



**More Information:**

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**Erasmus+ for Parents and Guardians**

One of the great innovations in higher education of the past thirty years has been the introduction by the European Union of the Erasmus programme. Ireland has taken part in the programme from its first year in 1987 and thanks to the initiative, some 55,000 students from this country have had the chance to study or work in one of 32 other participating countries joining over 4 million students from Europe who have made this journey. Each year around 300,000 students all over Europe cross borders to avail of this opportunity. Since 2015, the geographic scope of the programme has extended to all corners of the planet, albeit subject to some specific conditions.

If you would like your son or daughter experience Erasmus+, the following may help inform your decision.

**Why should a student spend a semester or a full year of their studies abroad?**

Surveys have shown that students who spend part of their time studying or working abroad under E+ acquire personal and subject skills, intercultural competencies, linguistic capabilities, and networks that will greatly improve their employability. It also strengthens the bonds that enable students to share experiences with their fellow Europeans at a formative time in their lives.

**Who can take part?**

All who are registered as full or part-time students at a participating Irish higher education institution. You do not have to be Irish or indeed a national of an EU member state. Participation in the study or work abroad period must be full-time.

**What is involved?**

Students can spend 3-12 months studying in another higher education institution (HEI) or 2-12 months working in a place of employment under the traineeship (work placement) option.

**Will these periods be recognised as part of their degree?**

These periods are fully recognised by the sending HEI in Ireland as part of the award that they are studying.

**When can they go?**

The earliest a student can go on Erasmus+ is Year 2 of a Bachelor programme. Students pursuing a Master or PhD programme are also eligible to participate. Students can go on a traineeship from the summer after successful completion of First Year.

### **Which countries can they go to?**

All member states of the EU plus Norway, Liechtenstein, Turkey, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Iceland. It is also possible to go to other parts of the world but there are budgetary and other limitations to where you can go. Your HEI will be able to advise.

### **Are all courses covered?**

There are in excess of 2,000 courses on the CAO listing and in theory all are eligible to participate in Erasmus+ as the programme has been known since 2014. However, not every course offers this possibility. You are strongly advised to check with the HEI of your choice before you make your CAO selection.

### **Does the EU provide any financial assistance towards meeting the cost of the time abroad?**

Yes – each year the participating Irish HEIs apply to the Erasmus+ National Agency at the Higher Education Authority for financial assistance based on the number of students that they plan to support. Students undertaking study visits can get between €200 and €250 per month and those undertaking traineeships (work placements) between €300 and €350 per month. This financial assistance is provided directly to the student by the HEI in Ireland. While the finance is a significant help, it will not fund the total costs of the period abroad. Students and their families are advised to make provision from at least the time they enrol on their studies in First Year.

### **Can they keep their higher education grant?**

Yes – the higher education grant is portable and in fact if your child is currently on the **Adjacent Rate** you can apply to SUSI to have this changed to the **Non-Adjacent Rate** for the period you are studying or working abroad.

### **Are there any other supports?**

Yes – the National Agency at the HEA provides supplementary support of €120 per month in addition to the main grant for some categories of higher education grant recipients based subject to budgetary availability.

### **Are there supports for students with a disability?**

Supplementary financial support is also available to cover the additional costs incurred by students with a physical, mental or health-related condition – sample costs include personal carers, special transport arrangements, and visits home for medical consultations, specialised accommodation costs etc.

### **What about sourcing accommodation abroad?**

Both the sending and receiving HEIs will offer assistance in this area and in a number of countries, student accommodation will be available. However, in general the responsibility of locating a place to stay will rest with the individual student.

### **Where can students apply to go on an Erasmus+ study visit or traineeship?**

Students will be made aware of these possibilities at induction when they enrol in their HEI. The Course Leaders/Erasmus+ Co-ordinators will also advise students. The application process is managed by the International Education Office at your higher education institution in Ireland.

**Slán Tamall – Bon Voyage!**