

Sussex Abroad



STUDY ABROAD: Information and advice for Departments and Schools

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Cover photo, *Paris*, courtesy of Sussex student, François Roeseler

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1. SUSSEX EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES FOR NON-MANDATORY STUDY ABROAD

Sussex has over 100 links for Study Abroad in Europe, 70 for Study Abroad in N. America, 11 for Study Abroad in Central and South America (Mexico, Chile and Argentina), 5 in Asia (Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan) and 2 in Australia. The majority of these links are used by our students who study a degree with a language or American Studies degrees, and will go away for the whole of the third year of a four year degree to the country of the language they are studying or to N. America. The full list of international student exchange partners can be found at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/International/europe/A-Zlinks.shtml>

Students who opt to go on study abroad during their three year degree are classified as non-mandatory or voluntary students and they will go away for a term to a year. Students tend to go in their second year, or the first term of their third year (or their third year if they are on MChem, MMath *etc* degree programmes), and usually to partner institutions where they can follow their major subjects in English. These students can also go to links used by our language year abroad students if they have a good enough level in the language to follow classes.

2. LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME - ERASMUS

Erasmus is the Higher Education section of the European Community funded Lifelong Learning Programme, which replaced the SOCRATES programme in 2007. The Lifelong Learning Programme runs from 2008 to 2011. The LLP Erasmus Programme is designed to support the European activities of higher education institutions, including mobility and exchange of students and teaching staff.

All of the European links that Sussex maintains are managed through the Erasmus programme. Bilateral agreements of cooperation are exchanged on an annual basis with partner institutions. These stipulate the number of students to be exchanged each year. However, they also ensure that exchange procedures conform to the rules of Erasmus; receiving and sending institutions will have transparency in credit weighting of courses and will issue transcripts upon completion of the Study Abroad programme; nominated co-ordinators will aid and assist Erasmus students while at the host institution; welcome programmes, language classes *etc*; will be provided.

For links with institutions that do not fall under Erasmus, such as partners in Switzerland, and the rest of our global links, similar memorandums of cooperation are in place to ensure that conditions as described above are conformed to by both institutions.

3. FEES, GRANTS AND LOANS

Sussex registered students who go to Erasmus participating institutions for between 3 – 12 months, will be eligible for an Erasmus grant if they are nationals of a Member State of the EU or of another country participating in the Lifelong Learning Programme. Students with Erasmus status, and who are eligible for UK student support, will not pay fees to Sussex **if** they go away for the full year and are subject to UK student support arrangements (this may change in the future). Neither will they pay tuition fees to the partner institution. If they go away for less than a year, they are liable to pay the full year Sussex tuition fee, but no fees at the host institution.

NB: Students are not allowed to go away in their first year through the Erasmus scheme.

Non-EU students may attend Erasmus institutions abroad. However, this is at the discretion of the host institution; they will not be eligible for Erasmus status at the host institution and neither will they receive an Erasmus grant. However, since tuition fees are mutually waived between institutions through the Erasmus programme, they will not pay tuition fees to the host institution, but will be liable to pay their usual fees to Sussex.

Students who go to institutions outside of the Erasmus scheme are liable to pay half of the Sussex tuition fee if they are away for the full year or all of the Sussex tuition fee if away for less than a year.

Students who go to N. America will need to present financial guarantees to the American institution. Insurance costs can also be significant and students should bear these expenses in mind when considering visiting N. America.

Students who go on Study Abroad may be entitled to a higher rate of Student Loan and may also be entitled to a travel grant from their LEA. Schools may want to flag the possibility of applying to the hardship fund to students who are interested in Study Abroad but feel deterred by financial constraints.

4. STUDYING ABROAD IN EUROPE IN ENGLISH

The majority of our regular Erasmus partner links used by non-mandatory study abroad Sussex students were established with non-language students in mind. Links at departmental level direct flow in certain disciplines and classes are held in English. However, European institutions are increasingly introducing courses taught in English to encourage exchange flows from the UK (and recruitment from Australia and America). The ISAO is continually looking at new possibilities opening up for our non-language students, in both new disciplines on current links, and new courses held in English. For this reason, we try not to adhere too strictly to subject specific links when advertising opportunities to Sussex students – many of the non-mandatory links are flexible and are happy to receive a student from us in a new discipline.

Language Preparation Courses

We encourage students to learn some basic communication in the host language while they are away.

Erasmus Intensive Language Courses are an initiative supported by the European Commission to enable Erasmus students to receive some tuition in languages that are not widely spoken or taught abroad. They take place in the host country twice during the academic year, prior to the start of each semester. Participating students do not have to pay any kind of fee for the EILCs, and will receive a normal Erasmus grant for the duration of the course if it precedes their term or year away.

Other language courses: Erasmus students may also apply for funding if they enrol on another language course, not being an EILC, which takes place in the host country immediately prior to the period of study abroad. The maximum funding available for a course is currently 400 euros. Students should check if fees will be refunded with the International and Study Abroad Office at the University of Sussex (for courses in

German, French, Spanish and Italian we need approval from the British Council) and submit proof of attendance and payment to be reimbursed.

The ISAO also provides students with simple phrase books.

5. STUDYING ABROAD IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE

If students speak another language apart from English, they have the opportunity of studying abroad on the links maintained for our language degree students in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and French-speaking Canada. The language level students would need to reach before going abroad should be equivalent to the level reached by Sussex language students by the end of their 2nd year of study. To assess their level before they go abroad, we require them to pass the 2nd year French/German/Italian/Spanish language exam.

