

## **Planning Residence Abroad for Spanish 2 and Portuguese 2, 2016-17**

Notes for the first Residence Abroad Meeting, week 4, Semester 1

These notes are designed to enable you to work out what you have to do, by going through a number of question-and-answer routines. It is **entirely your responsibility** to make sure you do what is required by the deadlines given.

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- The Year Abroad Coordinator for students currently abroad in Year 3 is Dr Elena Sanz Ortega, email: [elena.sanz@ed.ac.uk](mailto:elena.sanz@ed.ac.uk)

Please allow us a minimum of 3 working days to answer your queries, and do not leave important matters until the last minute.

### **VERY IMPORTANT**

It is absolutely crucial that students familiarise themselves with the information which is available in Learn in the DELC Handbook and the DELC Year Abroad Handbook.

Most of the answers to the questions you may have are in these documents. Please consult them carefully and only contact the Year Abroad Coordinator about matters that are not covered in these documents.

- Queries about fees, insurance, the Mobility Online Portal/Erasmus grants should be addressed to the relevant department (i.e. Registry, [Insurance@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Insurance@ed.ac.uk) or the International Office respectively).
- Issues regarding a subject other than Spanish and/or Portuguese must be addressed directly to the relevant Department/Subject area.

First, some terminology: MEL = Modern European Languages; an “MEL student” is one doing two languages (and no other subject). OSNAL = Other Subject Not A Language; this includes all degrees whose title includes a non-language subject (e.g. Spanish and Linguistics).

**Question 1: how long do I have to spend in a Spanish-speaking or Portuguese-speaking country in my 3 Hons year?**

If the only language in your degree (whatever it is) is Spanish or Portuguese, then the answer is: 30 weeks. If this applies to you, go to the section entitled *30 Week Residence*.

If you are doing two languages, e.g. Spanish and French, or Spanish and Portuguese, you have to spend a minimum of 30 weeks in total in the countries of your two languages, and a minimum of 8 consecutive weeks in each. In practice, this means you have a choice between:

(a) Spending the academic year in one country and a short residence (8 weeks) in the other. If you wish to spend the academic year in a Spanish-speaking country, see the section entitled *30 Week Residence*. If you wish to spend the academic year in the country of your other language, see the section entitled *Short Residence*.

(b) Spending one semester in one country, and the other semester in the other. If you would like to do this, see the section entitled *One Semester Residence*.

### **Question 2: how does my 3 Hons year count towards my degree?**

In four ways. First: you have to complete the residence, or you cannot enter 4 Hons and therefore will not get your degree. Second: your residence abroad is part of the language learning process, and therefore contributes a number of credits towards your written and oral language courses, although assessment for this takes place entirely in fourth year. Third: if you are going to do a dissertation in fourth year, you will be expected to begin work towards this in third year. And finally: on almost all curricula, you have to do some work that is assessed in third year. This can take one of three forms: Erasmus marks from European universities at which you study; 'Year Abroad Essays' written for us; or essays written for other departments, for OSNAL students. For details on this, see the DELC Year Abroad Assessment Handbook and the requirements of your Degree in your DPT.

### **Question 3: what can I do during my residence abroad?**

One rule applies to all students: what you do during your residence in a Spanish-speaking or Portuguese-speaking country must involve you using Spanish / Portuguese language at an appropriate (i.e. advanced) level consistently. More on this below.

**For OSNAL students (including MEL and EUS):** for most students, the first choice is to spend the time studying your other subject at a Spanish or Portuguese university on a Erasmus exchange. Where your other subject is the first-named one in your degree (e.g. Law and Spanish), this should be arranged by the department of that other subject. Otherwise, you should apply for Erasmus through Hispanic Studies; see the section *Applying for Erasmus* below. However, given the limited availability of places, we cannot guarantee you a place. Relevant work (e.g. in the European Parliament for EUS) is also possible; see the section *Neither Erasmus, Nor Assistant*.

**For MEL and Single Hons Spanish students:** you can apply to be an assistant in a school; this is probably the best way to learn the real Spanish as it is spoken. See *Assistantships*. Or you can apply for an Erasmus place, especially if you want to spend only one semester in Spain or Portugal (i.e. for MEL students doing 2 languages and splitting their year between 2 countries).

**30 Week Residence** can be done as an assistant, or under Erasmus (two semesters), or neither; see details in all three sections, below.

**One Semester Residence** (only for students taking two languages) is most easily undertaken under Erasmus.

**Short Residence:** This only applies to students taking two languages, spending the academic year in the country of their other language (e.g. Chinese and Spanish). You are required to spend eight consecutive weeks in a Spanish-speaking country. Unfortunately, we are unable to help you with organising this, and we therefore do not require you to tell us about your plans at this stage. It is nonetheless essential that those plans satisfy the fundamental rule: what you do during your residence in a Spanish-speaking country must involve you using the Spanish language at an appropriate (i.e. advanced) level consistently.

