us with feedback and advice, which will help us to improve our management of the Year Abroad and to update the advice we give to our out-going students.

As returnees from a year in France, we will also invite you to take part in **information meetings, discussion groups and preparatory seminars etc. for second-year students** who are now making their own Year Abroad arrangements. You should be prepared to take part in at least one such meeting or activity, as well as **to talk more informally** to first or second-year students who might wish to hear about your experiences in a particular location, type of year abroad placement, etc.

#### 3. Careers Advice

This is a good time to think about **updating your CV** and getting in touch with the **Careers Centre** at Warwick.

Remember that **the Year Abroad is highly valued by many employers**, and think of how this experience has improved **your skills profile**. These are some of the abilities you might want to think of:

Cultural awareness  
Decision-making  
Action planning

Communication skills  
Intercultural  
Communication  
Self-confidence

Exploring and Creating  
Opportunities  
Networking  
Flexibility and Adaptability  
Problem solving

Budgeting  
Coping with uncertainty  
Prioritising  
Negotiating

#### IV. Useful addresses & sources of information

##### Sources of information in French Studies:

- The **French Studies website**
- The **Year Abroad Coordinators** oversee all the administrative and educational aspects of the Year Abroad. They will call general preparatory meetings, give advice to groups of students, and discuss any Year Abroad programmes that need departmental approval. You can see the Year Abroad Coordinator(s) during their designated office hours and/or by appointment. If you require factual information, always check whether you can find it through the other sources first. If you know that some of your contemporaries share the same query or worry, then try to book a group appointment.
- The **Year Abroad files in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures office** contain addresses of language schools, and tips and contact details for work placements. You are welcome to browse through this source of information during the School of Modern Languages and Cultures Office's opening times. Note that the inclusion of a particular leaflet, address, etc. in these files does not mean that the company, institution or company carries departmental approval.

## Warwick University contacts & websites

- **French Studies**

<u>STAFF</u>	<u>Tel. No</u>	<u>e:mail</u>
Jeremy Ahearne	02476 523335	j.n.ahearne@warwick.ac.uk
Will Amos	02476 524125	w.amos@warwick.ac.uk
Kate Astbury	02476 523333	Katherine.Astbury@warwick.ac.uk
Emma Campbell	02476 523332	Emma.campbell@warwick.ac.uk
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Ariane Demeure-Ahearne	02476 523016	A.H.Y.Demeure-Ahearne@warwick.ac.uk
Ingrid de Smet	02476 523017	I.de-Smet@warwick.ac.uk
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Pierre-Philippe Fraiture	02476 523004	p-p.fraiture@warwick.ac.uk
Catherine Hampton	02476 523328	C.M.Hampton@warwick.ac.uk
Mary Harrod	02476 523014	m.g.m.harrod@warwick.ac.uk
Nick Hewlett	02476 150636	N.P.Hewlett@warwick.ac.uk
David Lees	02476 523004	D.W.Lees@warwick.ac.uk
Philippe Le Goff	02476 524125	p.le-goff@warwick.ac.uk
Kelly Mayjonade-Christy	02476 523328	k.mayjonade-christy@warwick.ac.uk
Douglas Morrey	02476 574439	D.J.Morrey@warwick.ac.uk
Jessica Wardhaugh	02476 523334	J.Wardhaugh@warwick.ac.uk
Margaux Whiskin	02476 523334	M.Whiskin@warwick.ac.uk
Susannah Wilson	02476 151365	S.M.Wilson@warwick.ac.uk

**School Office:**  
[resource.languages@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:resource.languages@warwick.ac.uk)

**Marion Imber**                      **02476 151045**                      [m.imber@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:m.imber@warwick.ac.uk)

**School of Modern Languages and Cultures**  
**Student Wellbeing**                      [Wellbeing.languages@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:Wellbeing.languages@warwick.ac.uk)

- **The Study Abroad team:**

Ben Meering (outgoing Erasmus students):  
tel 024 765 74229; e-mail: [erasmusplus-region1@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:erasmusplus-region1@warwick.ac.uk)

For queries to the International Office, it is best to use the generic [erasmusplus-region1@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:erasmusplus-region1@warwick.ac.uk) as there will sometimes be more than one person looking after outgoing student matters, and there may sometimes be reallocations of responsibility.

- **The Registry:**

Academic Registrar:                      tel: 024 765 22500  
e-mail: [academicregistrar@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:academicregistrar@warwick.ac.uk)

- **The Centre for Student Careers and Skills**

Holds some useful information on jobs in France and is located in the Learning Grid on the ground floor of University House.