Copies of past exam papers can be downloaded from:

www.sussex.ac.uk/USIS/pastexams/

For a few of our links which have courses taught in English, such as International Christian University, Japan, and some links in Mexico, students are required to have some knowledge of the language before they go.

6. ECTS, WORKLOAD AND GRADE CONVERSION

ECTS stands for the European Credit Transfer System. This was put in place to create transparency, build bridges between institutions, widen the choices available to students and encourage academic mobility. The system makes it easier for institutions to recognise the learning achievements of students through the **use of commonly understood measurements - credits and grades** - and it also provides a means to interpret national systems of higher education. ECTS is used at the majority of our Erasmus partner institutions.

ECTS is based on three core elements:

- information (on study programmes and student achievement)
- mutual agreement (between the partner institutions, the home institution and the student via the Learning Agreement – see *Appendix V*)
- the use of ECTS credits (to indicate student workload)

ECTS is well established and credits can be easily converted into UK credits, (by dividing by two): E.G: Sussex 120 ECTS 60

Each institution should have an ECTS Institutional Co-ordinator and ECTS departmental co-ordinators. It could be said that the Study Abroad Department Representatives for non-mandatory study abroad are notionally the ECTS departmental coordinators, since they perform the same functions.

For our non-European partner institutions, workload varies from one institution to another. However, at our current partners in N. America, Asia and Australia, it tends to be 3 or 4 courses per semester, or credit up the value of 12, expressed as 'semester hours/credit'. Please see *Appendix I* for detail of the N. American academic system, workload requirements and general advising of students' course selection. Please see *Appendix II* for details of work requirements at our partner institutions.

Changes to standard workload or study programme.

1) Flexible credit

Autumn term abroad:

Students who go away for a Sussex autumn term usually need to replace 48 Sussex credits. Some subjects at Sussex require students to complete 60 Sussex credits in their autumn term. It can be problematic to take 30 ECTS or an extra course or extra credit hours at non-ECTS institutions to achieve the equivalent of 60 Sussex credits. It may be difficult to find the extra courses and workload may be higher at some institutions. A flexible approach towards students in this situation will be followed, undertaken on an individual case basis whereby students may be allowed to take the same number of courses or credit as is usual for autumn term students going abroad, even where their credit requirement at Sussex is higher. If an issue should arise, actual workload can be looked at. In cases where the student will fall short of credit, General Credit may be applied, up to a maximum of 12 credit, by the subject exam board in compensation, and on advice from the Study Abroad exam board.

Spring and summer terms abroad and ECTS:

Normally students going away for spring and summer terms will aim to replace 72 Sussex credits, which is 36 ECTS at a European institution. At some institutions this is possible. At others, however, it is considered too high a load and students are not allowed to take more than 30 ECTS. (Most overseas institutions operate a semester system, and so 30 ECTS for each semester will be the maximum work load).

At institutions where it is not possible or advisable for students to take 36 ECTS, or in cases where students are clearly struggling to manage a workload to achieve the equivalent of 30 Sussex credit, the student may be allowed to take less credit. In these cases, where there is a shortfall of credit, General Credit may be applied, up to a maximum of 12 credit, by the subject exam board in compensation, and on advice from the Study Abroad exam board.

2) Assessed Sussex course work

In principle, study abroad should not normally be permitted in destinations where appropriate coursework cannot be undertaken by the student, and Sussex coursework should not form part of the credit which a student transfers from their study period abroad.

However, occasionally, it may arise that a student currently on study abroad has intractable problems with their work programme, (e.g. suitable courses not running with no alternative options available) and thus will not be able to complete the required number of credits. In this instance, it is permissible for the home department to implement an alternative arrangement, such as a distance learning course from Sussex, or project work, or preparation for future project work, which will be assessed by Sussex. This will allow the student to continue at the host institution, and not be short on credit when he/she returns. **Any such change in work programme must be approved by the Chair of the relevant study abroad exam board, who should be notified well in advance of the problem and the proposed change.**

Sussex has established conversion charts (see *Appendix III*) to translate the overseas grades into Sussex grades for all our partner institutions. Grade

conversions can be adjusted in the light of new information either from returning students, partner institutions or other UK institutions. The Study Abroad Group approves initial conversions and amendments to them.

7. ACADEMIC STANDING

It should be noted that students hoping to undertake Study Abroad in English or in another language, should have a good academic standing at Sussex. Some of our newer links, for example, City University in Hong Kong, like our North American exchanges, expect a GPA equivalent of 3.0 or B average and evidence to this effect.

It should also be noted that any concerns with a student's level of competence in English, which may affect their ability to study abroad (at an English speaking institution), must be flagged as early as possible to both the student and the ISAO.

References are required for N. American institutions and some of our other non-European partner institutions. Although Erasmus partner institutions tend not to request references, the ISAO will require a reference from the student's academic advisor to ensure that students will be able to cope with studying abroad.

8. PROCEDURES

Since a period of study abroad forms an integral part of the student's degree, full academic recognition implies not only that the period of study abroad replaces a comparable period of study at home but also that the foreign examination (or other form of assessment) replaces the home examination. The results of these will then be sent back to Sussex and the grades obtained converted into Sussex marks. The student's study abroad results are considered by the appropriate Study Abroad Examination Board, which authorises progression where necessary and assures marks obtained.

In terms of **deadlines**, for European partner institutions we ask students to have completed their part of the application procedure at least one whole term before they plan to go abroad.