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### ***Applying for Erasmus***

Erasmus is an EU scheme to enable students to spend part of their degree course studying at a university in another EU country. We have agreements with a number of Spanish and Portuguese universities (see list below); each agreement stipulates the number of students we can send there. Edinburgh University agrees to accept the same number of students here from those Spanish universities. As a result no fees are payable by you to the Spanish university; you pay fees only to Edinburgh.

Most universities will accept students either for one semester, or for two (Complutense in Madrid, and Sevilla are the exceptions and will only accept students for the full year).

As you will see from the information about Year Abroad Requirements, your Erasmus marks may count towards your degree. How, and how much, depends on your curriculum. If you are a single Hons Spanish or MEL student on Erasmus, your marks will definitely count. If you are an OSNAL student, you will have to ascertain from the OSNAL department whether they will count your Erasmus marks, or require you to do other work for them during your 3 Hons year. **In general, we, in Hispanic Studies, cannot give you that information.**

If you wish to apply for an Erasmus place, you must complete the appropriate parts of your Intending 3 Hons Schedule. Consult first the list of partner universities, and the separate page of *Advice on Choosing a University* below.

### ***Assistantships***

Being an English assistant in a Spanish or Latin American school has many advantages. You will certainly see the country and learn its language; and you will be paid quite a reasonable salary for the amount of work you will have to do. However, you have to be prepared: (a) to take the post allocated to you, wherever it is (you can specify the area you want to go to, but especially if it is a popular one there is no guarantee you will be sent there); (b) to arrive on time for the job, and stay for the full period of your contract; (c) to take the job of teaching English to schoolchildren seriously.

The British Council no longer does visits to individual universities, but you can check out their website for the latest information on their schemes.

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/language-assistants>

The British Council has now tightened up its deadlines so you will have to make sure that you meet them if you want to go.

### ***Neither Erasmus, Nor Assistant***

What can you do, other than Erasmus or an assistantship? You can study independently in Spain, Portugal or Latin America, or do a work placement.

Here are some ground rules for other students thinking of doing something different.

***Rule 1: you need a firm plan, notified to us, before the deadline for Erasmus if your residence is less than 30 weeks, and before week 9 if your residence is 30 weeks.*** It is our duty to ensure that all students have satisfactory plans for their residence abroad. The only plans that we can help you with are Erasmus, and assistantships. Therefore, if you want to do neither, you have to assure us that you have plans in place before the deadlines for these.

***Rule 2: we cannot take responsibility for your plans, or for what happens if they fall through.***

***Rule 3: all plans must satisfy the fundamental rule, which is that what you do during your residence in a Spanish-speaking or Portuguese-speaking country must involve you using the language at an appropriate (i.e. advanced) level***

**consistently.** We assume that Erasmus and assistantships satisfy this requirement. But for any other residence undertaken during the academic year, we need to check that your plans obey this rule. So ***you have to submit them to the Year Abroad coordinator for approval.*** To give some obvious examples of unsuitable plans: you cannot work behind a bar, on a shop floor, as an au-pair or as a guide for English-speaking tourists or schoolchildren. Nor can we simply accept an assurance that you will find work; we have to know what that work will be.

If you want to work for a company in Spain, Portugal or Latin America, they will probably ask for an agreement. This document makes it easier and cheaper for them to employ you for a fixed term; it certifies that your work with them fits into your studies for a degree. **Provided we approve the employment, we can provide such an agreement.**

***Rule 4: whatever you do must leave you time to fulfil your Year Abroad Requirements.***

***Rule 5: if you are an OSNAL student, any work you do should as far as possible be related to your OSNAL subject.***

### **Erasmus**

Given the high demand for Erasmus places, it is crucial that you read the information below and make your choices according to the instruction/advice given.

If you fill in your Prospective Form incorrectly, your application will go to the bottom of the list.