- **Accommodation Office:**

Tel 024 76 765 23772  
e-mail: [accommodation@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@warwick.ac.uk)

- **Students Union:** main switchboard: 024 765 72777

### **Language Assistantships**

- **Headquarters**

Language Assistants Team  
Education and Training Group  
The British Council  
10, Spring Gardens  
London SW1A 2BN  
Telephone 020 7389 4596  
Fax +44 (0)20 7839 6347  
e-mail: [language.assistants@britishcouncil.org](mailto:language.assistants@britishcouncil.org)

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/languageassistants.htm>

### **Erasmus study exchange partner institutions**

Please note that named contacts can change between the time when this booklet has to be printed and the time you may need to contact them. We will keep an up-to-date list of contacts on the Year Abroad website.

- Université de Caen,  
Basse-Normandie,  
Esplanade de la paix,  
B.P. 5186,  
14032 Caen Cedex  
Tel: (33) 02 31 56 5500  
Fax: (33) 02 31 56 5600  
[www.unicaen.fr](http://www.unicaen.fr)  
Named academic contact: Professor Isabelle Haik  
e-mail: [isabelle.haik@unicaen.fr](mailto:isabelle.haik@unicaen.fr)  
Named Administrative Contact: Christine Duval  
Tel: (33) 2 31 56 60 76  
e-mail: [christine.duval@unicaen.fr](mailto:christine.duval@unicaen.fr)  
or e-mail: [relations.internationales.europe@unicaen.fr](mailto:relations.internationales.europe@unicaen.fr)
- Université de Bourgogne  
Maison de l'Université  
B.P. 27877 – 21078 Dijon Cedex  
Tel: 03 80 39 5017  
Fax: 03 80 39 5595  
[www.u-bourgogne.fr](http://www.u-bourgogne.fr)  
[incoming-students.ri@u-bourgogne.fr](mailto:incoming-students.ri@u-bourgogne.fr)
- Université Stendhal  
1180 avenue Centrale - Domaine  
Universitaire - 38400 Saint Martin d'Hères  
BP 25 - 38040 Grenoble Cedex 9  
Tél. 04 76 82 43 00  
Fax. 04 76 82 41 85  
[www.u-grenoble3.fr](http://www.u-grenoble3.fr)  
Named Academic Contact: Susan Blattès  
E-mail: [Susan.Blattes@u-grenoble3.fr](mailto:Susan.Blattes@u-grenoble3.fr)  
International Office contacts:  
[relinter@u-grenoble3.fr](mailto:relinter@u-grenoble3.fr)
- Université Paris X Nanterre  
200 Avenue de la République  
92001 Nanterre  
Secrétariat des échanges – Europe  
Administrative contact: Soraya MOHAND KACI  
email: [smohandk@u-paris10.fr](mailto:smohandk@u-paris10.fr)  
Tel: 01 40 97 74 07  
[www.u-paris10.fr](http://www.u-paris10.fr)  
Email: [socrates-erasmus@u-paris10.fr](mailto:socrates-erasmus@u-paris10.fr)  
Academic contact: [Anne-Pascale Bruneau-Rumsey](mailto:Anne-Pascale.Bruneau-Rumsey@u-paris10.fr)  
e-mail: [anne-pascale.bruneau@u-paris10.fr](mailto:anne-pascale.bruneau@u-paris10.fr)
- Université Paris IV Sorbonne  
1,rue Victor Cousin  
75005 Paris  
Named administrative contact:  
Mme Coralie DESMARCHELIER  
[coralie.desmarchelier.1@paris-sorbonne.fr](mailto:coralie.desmarchelier.1@paris-sorbonne.fr)  
Reception incoming Erasmus students: Tel 00 33 (0)1 40 46 47 79

- Université de Bordeaux III  
 Domaine Universitaire  
 F33607 Pessec Cedex  
 International Office:  
[relations.internationales@u-bordeaux3.fr](mailto:relations.internationales@u-bordeaux3.fr)  
 Tel: 05 57 12 47 47  
 Academic Contact: H el ene Margerie  
[helene.margerie@u-bordeaux3.fr](mailto:helene.margerie@u-bordeaux3.fr)
  
- Universit e des Antilles et de la Guyane (Martinique)  
 97275 Schoelcher  
 Martinique  
 Bureau des Relations Internationales [based at Guadeloupe campus]  
 Contact at BRI: Mme Maryvonne Charlery  
[Maryvonne.Charlery@univ-ag.fr](mailto:Maryvonne.Charlery@univ-ag.fr)  
 Contact at Martinique campus: Mme Dominique Aurelia  
[Dominique.Aurelia@martinique.univ-ag.fr](mailto:Dominique.Aurelia@martinique.univ-ag.fr)

Institut Sup erieur de Traducteurs et Interpr etes (Bruxelles)  
 Rue J. Hazard, 34  
 B-1180 Bruxelles  
 BELGIUM  
 Named contact: Christine Demaecker  
 E-mail: [cdemaecker@heb.be](mailto:cdemaecker@heb.be)  
 generic email: [international@heb.be](mailto:international@heb.be)  
 tel: 0032 2 3401288