For institutions in N. America, Asia and Australia, students need to apply in the autumn term of the year before they plan to go away.

i) Responsibilities of STUDENTS – all destinations

- research the courses available for them to study at their chosen institution by consulting prospectuses, websites (a PC is available in the office for students to do this) and "study abroad reports" sent back by past students in the library of the International and Study Abroad Office
- complete the **Application to Study Abroad Form** for ISAO
- complete **Proposal to Study Abroad Form** (see *Appendix IV*) in liaison with department representatives and get the form signed off by the signatories on the form
- complete host institution application form and accommodation form if available
- for students going to N. America, provide financial guarantees
- undergo required medical examinations

- take insurance recommended by ISAO (most students going to N. America also have to take the N. American insurance)
- *Erasmus study abroad*: complete necessary paperwork for Erasmus placement and grant
- attend briefing session by ISAO
- *Erasmus study abroad*: return first Learning Agreement to ISAO as soon as possible in first term/semester
- *Erasmus study abroad*: return second Learning Agreement to ISAO as soon as possible in second term/semester
- keep department representative informed of any changes in study programme or any academic queries
- confirm assessment procedures and exam/hand-in dates at host institution on arrival (this is especially important if the student needs alternative assessment or to be examined before they leave in December – *see note on assessment below*).
- procure transcript at the end of each semester

Application to Study Abroad Form: Once a student has an idea of where they may like to go, they fill in the *Application to Study Abroad Form* (available from the International and Study Abroad Office). This is to inform us of their possible intentions - to have a record of their name, contact details and area of study, and the destinations they are interested in. This also allows our office to negotiate an appropriate number of places at the partner institution and, in the case of N. America, Asia and Australia where application deadlines are shorter, nominate the students for these places.

Proposal to Study Abroad Form (see Appendix IV): The second form that the student needs to complete lists in precise detail the courses they expect to miss at Sussex and the courses they have chosen to substitute for these during the period of study abroad. The form establishes approval of the study programme from key members of staff/units of the University and requires signatures to this effect. Once the form is fully completed and signed off, the International and Study Abroad Office will nominate students going to EU and South American institutions, and confirm nominations as appropriate for N. America, Asia and Australia.

Application to partner institution: Following agreement to accept the student, the host university will usually send its own application form to the ISAO for the student to complete and return, along with details of how to apply for accommodation if it is provided.

Students going to N. America, Asia and Australia will be invited to a briefing meeting in February, where they will receive information regarding visas, financial guarantees, choosing courses. Students going to Europe will be invited to a briefing meeting later in the term.

Transcripts: Students should try to obtain their transcripts from the host institution before they leave. If this is not possible, they need to ensure the appropriate office will forward their transcripts to the ISAO. *It is important to note that it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the host university sends their marks back to Sussex for conversion, and to chase them if the marks do not arrive.*

On receiving these, the ISAO will convert the grades to produce a Sussex grade. Although the exam boards retain some discretion, the basic conversion charts, included in the briefing documents given to students, are used to convert grades.

These grades will then be taken to the appropriate Study Abroad exam board, where the student's grades will be assured. There are two Study Abroad exam boards, one language-based and one non-language based. These boards meet at least twice a year and consider transcripts of voluntary and mandatory study abroad students in order to obtain appropriate Sussex marks. (See *Appendix III* for grade conversions.) Study Abroad exam boards apply MEC decisions where appropriate and have discretion to consider other mitigating circumstances (e.g. institutional failure).

ii) Responsibilities of STUDY ABROAD DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES

- ensure the student is aware of the Sussex credit s/he will need to replace at the host institution and the number of courses/units they will need to take to replace that credit (courses may vary in credit weighting)
- discuss the academic recognition procedures and missed assessment at Sussex
- inform students that they need to be assessed by the host institution, and are not normally allowed to take assessment at Sussex for work completed abroad
- guide the student to devise a programme of studies combining academic requirements with individual interests (as permitted by the department) and including alternative choices in case a course does not run. This may involve communication between home and the host institution to discuss programmes of studies and may occasionally require urgent liaison with the student, especially at the outset of the Study Abroad period
- sign the ***Proposal to Study Abroad Form***, when completed
- prepare transcripts of records/references for outgoing students before their study period abroad as appropriate
- notify the ISAO of any concerns there may be about the student's ability to complete the period of study abroad successfully. Special attention should be given to students who will be going to an English speaking destination, but whose first language is ***not*** English. If there are any concerns about the level of English of the student, these need to be communicated with the student and to the ISAO as soon as possible.
- ***Erasmus study abroad***: agree on and sign the ***Learning Agreement*** once the student has sent it at the beginning of each term/semester at the host institution
- Liaise with students about their study programme and approve any changes to it and sign the second ***Learning Agreement*** as appropriate
- ensure that students are making progress at the host institution by being in regular contact with them
- attend the Study Abroad exam boards if they are the departmental representative nominated from their School as permanent member of the two boards. Or liaise with that person ahead of the boards regarding any issues about students' marks and experience abroad, from their subject area.

** Please note that Erasmus funds are available to visit students at Erasmus partner institutions, and also to undertake short teaching visits at institutions in Europe. Please contact E Sinclair – e.sinclair@sussex.ac.uk - in the ISAO for further information.

The most significant aspect of the departmental representative's job is the assistance they give to students filling in the course sections of the ***Proposal to Study Abroad form***, (see *Appendix IV*). They will guide and advise the student with regard to Sussex courses they will miss, the type of courses they should select at the host

institution and the amount of credit they will need to replace these. If students would normally be doing a year-long course at Sussex, and will be away in the autumn term, they will need advice as to whether it is possible to substitute the material from that course that they will be missing. They also need to be sure that the student will not be missing key material which will be examined at Sussex in the June exams.