#### **Erasmus / Erasmus places administered by Hispanic Studies 2016-17**

University	Website	No. of outgoing students
Granada	<a href="https://www.ugr.es/">https://www.ugr.es/</a>	4
Madrid - Complutense [C1]	<a href="https://www.ucm.es/">https://www.ucm.es/</a>	4 full year
Madrid	<a href="http://www.uam.es/">http://www.uam.es/</a>	4
Salamanca	<a href="http://www.usal.es/">http://www.usal.es/</a>	6
Sevilla [C1]	<a href="http://www.us.es/">http://www.us.es/</a>	3 full year
Alcalá de Henares	<a href="http://www.uah.es/">http://www.uah.es/</a>	4
Almería	<a href="http://www.ual.es/">http://www.ual.es/</a>	1
Extremadura	<a href="http://www.unex.es/">http://www.unex.es/</a>	3
Málaga	<a href="http://www.uma.es/">http://www.uma.es/</a>	3
Barcelona - Autónoma	<a href="http://www.uab.cat/">http://www.uab.cat/</a>	4
Valladolid	<a href="http://www.uva.es/">http://www.uva.es/</a>	3

University	Website	No. of outgoing students
Córdoba	<a href="http://www.uco.es/">http://www.uco.es/</a>	2
Coimbra - Students in Portuguese Degree only	<a href="http://www.uc.pt/fluc">http://www.uc.pt/fluc</a>	3 full year / 6 if semester
Lisbon - students in Portuguese Degree only	<a href="http://www.letras.ulisboa.pt/pt/">http://www.letras.ulisboa.pt/pt/</a>	2 full year/4 if semester

### ***Advice on Choosing an Erasmus University***

Most of our Erasmus/Erasmus partner universities offer a wide range of subjects. Nearly all are suitable for MEL and single honours Spanish students, for whom the only requirement is that they should take courses related to Hispanic culture in the widest sense (history, literature, cinema, politics, economy of Portugal, Spain and/or Latin America, etc.).

For OSNAL subjects, please consult the OSNAL department. Special note for **Business Studies and Linguistics students**: it may well be worth asking if **Business Studies and Linguistics have their own specialised Erasmus places which they can offer you**, as these will be at universities they know about, which will definitely have suitable courses in those subjects.

One other piece of advice: it is tempting to head for big, well-known, cosmopolitan cities. However, long and sometimes painful experience has shown that it is significantly more difficult, in such cities (e.g. Madrid) actually to speak Spanish; making Spanish friends, integrating in local culture and finding Spaniards to share accommodation with may well be easier in smaller cities.

We will do our best to allocate you the place you want **BUT places are limited.**

### **And to find out more about a specific town/university...**

The International Office has set up a webpage on which students who are currently abroad can leave blog entries. You can look at those on [www.ed.ac.uk/student-exchanges](http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-exchanges) - there's a link on the left hand menu and you can also find it on the Student Testimonies page.

**N.B.** In order to make clear to us that you intend to carry out residence in Spain, Portugal or Latin America, and how you propose to do it, **it is essential that all students who have Spanish or Portuguese in their degree title complete the Intending 3 Honours Schedule and hand it in to the Teaching Office, even if you get an Erasmus place from another department or will be working.**  
**SEE DELC HANDBOOK FOR DEADLINE**

Without this, we will not know that you intend to carry out residence abroad and will be unable to help you. For those wishing to attend a University through Erasmus, this will be the only way to express your preferences.

## What you will need to do (in advance!)

Make sure that you hand-in any documents needing a signature from the Year Abroad CO in the TO, AT LEAST a week in advance of your deadline.

### Erasmus

- Learning Agreement: after you have accepted your place on Mobility Online, you will need to fill in a Provisional Learning Agreement listing the courses you will take. You can find the form for this on the International Office website.

To find courses: go to your host university website and search for suitable courses. It is important that you learn to navigate your university website, so please take your time looking around. The YA co-ordinator cannot help you with this.

Spanish and Portuguese Universities can be quite tardy putting their programmes up. If the programme for next year is not yet available, use course codes and descriptions from this year's programme.

- Proof of Spanish or Portuguese Language proficiency: please fill in the proforma on Learn and drop it off or email it to Fiona Jack in the TO for signature.

### Work Placements

Your placement **MUST** be approved by the YA co-ordinator **BEFORE** you accept any offer from an employer. Details of requirements for work placements can be found in the DELC Handbook.

### British Council

All relevant forms and information are available on the British Council website. After you have had your interview and submitted your form via the University, please address all enquiries to the British Council.

### **Remember:**

- You cannot apply for Erasmus AND British Council
- You cannot use Erasmus or British Council placements as 'back-up' plans
- Once an Erasmus or British Council place has been accepted, you cannot withdraw from it

The International Office states that "Once an Erasmus place has been accepted via the mobility online workflow, this decision is binding. Students can not withdraw from their Erasmus place at a later stage unless there are special circumstances which need to be discussed with the Year Abroad co-ordinator. **Any student who withdraws from an Erasmus place without written consent by their YA co-ordinator will no longer be eligible for the Erasmus grant**". Such

consent can only be given when there are specific health issues or personal special Circumstances preventing the student from going abroad.

- Any queries regarding Erasmus grants - contact the International Office

Finally, good luck planning your year abroad - put in the hard work now, and your year should be one of the most memorable of your life!

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