### **University of London Institute in Paris**

- University of London Institute in Paris  
 9-11 rue de Constantine,  
 75340 Paris Cedex 07  
 t el ephone (+33) 1 44 11 73 83  
 t el ecopie / fax (+33) 1 45 50 31 55  
<http://ulip.london.ac.uk/>  
[french@ulip.lon.ac.uk](mailto:french@ulip.lon.ac.uk)

### **Other useful contacts**

- French Embassy in London  
 58 Knightsbridge  
 London  
 SW1X 7JT  
 Tel : 020 7073 1000  
 e-mail: [press@ambafrance.org](mailto:press@ambafrance.org)
  
- French consulates  
**Consulate General London**  
 21, Cromwell Road  
 London SW7 2EN

Tel : 020 7073 1200 / fax : 020 7073 1201

- British Embassy in Paris  
35 rue du Faubourg St-Honoré  
75008 Paris  
Tel : 01 44 51 31 00  
Fax: 01 44 51 31 09  
e-mail: [ambassade@amb-grande-bretagne.fr](mailto:ambassade@amb-grande-bretagne.fr)
- British Consulate  
18 bis rue d'Anjou,  
75008 Paris  
Tel : 01 44 51 31 00  
Fax: 01 44 51 31 27

### **Useful Websites**

<http://www.francofil.net/fr/index.html>

<http://www.francealacarte.org.uk>

<http://www.careerseurope.co.uk>

<http://www.cnous.fr>

<http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/>

<http://www.education.gouv.fr>

<http://www.eurodesk.org/edesk/>

<http://www.eurydice.org>

<http://www.onisep.fr>

<http://www.fle.fr>

### **And finally...**

Some of the information in this booklet may be more useful than others; the advice given may at times seem over-protective, even off-putting or alarmist. All of it is meant, however, to help you to make the most of your Year Abroad. Do go “out there” in a spirit of adventure and enjoyment. Above all, put things in perspective: don't let the bad moments get in the way of the good ones. Remember that nearly every student will look back on their Year Abroad positively, and with a sense of achievement: they will have learned to express themselves adequately in a foreign language, to manage their time and their money, to deal with people from different backgrounds and cultures — in short, they will have learned to stand their ground.

*Bon courage, bonne chance et bonne continuation!*



## **Appendix 1: List of Contact Points for the Year Abroad (non tier-4 visa students)**

Most students (i.e. those who do not require tier 4 visas to study in the UK) should expect to receive regular contact from the School Office, personal tutor and Year Abroad Coordinator while on their year abroad. This is to ensure continued engagement with study/work and to identify any welfare problems at an early stage. All students will be expected to:

### Term 1

Submit address and contact form to School Office by week 2 (13/10/17)  
Contact personal tutor in week 2-3 (between 9/10/17 and 20/10/17)  
Submit Assignment 1 by Week 9 (01/12/17)

### Term 2

Submit change of address form (where applicable for those on split year placements)  
Contact personal tutor in Week 2-3 (between 15/1/2018 and 26/1/2018)  
Submit Assignment 2 by Week 9 (09/3/2018)

### Term 3

Submit end of year report and feedback form to SMLC by week 9 (15/6/2018)

## **Monitoring Points (Tier 4 visa students)**

French Studies monitors engagement in the year abroad programme as part of the framework for monitoring attendance more generally throughout the degree.

French Studies is required to report to the University students who miss the “monitoring points” set out below. If a student misses three monitoring points the Academic Office will write to the student concerned; however, students who have missed three monitoring points should expect their Personal Tutor in French Studies to have investigated the reasons for their non-engagement long before they receive this formal letter. Where a student has missed six formal monitoring points in one academic year the University Academic Office will notify the Director of Undergraduate Studies that French Studies should refer the student to the Continuation of Registration Committee as set out in University Regulation 36 (Governing Student registration, attendance and progress), unless French Studies wishes to present reasons why referral is not appropriate. Where a student has missed eight formal monitoring points in one academic year French Studies or the Academic Registrar will invoke the process outlined in University Regulation 36 (Governing Student registration, attendance and progress).