Since they will also be the first signatory on the ***Proposal to Study Abroad form*** endorsing the study plan that the student is proposing, the departmental representative needs to be completely satisfied that the student's study plan is appropriate and will not lead to problems at a later date.

Language courses for credit:

With the exception of students going to N. America and Australia, students studying abroad are allowed, as a general rule, to take a quarter of their study programme as language courses: courses in the language of the country they are studying in, or relevant to the destination. Students going to Japan are allowed to make up a third of their study programme with Japanese language courses.

Assessment (European institutions): For students going to European institutions, assessment at the host institution will need to be discussed with the student. European universities frequently have two semesters per year, running from October through to January/February, and March through to July. Students are not allowed to be assessed at Sussex for work which they have completed abroad, so students who are going away for the autumn term only and are due back at Sussex in January need to be assessed before they leave the host institution. Alternative assessment can usually be arranged – for many of our partners it is quite a normal procedure for incoming exchange students. However, this will need to be checked beforehand with the host institution or via the ISAO. The ISAO endeavours to obtain as much information as possible from the host institution to facilitate course selection and clarification of assessment procedures. However, once the student is at the host institution, they must confirm with individual tutors there, the assessment requirements, any necessary exam registration and the credits earned for every course, with an assurance that specific grades or marks will be awarded (i.e. **not** pass/fail). If, on arrival, there is any doubt, the student must immediately contact their departmental representative or the ISAO.

Pass/Fail courses:

Students must not take *Pass/Fail* courses at any institution abroad. Students will receive a zero grade for these courses.

The experience of Erasmus and ECTS shows that most institutions are able to guarantee their students full academic recognition. Sometimes, the home examination covers a broader range of subjects and cannot be replaced formally. In those cases, the home institution must give a guarantee to the student that the foreign examination will be taken into account in the fullest possible way, e.g. by giving partial exemptions of the home examination.

Learning Agreement: The ***Proposal to Study Abroad form*** effectively constitutes the student's initial ***Learning Agreement*** and is the most important document, along with the student's eventual marks, relating to their non-mandatory study abroad. Fully signed, it is the University of Sussex's agreement that the studies the student proposes to undertake abroad will count towards their Sussex degree. In compliance with Erasmus procedures, Erasmus students are also furnished with two further Learning Agreements (see *Appendix V*), one for each semester. Once they have

arrived at their host university, these forms need to be filled in with the definitive list of courses and credits and returned to Sussex for final agreement by the departmental representative. These forms allow for any course changes to be communicated in good time and to be signed off in accordance with the new proposal. With all students the ISAO advises the student to maintain contact with Sussex, and in particular the departmental representative, especially over any changes to their study plan. **When a student contacts Sussex with a query regarding a change of course, credit, assessment or any other academic concern, they will need a prompt response.**

For significant changes to study programmes please see above *under ECTS, workload and grade conversion*.

iii) Responsibilities of INTERNATIONAL AND STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

- informing students about ECTS in more practical detail, e.g. provide students with the information packages available from partner institutions
- liaising with the institutions over number of places and flexibility of subject area
- formalising bilateral agreements with partner institutions
- explaining the procedures for applying for a place and providing students with forms they need to fill in for Sussex (***Application to Study Abroad and Proposal to Study Abroad***)
- nominating students to partner institutions
- checking that the *Proposal to Study Abroad form* has all required signatures and that there are no outstanding issues or comments
- contacting the host institution
- liaising with the Directors of International Programmes to provide the student with a formal letter from Sussex, confirming their placement abroad
- providing students with host institution's application forms and helping them to complete forms
- providing students with and explaining the academic documents (learning agreement, transcript of records)
- arranging for students to sit 2nd year language exams if appropriate and checking level of language if basic level is needed
- administration of Sussex student participation on Erasmus Intensive Language Programmes
- giving advice on practical details (visas, required medical examinations, insurance, accommodation)
- arranging payment of the Erasmus grant
- preparing a pre-departure talk and information folder, with country specific material
- acting as a contact point for students on study abroad
- receiving overseas transcripts and converting marks to produce either a Sussex transcript or grade
- providing transcripts with converted marks and any associated documentation for the Study Abroad exam boards
- providing schools with information on students' progression and/or study abroad grades following the Study Abroad exam boards
- drawing up conversion scales for foreign marks (to be approved at the Study Abroad Group)
- internal promotion of Study Abroad

- management of Erasmus funds
- liaison with the British Council (the UK National Agency for the LLP Erasmus Programme), including submission of bi-annual reports on student numbers and submission of proposals for grant monies

The Credit System in the USA and Canada

Sussex requires a minimum of 120 Sussex credits per year for progression. Students spending a period in North America are generally expected to complete approximately equivalent work while they are away. The requirements of visa issuing authorities also need to be taken into account as students who do not take adequate credit are deemed not to be "full time" and to be in breach of immigration regulations. Within the USA and Canada credit systems differ. The contents of this document were agreed by the relevant Exam Boards (and approved by the relevant higher committees) as the pattern to be adopted by ALL students studying for a period in North America as of the academic year 2005-6.

Some Background

Semesters

A large proportion of US institutions (and some in Canada) operate semesters, and expect students to complete various numbers of "semester hours" per year. A semester hour is defined in terms of the hours per week that a class meets. Thus a 3 credit course for one semester will meet for 3 hours each week for the semester. In practice, with exam periods, reading periods etc., this probably means about 40 contact hours. Laboratory classes push up the contact hours, but this is rarely taken into account in the credit system. A one-credit lab that goes with a 3 credit course will probably meet 4-5 hours a week. Students need to be aware of this when planning timetables, and not to go into overload. Different institutions have different recommendations, but most would expect at least 2-3 hours per week outside class time per hour in class.

It should be noted that in North American institutions, students are allowed to take a small amount of what I, somewhat impolitely, call "junk credit". This may be sport (riding, snowboarding, scuba) or how-to-do courses such as desk top-publishing, or art practicum, courses like pottery. We would not give academic credit for these, but for an American student it does ease the pressure. Whilst we do not wish to discourage students from taking such courses, they should not be regarded as a part of the standard academic load, and should be taken as well as, not instead of, the usual academic requirements

In some institutions all the courses are the same "size" - generally 3 or 4 semester hours. In others they vary widely - in some cases between 1 and 5 credits. This means that the number of credits rather than the number of courses is the appropriate way to calculate student load in the general case. (In many places saying 4 courses per semester means 12 credits per semester, so it reduces to the same thing).

See Appendix II for full details of work requirements at each institution.

Quarter System

American quarters look superficially like Sussex terms - they run for about 10 weeks and then there is an exam period. However, unlike Sussex terms, they are totally self-contained (Real modularity...), and all three are equivalent. They operate in quarter hours, which again indicate times for meeting. A 4 quarter hour course meets for 4 hours per week for that quarter.

Institutions operating a quarter system

Oregon State University

University of California (all campuses except Berkeley)

University of Washington, Seattle

Oddities!

Inevitably, some institutions operate their own systems, which are quite distinct, and often not at all comprehensible!

Universities of Waterloo and Toronto

These essentially operate a semester system, but Canadian semesters are usually a week or so shorter than American ones. Most 1 semester courses are described as 0.5 units. Labs tend to be 0.25 units.

Reed College and U Pennsylvania

Reed and UPenn operate a units system. Students normally take up to 8 units per year. These are both academically very demanding schools, and this would be a very high load for a visitor. Most courses are one unit but there are also a number of half unit courses. Students should be advised to approach these with caution; previous experience suggests that two half units represents a lot more work than one unit. Both operate a semester system.

SEMESTER SCHOOLS

Full year:	24 semester hours
Fall semester:	12 semester hours
Spring semester:	12 semester hours

QUARTER SCHOOLS

Full year:	36 quarter hours
Fall quarter:	12 quarter hours
Winter & Spring quarters:	24 quarter hours

REED COLLEGE

Full year:	6.5 units
Fall semester:	3.5 units
Spring semester:	3.5 units

Note: Students should be advised that 0.5 unit courses at Reed tend to require almost as much work as 1 unit courses

UPENN

Full year:	8 units
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ONTARIO SYSTEM (WATERLOO AND TORONTO)

Full year:	4 units
Fall semester:	2 units
Spring semester:	2 units

Individual departments will remain in control of which courses students are permitted and/or required to take while they are abroad.

On completion of the designated credit requirements abroad, students will receive the amount of Sussex credit that they would have received for the same period at Sussex (i.e. 120 credits for the year, 48 for autumn and 72 for spring + summer). It is recognised

that the equivalences for part year students are imperfect; some will have to do more than others to achieve their credit. However, it is at least transparent, and common across all subjects.

Students will be advised that they may not register for fewer credits than the designated number, as if they do so they will be in breach of visa regulations. Students will be permitted, and encouraged, to take additional credit for their own academic development, and personal enrichment, but will not receive additional Sussex credit for doing so. If students have taken more than the required number of *acceptable* courses for credit, The Study Abroad exam board (non-language based) has the discretion to discard the lowest marks, provided that this does not result in the discard of any course deemed by the home department to be mandatory. It is accepted that as Sussex moves to a system more closely based on completion of credit, rather than simple annual progression, this issue may need to be reviewed.

Course Choices

When telling students what courses they should take abroad, we should remember that the US system is very different from our own. Students are expected to take courses from outside their major, and a number of institutions have told me that it is not advisable for a student to take 8 three semester hour courses in the upper division of their major in a year - their system was not designed for that, and it would be regarded as cruel and unusual punishment, and constitutionally prohibited..... I recognise that there are tensions here, more in some subjects than others.

I will be more than happy to discuss any aspect of this further with personal tutors and exam board secretaries for the voluntary students going abroad next year. My phone number is 8314, and my email is kafk7.