### Term 1

1. Submission to SMLC of Year Abroad contact address form by Week 2
2. Contact with Personal Tutor by Week 3
3. One of the following Erasmus + forms to be submitted for signature by relevant SMLC contact by Week 4:
  - Study Placement in Europe/Worldwide
  - Work Placement in Europe/Worldwide

- Language Assistantship Europe/Worldwide

\*Forms will then need to be uploaded to dedicated Erasmus + folder on Study Abroad team webpage

4. & 5. Submission of Online Progress Report and submission of Task 1 to SMLC by Week 9

Term 2

6. Contact with Personal Tutor by Week 3

7. Submission of updated contact details form to SMLC by Week 6 (for those on split placements).

Confirmation of pre-existing contact details to SMLC for those on full-year placements

8. Submission of mid-year plan or arrival form for signature by relevant SMLC contact by Week 6

\*Form will then need to be uploaded to dedicated Erasmus + folder on Study Abroad team webpage

9. Submission of Task 2 to SMLC by Week 9

Term 3

10 & 11: Submission of End of Year Report and SMLC Year Abroad Feedback Form to SMLC by Week 9

## **Appendix 2: Some specific remarks for language assistants**

The British Council issues all language assistants with a booklet of guidelines and advice. Please read it carefully and remember to take it abroad with you. Note also that their website (<http://www.britishcouncil.org/languageassistants.htm>) contains from September to May weekly updated tips, materials and links to help you with your teaching.

You are strongly advised to attend the *stage* that your local *académie* puts on for new language assistants: it will tell you what you can and can't be expected to do, as well as give you an opportunity to meet other assistants. The *stage* can also be a good time to sort out any problems you may have with your school, which you could not resolve with them directly, as you are likely to meet some of the relevant *responsables* (e.g. the *directeur* of the *académie*) there in person.

### **Tips about teaching (from a former language assistant)**

#### **Don't**

- expect a high level of English – some of your pupils may only have studied English for 2 years (or less in the case of primary schools).
- rely on newspaper articles – use only short extracts with simple vocabulary.
- overcomplicate – simple tasks boost their confidence and they are more likely to respond.
- try to do too much in a lesson. Don't overprepare.

### **Do**

- be prepared to be an expert on all things English.
- use visual aids such as cartoons & illustrations.
- take music—appropriate for classwork:
  - slow, clear pronunciation – not much slang
  - with an idea behind it i.e. not a love song.
  - DVDs
  - games – with a linguistic aim. Nothing too babyish
- repeat instructions in order to ensure comprehension.
- reuse material in as many classes as possible. If a lesson works, you can adapt it to classes of all ages.
- be prepared to encounter different types of *lycée or collège* (e.g. Lycée professionnel, lycée technique, BTS students: - trilingue – engineering).
- take the observation period.
- try to work with the teacher i.e. find out what they are doing with their pupils at the time in order to work upon this. If you can work upon & consolidate something they know, response will be greater.

### **Private lessons**

Some language assistants supplement their teaching remit with private language tuition or coaching: do not advertise yourself on notice boards, in newspapers etc, but go by word of mouth through friends/teachers, for reasons of safety. Make sure that the person whom you agree to teach is bona-fide. Ask around, to find what the going rates are.

### **Appendix 3: Some specific remarks for students going on Erasmus study exchanges**

You need Departmental endorsement before you may finalise your application.

Remember to hand in a copy of your completed application form to the Year Abroad Co-ordinator.

The Study Abroad team issues all out-going Erasmus students with a brochure of guidelines and advice. Please read it carefully and remember to take it abroad with you. Note especially the table of forms for filling in that is available on their website (<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/study/studyabroad/outgoing/erasmus/outgoing/>) – some of these will need filling in before you leave Warwick.

The success of the Erasmus exchange programme relies largely on the commitment and the goodwill of the partner institutions. As an Erasmus student, you should consider yourself an ambassador for French Studies, and the University of Warwick.

You are expected to take on a programme of study that is more or less equivalent to a full Warwick workload (120 CATS). The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) can help you gauge course weighting (1 ECTS = 2 CATS, so go for ca. 60 ECTS),

but is only a guide. On the final transcript of studies ECTS credits are only awarded if you achieve 10 out of 20 or more for the assessment (exam).

You must complete a learning agreement stating the modules you wish to study before you go – information about previous students' modules is available in the department or from the Study Abroad team. You are expected to submit your choice of modules to your *directeur d'études* or *coordonateur pédagogique* at your host institution. If your module choices change once you get out there (this is common), you must fill in and send to us a revised learning agreement.

You are expected to participate in the exams of the subjects you have taken. Students sometimes find this a daunting prospect. It needn't be: after all, you will have had some time at your host university to get to know the system (and to get used to expressing yourself in French). Pedagogically, it makes sense too not to stop short of the finish-line: the processes of revision and "cramming" (memorising) before the exams, and the challenge of the exam itself, can often help you to clarify your understanding of the subject, and to make the acquired knowledge "stick". The exam results will appear on your *transcript of studies*, which can be a valuable addition to your CV. French Studies does not "translate" your French marks into Warwick marks, and so they have no direct bearing upon your final profile of marks for degree classification. The Exam Committee may take your Transcript of Studies into account, however, as proof of a satisfactory completion of the course requirements with regard to Residence Abroad.