Penny Chaloner
November 2009

Minimum course requirements at partner institutions

Partner University	Academic system	Number of credit/semester hours needed per semester/term
ASIA		
China: City University of Hong Kong	2 semesters	12 credits/units (24 credit points for full year) Each course is worth 3 credits/units; 1 credit unit = 40 – 50 work hours
Japan: International Christian University,	3 terms	12 credits (24 credit points for full year) Each course is worth 2 – 3 credits.* <i>*Students can take Japanese language courses at 4-6 credits, which Sussex may transfer at 3.</i>
Korea: Korea University	2 semesters	Provisional: 15 credits (30 credits for full year) Each course is worth 3 credits.
Singapore: National University of Singapore	2 semesters	12 credits (24 credit points for full year) Each course is worth 4 credits.
Taiwan: National Taiwan University	2 semesters	12 credits (24 credit points for full year). Each course is worth 2-3 credits. <i>Total credit includes the NTU Mandarin language course worth 4 credits for the day time 10 hour a week course, or 3 credits for the evening 6 hour a week course.</i>
AUSTRALIA		
Monash University	2 semesters	24 credit points or 12 semester hours (48 credit points for full year) All units are worth 6 credit points (except some engineering units which are worth 4 credit points).
University of Queensland	2 semesters	8 units: 4 x 2 credit courses (16 units for full year) Each course is worth 2 units.
EUROPE		
	Mainly semester	24 ECTS if replacing 48 Sussex credit (i.e. autumn term away)*
	1 ECTS = 2 Sussex Credits	60 ECTS if replacing 120 Sussex credit (i.e. full year)
		36 ECTS if replacing 72 Sussex credit (i.e. spring and summer term away)*
		<i>* check requirements of individual Sussex subjects. Some need more than 24 ECTS in autumn term – e.g. Geography</i>
SOUTH AMERICA		
Argentina: Universidad Nacional del Cuyo, Mendoza	2 semesters	24 credits (48 credits for full year)
Chile: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	2 semesters	20 credits (40 credits for full year). Each course is worth 8 – 10 credits; 1 credit = 1 hour of work per week. *Minimum course load is 30 credits.
Mexico: Universidad Anáhuac del Sur	2 semesters	4 courses (8 for full year)
Mexico: Universidad de Guadalajara	4 terms/2 semesters	4 – 5 courses (8 - 9 for full year)
Mexico consortium: contact ISAO		

NORTH AMERICA*		
Canada:		
University British Columbia	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Laval University	2 semesters	12 – 15 (24 – 30 credits per year)
University of Toronto	2 semesters	2 units (4 units for full year)
Simon Fraser University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Waterloo	2 semesters	2 units (4 units for full year)
USA:		
University of Alaska at Fairbanks	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Arizona State University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of California:		
UC Berkeley	2 semesters	12 (24-26 credits in total) * <i>Students have to register for 13 credits to maintain visa status, but Sussex only counts best 12 per semester, or 24 credits over a year.</i>
UC Davis	3 quarters	36 credits for full year
UC Irvine	3 quarters	36 credits for full year
UC San Diego	3 quarters	36 credits for full year
UC Santa Barbara	3 quarters	36 credits for full year
UC Santa Cruz	3 quarters	36 credits for full year
University of Colorado	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
George Washington University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Georgetown University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Georgia Tech	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Georgia	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Louisiana State University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Massachusetts	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Miami	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Michigan	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Mount Holyoke College	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
North Carolina Chapel Hill	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Occidental College	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Oregon State	3 quarters	36 credits for full year
Penn State University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
U Pennsylvania (UPenn)	2 semesters	4 units (8 units for full year)* <i>Sussex will use the best grades for 7 credit units. 1 credit unit can be at a lower level. This means that you can take something for your own entertainment if you wish for 1 credit or if you do all 8 credits at an upper level we will only use the best 7.</i>
University of Pittsburgh	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Purdue University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Reed College	2 semesters	3.5 units (6.5 units in total)
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Rochester	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Spelman College	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
State University of New Jersey, Rutgers	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
SUNY Stony Brook	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Texas, Austin	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Tulane University	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
University of Vermont	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)
Washington Seattle	3 quarters	36 credits for full year
Washington University, St Louis	2 semesters	12 (24 credits for full year)

*Please also see Appendix I: The Credit System in the USA and Canada

Grade conversions

Study abroad is assessed entirely by the host institution. The letter grades students receive for their period of study abroad will be weight-averaged and converted to a Sussex percentage mark, and this will contribute to the students' final degree assessment.

ASIA:

HK grade	Sussex %		Singapore	Sussex %		Taiwan	Sussex %
A+	80		A+	83		More than 90	80
A	75		A	78		83-89	71-77
A-	70		A-	73		75-82	60-68
B+	65		B+	68		67-74	50-57
B	60		B	63		60-66	40-46
B-	55		B-	58		50-59	FX
C+	50		C+	53		Less than 50	0
C	45		C	48			
C-	40		C-	43			
D+	35		D+	38			
D	30		D	33			
F,W,I	0		F,W,I	0			

AUSTRALIA:

Only the numerical mark given by Monash University is used, and 10% is deducted from that mark to convert to a Sussex percentage. Monash has a pass mark of 50%, and 80% is required for the highest descriptive grade.

The exchange with the University of Queensland is new and the grade conversion below is provisional.

Monash mark	Correction to Monash mark	Sussex mark	UQ mark	Correction to UQ mark	Sussex mark
85 +	-5	80+	85+	-5	80+
84	-6	78	84	-6	78
83	-6	77	83	-6	77
82	-6	76	82	-6	76
81	-6	75	81	-6	75
80	-7	73	80	-6	74
79	-7	72	79	-6	73
78	-7	71	78	-6	72
77	-7	70	77	-6	71
76	-7	69	76	-6	70
75	-8	67	75	-6	69
74	-8	66	74	-8	66
73	-8	65	73	-8	65
72	-8	64	72	-8	64
71	-8	63	71	-8	63
70	-8	62	70	-8	62
69	-9	60	69	-8	61
68	-9	59	68	-8	60
67	-9	58	67	-8	59
66	-9	57	66	-8	58
65	-10	55	65	-8	57
64	-10	54	64	-10	54
63	-10	53	63	-10	53
62	-10	52	62	-10	52
61	-10	51	61	-10	51
60	-10	50	60	-10	50
			And below	-10	

EUROPE, SOUTH AMERICA, JAPAN

Please see conversion chart for 2008/2009 below:

Key to country codes:

A – Austria
Arg – Argentina
B – Belgium
CH – Switzerland
CZ – Czech Republic
G– Germany
DK – Denmark
EE - Estonia
FR – France
G - Greece
I – Italy
IRL - Ireland
IS – Iceland
JP– Japan
NL – Netherlands
PL - Poland
SP – Spain
S - Sweden
SF – Finland
Chile – Chile
Mex – Mexico
M.C – Mexico Consortium

* For Mexico City divide by 10

Sussex	Austria	ARG	B	CH	CZ	Germany	DK	EE	FR	GR	Italy	IRL	ICL	JP	NL	PL	Spain	Sweden	FL	Chile	Mexico	M.C
95																						
90	0.7/1+	10		6		0.7/1+			18	10	30 e lode	90					Math			7	100	
85			18						17		30	85	10	A	10		10	VG 5 A			98	
82										9	29											
80	1 sehr gut	9	17.5	5.5		1 sehr gut	12	5	16		28	80			9		9/sobr.		5	6.5	97	A+
78	1.1			5.4		1.1																
77			17										9.5									
76	1.2			16.5	5.3	1.2					27											
75		8	16		1				15			75			8.5	5	8.5	VG 5 B+			96	A
74	1.3			5.2		1.3																
73																						
72	1.4			5.1		1.4					26											
70	1.5/2+	7	15.5	5		1.5/2+	10	4	14	8.4		70	9		8		8/not.	VG 4 B	4	6	95	A-
69																						
68	1.7		15	4.9	2+	1.7					25					4+						
67													8.5									
66	1.9			4.8		1.9								B	7.6							
65	2 gut		14			2 gut			13			65			7.5		7.5	G 4 B			90	B+
64	2.1			4.7		2.1					24		8									
62	2.3			4.6		2.3							7.5									
60	2.5/2-	6	13	4.5	2	2.5/2-	7	3	12	7	23	60			7	4	7	G 4 C	3	5.5	80	B
59										6.99												
58	2.7			4.4		2.7							7									
56	2.9			4.3		2.9					22											
55	3 befried.		12		2-	3 befried.			11			55	6.5	C	6.5		6.5	G 3 D			75	B-
53	3.2					3.2											6.3					
52	3.3			4.1		3.3					21											
50	3.5/3-/4+	5	11	4	3+	3.5/3-/4+	4	2	10	6		50	6			3+	6/apr.		2	5	70	C+
49										5.99	20											
48																						
45	4 ausreich.		10.5		3	4 ausreich.			9		19	45	5.5	D	6		5.5			4.5	65	C
42																						
40	4.5/4-/5+	4	10	3.5	3-	4.5 4-/5+	2	1	8	5	18	40	5		5.5	3	5	G 3 E	1	4	60	C-
38			9	3.4																		
35									7			35	4.5	E			4.5	UFX			55	D+
32			8	3.1																		
30	5	3		3	4	5 mangelhaft	0	0	6		<17	30	4		4	2	4		0	3	50	D
25	5.5/5-/6+					5.5 5-/6+			5				3.5									
20	6 ung.	2	5	2		6 ung.			4				3					U F				
15			4		4				3													
0							-3															

NORTH AMERICA:

N America grade	Sussex %
A+	80
A	75
A-	70
B+	65
B	60
B-	55
C+	50
C	45
C-	40
D+	35
D	30
F,W,I	0

At institutions where the grade of A+ is not awarded but A- is, then A will be translated as 80. If you are at an institution where +/- is not used then A = 75.

- Where Canadian institutions give both percentage marks and letter grades, only the letter grade will be used in the translation.
- Waterloo marks are given only as percentages; however, these will be translated to letter grades through the old Waterloo system (see back of transcript) and these letter grades translated in to the Sussex mark by the standard methodology.
- For the institutions listed below, 3% should be added to the translated mark

Occidental College,
 Reed College
 UC Berkeley
 University of Pennsylvania
 University of Toronto

- For graduate courses (listed at the 500, 600 or 700 level) 3% will be added to the translated mark

VOLUNTARY STUDY ABROAD

PROPOSAL FORM

This form is for the University of Sussex to approve and record the courses that you intend to study abroad in place of the courses you will be missing at Sussex.

Applicants for North America, Asia & Australia:

- This form is to be completed AFTER you have been allocated a university place.
- Do not complete this form until you have discussed courses to be missed with your Study Abroad Departmental Representative.
- This form does not go to your exchange university and it will be your responsibility to register for courses at the appropriate time.

Applicants for Europe & Latin America :

- This form is to be completed BEFORE you have been allocated a university place and forms part of your application to be considered for your chosen university.
- Use the internet to research courses at your preferred host institution and put together a draft proposal BEFORE taking the form to your Study Abroad Departmental Representative.
- This form does not go to your exchange university and it will be your responsibility to register for courses at the appropriate time.

Please read the notes on the back page before completing this form.

[illegible]

Staff signing this form: For further information as required, please refer to the handbook '*STUDY ABROAD: Information and advice for Departments and Schools*'.

The student should get the signature of the Departmental Study Abroad Representative and then return the form to the International and Study Abroad Office. The form will then be sent by the ISAO to the Director of Taught Programmes for their signature. ***Please return the form in good time to the ISAO for the signature of the DTP to be obtained as this completes the process and allows us to allocate and/or confirm places.***

COMMENTS ON PROGRAMME AND ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS
<p><i>I confirm that credits, equivalence of courses and assessment implications have been addressed.</i></p> <p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>Name:..... Signed: Date:</p> <p>Departmental Study Abroad Representative OWNING MAJOR</p>
<p><i>I confirm that credits, equivalence of courses and assessment implications have been addressed.</i></p> <p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>Name:..... Signed: Date:</p> <p>Departmental Study Abroad Representative SECOND NAMED MAJOR/MINOR</p>
<p>Approval of this proposal by Director of Taught Programmes from relevant School:</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Name:..... Signed: Date:</p>
<p>ISAO will circulate copies to: Director of Study Abroad, Director of Taught Programmes, Departmental Representatives, School Office, Student Progress and Assessment Office, Student</p>

NOTES FOR STUDENTS COMPLETING THIS FORM

1. **Courses missed at Sussex:** All courses taken during the second and third years, including those taken overseas, count towards the student's degree. Courses taken abroad will have the same weighting for classification as those that you would have done during the same period at Sussex. First find out from your School Office which courses you would be taking at Sussex during the term(s) you propose to study abroad. (If you are doing a joint degree or a minor, you must replace the courses for all subjects.) If you will miss part of a year-long course, please discuss this with your Study Abroad Departmental Representative before proceeding further.
2. **Courses to be taken at the Host Institution:** You can find details of these:
 - on the Internet (direct links to partner universities are found on the Sussex webpage: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/International/europe/A-Zlinks.shtml>)
 - North America, Asia & Australia – in the course guides in Mantell 1A25 or via the links at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/International/america/map.php> (North American map with links)

N.B. Any subsequent changes made to the course choices on this form need to be agreed with your Departmental Study Abroad Representative as a matter of urgency, for the new courses to be approved as suitable for your degree programme.

3. **Credits:** Credits are a measure of workload. The credit values of the courses missed at Sussex **must** be shown alongside the equivalent credit values of the courses at the Host Institution. A full year's workload is 120 Sussex credits, which is equal to:
 - 60 ECTS credits in Europe
 - Varying equivalents for North America – please see Credit Document
 - Varying equivalents for Asia, Australia and Latin America – please ask in the International & Study Abroad Office
4. **Assessment:** Most European universities operate on a two-semester basis, where first semester exams are not taken until January. To enable Sussex students to spend just the autumn term abroad and return for the start of the spring term, arrangements need to be made with the host institution for students to be assessed before Christmas. The International and Study Abroad Office will check this with partner institutions, but sometimes it may not be possible and an alternative destination must be sought.
5. **Returning marks to Sussex:** It is the student's responsibility to ensure their host institution sends their marks to Sussex in time for the relevant Study Abroad exam boards. Do not leave your host institution without first having double checked how and when the host institution will deal with this.

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX – STUDY ABROAD 2009-2010
LEARNING AGREEMENT- 1st SEMESTER
VOLUNTARY STUDENTS

Name:		Host Institution:	
Degree: School:		Length of Study period:	

On this form you are required to fill in details of the courses you are taking in the **first term/semester** of your study period abroad. You must send this form to the International and Study Abroad Office as soon as you have registered onto courses at the host institution. The form will be checked by your Department Representative and returned to you.

The courses you list here should match those indicated on your original light blue "Proposal to Study Abroad" form. If you need to change any of these courses once you arrive at the partner institution, the changes must be agreed without delay with your Study Abroad Department Representative at Sussex, by email if possible.

If changes occur *after* you have sent back this form, you should discuss your new choices with your Department Representative at Sussex (by email) and then note down the names of the new courses on the attached "Changes to original Proposed Study programme" form before returning it to Sussex for signature.

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED STUDY PROGRAMME / LEARNING AGREEMENT

Course unit code	Course unit title	Language of Instruction	Hours In week	Mode of Assessment	ECTS Credits
Total					

Student's signature:..... Date:.....

SENDING INSTITUTION (SUSSEX) - We confirm that the proposed programme of study is approved.	
Departmental Representative's name and signature(I): Date:.....	Institutional Co-ordinator's name and signature: Date:.....
Departmental Representative's name and signature (II – in the case of students doing Joint Majors): Date:.....	

RECEIVING INSTITUTION - We confirm that the proposed programme of study is approved and details given are correct.	
Departmental Co-ordinator's name and signature: Date:	Institutional Co-ordinator's name and signature: Date:

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX – STUDY ABROAD 2009-2010
LEARNING AGREEMENT - 2nd SEMESTER
VOLUNTARY STUDENTS

Name:		Host Institution:	
Degree: School:		Length of Study period:	

On this form you are required to fill in details of the courses you are taking in the **second term/semester**. You must send this form to the International and Study Abroad Office as soon as you have registered onto courses at the host institution. The form will be checked by your Study Abroad Department Representative and returned to you.

The courses you list here should match those indicated on your original light blue "proposal to study abroad" form. If you need to change any of these courses once you arrive at the partner institution, the changes must be agreed straight away with your Study Abroad Departmental Co-ordinator at Sussex, by email.

If changes occur *after* you have sent back this form, you should discuss your new choices with your Department Representative at Sussex (by email if possible) and then note down the names of the new courses on the attached "Changes to original Proposed Study programme" form before returning it to Sussex for signature.

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED STUDY PROGRAMME /LEARNING AGREEMENT

Course unit code	Course unit title	Language of Instruction	Hours in week	Mode of Assessment	ECTS Credits
Total					

Student's signature:..... Date:.....

SENDING INSTITUTION - We hereby confirm the proposed programme of study is approved.	
Departmental co-ordinator's name and signature: Date:.....	Institutional co-ordinator's name and signature: Date:.....
Departmental Co-ordinator's name and signature (II – in the case of students doing Joint Majors): Date:.....	

RECEIVING INSTITUTION - We confirm that the proposed programme of study is approved and details given are correct.	
Departmental Co-ordinator's name and signature: Date:	Institutional co-ordinator's name and signature: Date: