

# **SSEES**

# **YEAR-ABROAD HANDBOOK**

For students abroad in 2023-24

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Please note that this handbook is fluid and subject to change. The information it contains is correct at the date indicated on the front of the handbook and every effort will be made to update the handbook quickly when changes are required.

When you refer to the handbook, please ensure you are using the most up-to-date version (i.e. the version posted on Moodle). The date of the handbook is given on its front cover.

**The current version was last updated on 13 November 2022.**

## 1. Introduction

Studying abroad is a highly rewarding, though often challenging, experience. SSEES students returning from their year abroad describe their experience as ‘life-changing’, ‘inspiring’ and ‘the best year of my life’. The experiences and skills developed while abroad further academic and personal development, as well as cultural and social awareness, and provide a foundation for final-year undergraduate and

future postgraduate study. Employers of all kinds require people who can think and work in a global context; graduates who have embraced the challenge of a year abroad are best equipped to meet these demands.

The following pages summarise the year-abroad destination options on offer within each SSEES programme and explain what you have to do to prepare for your year abroad. **Please remember: your year abroad is your responsibility and you should take ownership of it. You are responsible for knowing and adhering to the programme requirements of your year abroad.** Please take some time to read through this Handbook, therefore, to explore the SSEES Year-Abroad Moodle site for second-year students and to browse the UCL Study Abroad Team's 'preparing to go abroad' webpages: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad>

## 2. Preparing for your year abroad

General advice about issues to consider when choosing your destinations can be found here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad>

Also use the resources on the YA Moodle site and bear in mind the advice given at that the year-abroad destination briefing in December.

i. First, make sure that you are registered on a four-year degree programme (your degree programme is recorded on your Portico account). **If you are not, you must apply to change your degree programme as soon as possible.** Information about how to apply to change degree programme is given in the SSEES Student Handbook here (see point 12.1.2 Changing Programme): <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/node/6139>

ii. By February, you will be automatically enrolled on the **UCL Study Abroad Preparation Programme**. All students who undertake a period of study abroad are required to follow and complete this programme prior to departure. The Preparation Programme is run by the UCL Study Abroad Team and takes place during Term 2 of this year. It is designed to provide you with the information you need in order to make practical preparations for your period of study abroad. Successful completion of the Study Abroad Preparation Programme is a prerequisite for progression to your year abroad. Students who do not fulfill all the requirements of the Preparation Programme by the stated deadline (usually the first day of Term 3) may be disqualified from studying abroad. Preliminary information about UCL's pre-departure preparation programme can be found here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad/pre-departure-programme>

iii. In addition to the UCL Study Abroad Preparation Programme, you are required to attend two compulsory SSEES briefings: the first, covering year-abroad destination options, takes place in December; the second, covering workload and assessment of your year abroad, as well as application information, is held in mid-January (see the calendar on p. 4 for this year's dates).

**Key dates for your YA preparation are given in the calendar below. Please make a note of them in your calendars now.**

## 3. Year abroad preparation – key dates for your calendars

07 December 2022	Compulsory SSEES Year-Abroad Briefing I – Your Year-Abroad Destinations
Nov 2022–Jan 2023	Students conduct individual research into year-abroad destinations

<b>11 January 2023</b>	<b>Compulsory SSEES Year-Abroad Briefing II - Workload and Assessment During the Year Abroad; Application Information</b>
January 2023	SSEES notifies the UCL Study Abroad Team of all students' destinations
20 January 2023	<b>SSEES deadline for submission of Notification of Year-Abroad Destinations Form.</b> You must complete the online form, accessed via a link on <i>SSEES Year Abroad Preparation (for Year 2 students)</i> Moodle site, by this date
<b>8 February 2023</b>	<b>RLUS deadline for applications for autumn semester 2023 RLUS placements and for full-year RLUS placements (autumn and spring semesters, 2023-24)*</b>
February 2023	UCL: Automatic enrolment of students on 'Preparation for Study Abroad' Moodle course (including online Health and Safety test)
March 2023	UCL: Pre-Departure Briefing (date and venue to be confirmed by UCL Study Abroad Team)
April 2023	UCL: Regional Study Abroad Preparation Meeting (date and venue to be confirmed by UCL Study Abroad Team)
March-April 2023	SSEES nominates students for exchange placements. Students receive information about application process from host universities
<b>March-July 2023**</b>	<b>Deadlines (various) for students on exchange and fee-paying placements to submit applications to host institution(s)**</b>
April 2023	UCL deadline for completing 'Preparation for Study Abroad' Moodle course (date to be confirmed by UCL Study Abroad Team)

**\*Important note for students using the RLUS programmes**

**You are responsible for submitting your application to RLUS.** Applications received after the RLUS deadlines (given above) will be accepted only if there are places available and there is time to arrange your visa.

**\*\*Important note for all other students (i.e. those not using the RLUS programme)**

**You are responsible for submitting your application to the host institution(s).** It is essential that you study carefully the application requirements and deadlines for the institution(s) where you wish to study. This information will be on the website of the relevant institution, most likely through their office for international students. Partner institutions observe their application deadlines very strictly and do not accept late applications. If you miss their deadlines, you could find yourself without a year-abroad placement and might have to interrupt or transfer to the 3-year degree programme.

#### **4. Choosing where to go: your programme guides**

Students on language degrees have been preparing for the year abroad with language tuition during the first two years of their degree. This will continue during the year abroad. For students on other degree programmes, knowledge of the local language, while advantageous, is not usually essential, as the discipline-based taught courses at our partner universities are delivered in English.

#### 4.1 Economics & Business programme (EBEES+YA)

EBEES+YA students are required to spend their year abroad in the SSEES region. They are required to spend a whole year abroad and to study at approved institutions. EBEES+YA students may not undertake work placements during the year abroad. The table below lists partner institutions that offer strong Economics and Business options. The website addresses given below take you to the universities' English-language homepages and to their Erasmus+ pages or exchange student pages, as relevant. **If you want to split your YA between two different institutions/countries, please check that your placement dates do not overlap.** In some institutions the autumn semester runs from September to February/March, for example.

University	Websites	Placement type
Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic	Homepage <a href="https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html">https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-145.html">https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-145.html</a>	Exchange
University of Helsinki, Finland	Homepage <a href="https://www.helsinki.fi/en">https://www.helsinki.fi/en</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.helsinki.fi/en/studying/how-to-apply/exchange-studies">https://www.helsinki.fi/en/studying/how-to-apply/exchange-studies</a>	Exchange
European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder), Germany	Homepage <a href="http://www.europa-uni.de">www.europa-uni.de</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.europa-uni.de/en/international-students/incomings/applying/erasmus/index.html">https://www.europa-uni.de/en/international-students/incomings/applying/erasmus/index.html</a>	Exchange
University of Warsaw, Poland	Homepage <a href="http://en.uw.edu.pl">http://en.uw.edu.pl</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://en.uw.edu.pl/education/exchange-and-guest-students/">http://en.uw.edu.pl/education/exchange-and-guest-students/</a>	Exchange
University 'Babes-Bolyai', Cluj-Napoca, Romania	Homepage <a href="http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/">http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://cci.ubbcluj.ro/erasmus/erasmus.php">http://cci.ubbcluj.ro/erasmus/erasmus.php</a>	Exchange

#### 4.2 Politics & Sociology programme (PEES+YA)

PEES+YA students are required to spend their year abroad in the SSEES region. They are required to spend a whole year abroad and to study at approved institutions. PEES+YA students may not undertake work placements during the year abroad.

The table below lists partner institutions that offer strong Politics, Sociology and/or International Relations options. The website addresses given below take you to the universities' English-language homepages and to their Erasmus+ pages or exchange student pages, as relevant.

**If you want to split your YA between two different institutions/countries, please check that your placement dates do not overlap.** In some institutions the autumn semester runs from September to February/March, for example.

University	Websites	Placement type
Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic	Homepage <a href="https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html">https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-145.html">https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-145.html</a>	Exchange
University of Tartu, Estonia	<a href="https://ut.ee/en/international">https://ut.ee/en/international</a>	Exchange
University of Helsinki,	Homepage <a href="https://www.helsinki.fi/en">https://www.helsinki.fi/en</a>	Exchange

Finland	Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.helsinki.fi/en/studying/how-to-apply/exchange-studies">https://www.helsinki.fi/en/studying/how-to-apply/exchange-studies</a>	
European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder), Germany	Homepage <a href="http://www.europa-uni.de">www.europa-uni.de</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.europa-uni.de/en/international/Students/Incomings/Applying/Erasmus/index.html">https://www.europa-uni.de/en/international/Students/Incomings/Applying/Erasmus/index.html</a>	Exchange
University of Warsaw, Poland	Homepage <a href="http://en.uw.edu.pl">http://en.uw.edu.pl</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://en.uw.edu.pl/education/exchange-and-guest-students/">http://en.uw.edu.pl/education/exchange-and-guest-students/</a>	Exchange
Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland	Homepage <a href="http://www.en.uj.edu.pl/en">http://www.en.uj.edu.pl/en</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://www.dmws.uj.edu.pl/en/erasmus-kraje-programu">http://www.dmws.uj.edu.pl/en/erasmus-kraje-programu</a>	Exchange
University 'Babes-Bolyai', Cluj- Napoca, Romania	Homepage <a href="http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/">http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://cci.ubbcluj.ro/erasmus/erasmus.php">http://cci.ubbcluj.ro/erasmus/erasmus.php</a>	Exchange

### 4.3 Languages & Culture programme

#### 4.3.i Central, Eastern and South-East European languages

The year abroad is a compulsory and integral part of the programme for all students taking language degrees at UCL. For students studying Central, Eastern and South-East European languages at SSEES, there is a range of Erasmus+ and non-Erasmus+ possibilities, as outlined in the table below. Alternative 'off-track' options may be considered. As these will by necessity be outside the Erasmus+ programme, they generally place greater administrative and financial demands on you. You must discuss any such 'off-track' proposals with the International Tutor before going making any formal arrangements or submitting an application. All 'off-track' proposals require final approval from the relevant Programme Coordinator. **If you want to/have to split your YA between two different institutions/countries, please ensure that you check that your placement dates do not overlap.** In some institutions the autumn semester runs from September to February/March, for example.

University	Websites	Placement
Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic	Homepage <a href="https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html">https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-1.html</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-145.html">https://www.cuni.cz/UKEN-145.html</a>	Exchange
University of Tartu, Estonia	<a href="https://ut.ee/en/international">https://ut.ee/en/international</a>	Exchange
University of Helsinki, Finland	Homepage <a href="https://www.helsinki.fi/en">https://www.helsinki.fi/en</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.helsinki.fi/en/studying/how-to-apply/exchange-studies">https://www.helsinki.fi/en/studying/how-to-apply/exchange-studies</a>	Exchange
University of Warsaw, Poland	Homepage <a href="http://en.uw.edu.pl">http://en.uw.edu.pl</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://en.uw.edu.pl/education/exchange-and-guest-students/">http://en.uw.edu.pl/education/exchange-and-guest-students/</a>	Exchange
Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland	Homepage <a href="http://www.en.uj.edu.pl/en">http://www.en.uj.edu.pl/en</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://www.dmws.uj.edu.pl/en/erasmus-kraje-programu">http://www.dmws.uj.edu.pl/en/erasmus-kraje-programu</a>	Exchange
University 'Babes-Bolyai', Cluj-Napoca, Romania	Homepage <a href="http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/">http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://cci.ubbcluj.ro/erasmus/erasmus.php">http://cci.ubbcluj.ro/erasmus/erasmus.php</a>	Exchange
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary	Homepage <a href="http://www.btk.elte.hu/en">www.btk.elte.hu/en</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.elte.hu/en/erasmus">https://www.elte.hu/en/erasmus</a>	Exchange
University of Zagreb, Croatia	Homepage <a href="http://www.unizg.hr/homepage/">http://www.unizg.hr/homepage/</a> Erasmus+ <a href="http://www.unizg.hr/homepage/international-relations/partnerships/erasmus/erasmus-ka107-partner-countries/info-incoming-students-ka107/">http://www.unizg.hr/homepage/international-relations/partnerships/erasmus/erasmus-ka107-partner-countries/info-incoming-students-ka107/</a>	Fee (off-track)
Sofia University, St Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria	Homepage <a href="https://www.uni-sofia.bg/eng">https://www.uni-sofia.bg/eng</a> Erasmus+ <a href="https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/eng/the_university/international_relations/exchange_students">https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/eng/the_university/international_relations/exchange_students</a>	Exchange
University of Belgrade, Serbia	Homepage <a href="http://www.bg.ac.rs/en/">http://www.bg.ac.rs/en/</a> Mobility information <a href="http://bg.ac.rs/en/students/students.php?submenuheader=10">http://bg.ac.rs/en/students/students.php?submenuheader=10</a>	Fee (off-track)

#### 4.3.ii Russian language

A period of study abroad at an approved institution is a compulsory and integral part of the programme for students taking Russian degrees at UCL.

The exchange scheme does not apply to Russia, so SSEES pays the tuition fees charged by RLUS.

- Students taking BA Russian Studies, BA Russian and History and BA Russian with an East European Language, BALC and ESPS: you will normally go on your placement for 34-36 weeks.
- Joint-honours students (ie. students taking BA Russian and another language): you will split your year abroad between your Russian language placement and the country of your other language.

**SSEES recommends the following year-abroad placements for Russian language:**

### **1. RLUS placements: Tallinn, Estonia and Astana, Kazakhstan**

RLUS (Russian Language Undergraduate Studies) is a registered charity (non-profit making) that arranges Russian-language tailored courses on behalf of many British universities. It is an organisation with years of experience. RLUS quality controls its courses with input from British universities, and arranges two pastoral visits each year, during which RLUS representatives meet with students and the local organisers. You will find yourself studying with students from UCL and other UK universities if you enrol on a RLUS placement. Information about RLUS courses can be found on the RLUS website ([www.rlus.co.uk](http://www.rlus.co.uk)). You should spend some time exploring this website and reading the documents posted there to help you decide where to spend your year abroad. SSEES recommends the following RLUS placements (not in any order):

#### **Autumn semester 2023**

- Tallinn, Estonia Language Link course
- Astana, Kazakhstan Language Link course

#### **Spring semester 2024**

- Tallinn, Estonia Language Link course
- Astana, Kazakhstan Language Link course

#### **Autumn and spring semesters 2023-24**

- Tallinn, Estonia Language Link course
- Astana, Kazakhstan Language Link course

### **2. Free mover programme, Tartu, Estonia**

If you enrol on the Free movers programme at University of Tartu in Estonia – <https://ut.ee/et/sisu/free-movers> – you will be able to create your own programme of study of Russian-language courses that are offered by the university. You should spend some time exploring this website and other webpages to identify which module you would like to take. This option enables you to learn the Russian language within a university environment – and also select other non-language modules in combination with the Russian-language courses.

**PLEASE ALSO NOTE THE FOLLOWING AS YOU CONSIDER RUSSIAN PLACEMENTS:**

1. **Students on BA Russian Studies, BA Russian with an East European Language, BA Russian & History, BALC and ESPS:** if you arrange a full year abroad through RLUS, you must choose either two one-semester courses in different locations or a full-year course (36-week course)



at the same Language link location. Please bear in mind that studying at two different institutions will require you to have two different visas, one for each location.

2. **Joint-honours students with two languages (BA Russian and another language):** You must choose either a course in the autumn semester or in the spring semester. NB: Please check with your other department if there are any restrictions on which semester you study in the other country. Please also check that your two placement dates do not overlap. In some European institutions the autumn semester runs from September to February/March, for example.
3. RLUS will only run a course if there is enough demand. For this reason, RLUS asks you to indicate a first choice destination and a second choice destination on your application form. Please do not begin to plan your year abroad until you have heard from RLUS that you definitely have a place on the course you have chosen and that the course is running.

## 5. Waiving the year abroad

Students on the Economics & Business and Politics & Sociology degree programmes are not required to spend a year abroad: it is your choice to join the YA programme. If you are enrolled on a degree 'with a year abroad' in these areas, you can therefore apply to transfer to the equivalent three-year degree programme, if for any reason you decide not to spend a year abroad. Information about how to apply to change degree programme is given in the SSEES Student Handbook, here (**see point 12.1.2 Changing Programme**): <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/node/6139>

For students enrolled on a UCL language degree, however, it is compulsory to spend a year in the country whose language you are studying. The study abroad requirement for language-degree students can be waived only in exceptional circumstances and generally requires students to satisfy the following criteria:

- evidenced domestic, personal (including medical) or political circumstances which render the period abroad impossible
- evidenced native/near-native knowledge of the relevant language
- evidenced previous residency in the country of at least one year or previous study for a minimum of one year at an approved HE institution in the country; and
- presentation of an equivalent programme of study to replace the year abroad.

If you think that you may qualify for a waiver, you must put your case in writing to the International Tutor, who will forward it to your Programme Coordinator for approval, if it meets the criteria set out above. Good academic standing in your study at SSEES so far is essential. If given preliminary approval for a waiver by SSEES, and after you have provided relevant documentation as evidence of your status, the request will be forwarded to the UCL Joint Faculty Tutor for further consideration. Please note that the Faculty Tutor is extremely strict about granting such waivers. If your waiver request receives Faculty approval, the application is then also subject to approval by UCL, which cannot be guaranteed by SSEES or Faculty.

Generally, language students who are unable to go abroad for significant reasons, but who do not qualify for a waiver from the year abroad, will usually be required to apply to transfer to a relevant three-year exit-only programme of study. For students taking language degrees in SSEES this is usually entitled BA East European Languages and Culture. This is not always the most appropriate solution, however. If you think you may need to apply to change degree programmes (because you cannot go abroad for significant and evidenced reasons) you must discuss this with the International Tutor.

## **6. Failure to complete the year abroad (once it has begun)**

If you fail to complete your year abroad after you have embarked on it, you are generally expected to transfer to an appropriate three-year degree. For students in the Economics & Business and Politics & Sociology programmes, this means the three-year versions of those degrees (BA EBEES or BA PEES).

For students in Languages & Culture, the relevant three-year exit-only degree is usually entitled BA East European Languages and Culture. Students who transfer to three-year exit-only degree programmes are usually expected to follow in year 4 the same programme diet they would have taken had they completed the year abroad successfully. Any requests to deviate from the usual programme diet should be addressed to your Programme Administrator in the first instance, for approval by your Programme Coordinator.

**NB: It is not possible to repeat an incomplete year abroad.** Non-completion of the year abroad may result from e.g. failure to complete the course of study at the host institution, failure to pass assessments held at the host institution, or failure to complete the four UCL year-abroad shell units.

## **7. Workload during the year abroad**

### **7.1 Year-abroad workload for 2023-24 – overview**

All year-abroad students are required to enrol on modules worth 60 ECTS over the course of the academic year. Students spending a semester in two different countries, or at two different host universities, are required to enrol on modules worth 30 ECTS in each semester. (NB: You are not required to achieve passes in all the modules you enrol on; see Section 8 below).

### **7.2 Year-abroad workload for students on BA EBEES + YA and BA PEES + YA programmes**

You must enrol on modules at your host institution up to the amount advised above, i.e. 60 ECTS over the course of the academic year. Students spending a semester in two different countries, or at two different host universities, are expected to take modules worth 30 ECTS in each semester.

You must select modules that are relevant to your UCL degree programme. There is room for some flexibility, however, and you may choose some unrelated modules, if you would like to, though these should not dominate your programme of study. If in doubt, check your module choices with the International Tutor. You are strongly encouraged to take a language course.

SSEES recognises that the workload associated with modules of the same ECTS value varies considerably from institution to institution. There may therefore be cases when a slightly lower ECTS course load is appropriate and can be approved by SSEES. If you wish to take a course load of less than 60 ECTS (over the whole year), you should write to the International Tutor to make your case after you

have arrived at your host institution. Approval for the reduced load will then be sought from your Programme Coordinator.

As part of selecting your modules, students on exchange placements are required to complete a Learning Agreement (LA) that has to be approved both by the relevant co-ordinator at your host institution(s) and by the SSEES International Tutor. You might have to complete two LAs for each placement – one for your host university and one for UCL. The UCL LAs are administered by the UCL Study Abroad Team. If you are on an Erasmus+ placement they will write to you about this and send you the forms. They are also on the UCL website, here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/global-opportunities/study-abroad-and-erasmus/documents-and-forms>

In summary, in order to meet the workload requirements, during your year abroad you must:

- Attend and complete the full course of study at your host institution(s)
- Take modules up to the value of 60 ECTS over the whole year
- Choose a majority of modules that are relevant to your degree programme
- Complete the paperwork requirements for UCL (see below)
- Attend classes regularly (the UCL minimum attendance is required in all classes).

### **7.3 Year-abroad workload for Russian Language & Culture students studying through RLUS**

You are automatically enrolled on a tailor-made Russian language and culture programme. In order to meet the workload requirements, during your year abroad you must:

- Attend and complete the full course of study at your host institution(s)
- Take and pass all the courses that make up the programme (on RLUS placements all courses are compulsory and you are given no choice about the courses you take;
- Complete the paperwork requirements for UCL (see below)
- Attend classes regularly (the UCL minimum attendance is required in all classes).

### **7.4 Year-abroad workload for all other Language & Culture students**

You must enrol on language and culture (plus other track-relevant) modules at your host institution up to the amount advised above, i.e. 60 ECTS over the course of the academic year. Students spending a semester in two different countries, or at two different host universities, must take modules worth 30 ECTS in each semester.

SSEES recognises that the workload associated with modules of the same ECTS value varies considerably from institution to institution. There may therefore be cases when a lower ECTS course load is appropriate and can be approved by SSEES. If you wish to take a course load of less than 60 ECTS (over the whole year) or 30 ECTS per semester, you should write to the International Tutor to make your case after you have arrived at your host institution. Approval for the reduced load will then be sought from your Programme Coordinator.

As part of selecting your modules, students on exchange placements are required to complete a Learning Agreement (LA) that has to be approved both by the relevant co-ordinator at your host institution(s) and by the SSEES International Tutor. The LAs are administered by the UCL Study Abroad Team. If you are on an exchange placement they will write to you about this and send you the forms. They are also on the UCL website, here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/global-opportunities/study-abroad-and-erasmus/documents-and-forms>

In summary, in order to meet the workload requirements, during your year abroad you must:

- Attend and complete the full course of study at your host institution(s)
- Take modules up to the value of 60 ECTS over the whole year (30 ECTS per semester)
- Choose modules that include both language courses commensurate with improving your language skills sufficiently to participate in year 4 courses on your return to UCL and cultural studies and/or track-specific courses relevant to your degree programme
- Complete the paperwork requirements for UCL (see below)
- Attend classes regularly (the UCL minimum of attendance is required in all classes).

## 8. UCL assessment – how to pass the year abroad

The Year Abroad shell module is pass/fail only, so the marks you receive for the modules you take at your host institution(s) will NOT be included in your final UCL degree classification. However, as in each academic year at UCL, your year abroad will contribute four compulsory course units (also referred to as ‘shell units’) to your degree. The modules for which you are required to register during your year abroad are the following: SEES0138 Year Abroad Term 1 (2CU/30ECTS) and SEES0139 Year Abroad Term 2 (2CU/30ECTS).

Students will be judged to have passed the 4CU shell units (which is required for students to be able to progress to year 4 of their degree) by meeting the following criteria:

### 1. Completion of the required duration of the year-abroad placements

**Evidence required:** Confirmation of Arrival and Confirmation of Departure Forms\* for each placement, plus Study Abroad Team questionnaire\*\* for each placement

- ### 2. Successful completion of the required number of modules taken at host institution(s).
- As outlined in the previous section, you are required to take modules worth 60 ECTS over the year abroad as a whole (30 ECTS per semester). **However, in order to pass the Year Abroad you must gain passes in modules worth a minimum of 45 ECTS over the full academic year.** Joint-honours students (ie students whose programmes cover two languages jointly – eg BA French and Russian; BA Czech and German; BA Russian and Serbian/Croatian etc) and who are spending a term in two different countries): please note that you must split the 45 ECTS as equally as possible across the two placements (i.e. you must pass a minimum of 22 ECTS in one semester and a minimum of 23 ECTS in the other semester). This is a compulsory requirement as the two halves of your degree must remain balanced. **Evidence required:** transcript from host institution(s)\*\*\*

**\*Confirmation of Arrival and Departure Forms:** These are a UCL requirement and the UCL Study Abroad Team will give you information about this as part of their Study Abroad Preparation Programme. Briefly, you are required to submit two forms (a confirmation of arrival form and a confirmation of departure form) for each host university you attend. You should always keep copies of these forms. If you are on Turing placements then you must also complete the Turing grant receipt by the arrival deadlines for each semester. These forms are all managed by the UCL Study Abroad Office, and there are deadlines for their submission. Contact the UCL Study Abroad Team ([study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk) or <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/askucl-student-enquiry-system>) if you have any questions about this requirement.

**\*\*The Year-Abroad Questionnaire(s):** These are a UCL requirement and the UCL Study Abroad Team will give you information about them as part of their Study Abroad Preparation Programme. Briefly,

at the end of (each of) your SSEES year-abroad placement(s), you will need to complete an online year-abroad questionnaire. If you are spending the entire year at one institution you will only need to complete a single year-abroad questionnaire. If you are splitting your year between two institutions you will need to complete a separate year-abroad questionnaire for each placement. The questionnaires are managed by the UCL Study Abroad Office, and there are deadlines for their submission. Contact the UCL Study Abroad Team ([study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk) or <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/askucl-student-enquiry-system>) if you have any questions about this requirement.

**\*\*\*Transcript from host institutions:** You are responsible for ensuring that your host university forwards your transcript to UCL at the end of your period of study.

## 9. Costs, funding and finance

See: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad/tuition-fees-and-financial-help>

There are three basic categories of costs that apply to the year abroad:

**i. Fees payable to UCL:** During the year abroad, home fee-paying students are required to pay to UCL a certain percentage (usually 15%) of their usual annual tuition fee to cover the costs of preparation, monitoring, pastoral care and general administration. Overseas students are required to pay a larger percentage to UCL during their year abroad (usually 50% of their usual UCL tuition fee). See <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad/tuition-fees-and-financial-help>

**ii. Fees payable to your host institution(s):** If you are studying abroad through an exchange or bilateral agreements, free movers programme, or through the RLUS and HSE L&C programmes, you are not usually required to pay tuition fees to your host institution. However, you may be charged a student enrolment or registration fee and required to pay a small deposit. You are expected to pay this fee yourself and such fees are non-refundable by UCL.

**iii. Travel, administration, preparation, visa and living costs:** you will have to finance your living costs in full during the year abroad, including additional expenses relating to visas and so on. For Russian language students there is also a small additional administrative charge made by RLUS. Please note that RLUS may charge you additional fees if you miss specified deadlines or request changes to existing arrangements, to cover the cost of the extra administration involved.

If you are abroad you may be eligible to apply for a Turing Grant for the duration of your programme participation. The amount of the grant varies from country to country (to reflect variation in cost of living) and from year to year. The UCL Study Abroad Team administers the Turing grants, so if you have questions about this, please contact them ([study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk) or <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/askucl-student-enquiry-system>).

Information about the above issues and finance during your year abroad generally can be found on the Study Abroad pages of the UCL website, here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad/tuition-fees-and-financial-help> You should read this information carefully and thoroughly. If you have any questions not answered by these webpages, please contact the UCL Study Abroad Team via email: [study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk) <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/askucl-student-enquiry-system>

## Financial assistance during the year abroad

There is information about financial support during your year abroad on the UCL website, here (scroll down to the heading 'Financial Assistance'): <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad/tuition-fees-and-financial-help>

## Insurance

UCL offers a year-abroad insurance scheme that covers all year-abroad students. Details will be provided at the compulsory UCL Pre-Departure Briefing to be held in Term 2. See here for information: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad/insurance>

## 10. Selecting your year-abroad destinations: what to do next

- a. **Actively research the different destinations that are available to you.** Spend time exploring the websites of the institutions where you might like to study. Speak to students who have been abroad on SSEES placements in previous years. There are links on the year-abroad Moodle site and in this handbook to the university websites listed in Section 3 of this handbook. The website <https://globalgraduates.com> (formerly [www.thirdyearabroad.com](http://www.thirdyearabroad.com)) is the UK's largest network of students who study or work abroad and is a helpful source of anecdotal information about different year abroad destinations and options (please note, however, that SSEES cannot vouch for the accuracy of information posted on this website).
- b. Discuss the different destination options with family and friends.
- c. Meet your Personal Tutor to discuss your year-abroad plans, if you would find this helpful. Also talk to your language tutors, many of whom will know the different universities well, and to your module tutors, who may have knowledge of the countries you're considering.
- d. Look at the UK Government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office's 'Foreign Travel Advice' webpages for the countries you're considering. Consider LGBTQ+ matters, racism and crime.
- e. Look at the 'making a decision' resources on the year-abroad Moodle site.
- f. Once you have chosen your destination(s), complete the year-abroad notification of destination(s) form (details to follow by email) by the January deadline (see calendar: p. 4).
- g. Check that your passport is valid and will be valid for the whole duration of your year abroad and beyond. ***If your passport expires earlier than required or there are not enough clear pages, please apply for a new passport immediately.***
- h. Also please keep in mind that you may now also need a visa for studying in the EU – see: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/studyabroad>
- i. Read the UCL study-abroad website carefully, particularly the advice relating to health. See: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/studyabroad>
- j. Make sure you understand the application process you need to undertake in order to get on the course(s) of your choice. This information will be found on the university websites, or on the RLUS website if you are applying through them. If you are applying through an exchange



agreement or free-movers programme, you will be sent application information by the host institution after the International Tutor has nominated you for study there.

- k. Check and double-check the timeline of events detailed in Section 3 of this handbook (p. 4) and be sure not to miss any events or deadlines.
- l. Check and make a note of the application deadlines for the institution(s) and placements you are applying for. Remember it is your responsibility to submit the application for your year-abroad placement. Most institutions do not accept late applications so you must meet all the deadlines. If you miss them, you may find yourself without a year-abroad placement and will either have to interrupt or apply to transfer to a three-year degree programme.
- m. Keep your UCL password up-to-date and check your UCL email account regularly. **Year-abroad information will be sent to your UCL e-mail address only.**
- n. If you are booking a RLUS placement, familiarise yourself with the terms and conditions. If you cancel a RLUS course too close to the start date, you may be liable for paying the tuition fees to RLUS.

## 11. What if I experience problems during my year abroad?

Occasionally students studying abroad experience academic, personal, health or welfare problems. Often, the support services, student bodies and international offices at the partner university are able to help you resolve these problems and should usually be your first port of call. However, it is important that you don't feel remote from UCL or SSEES during your year abroad.

The academic part of your year is the concern of your Programme Coordinator, as in other years of your degree, and your overall welfare and year-abroad experience are the concern of the SSEES International Tutor, as well as your SSEES Personal Tutor. **If you do have problems and you need the support, intervention or help of UCL and/or SSEES, then please write to either the International Tutor or your Personal Tutor, as you prefer.** Most problems can be overcome with a little help. If you are not sure who your Personal Tutor is, check your Portico account as this information is given there.

Occasionally, students on their year abroad experience difficulties relating to health and welfare or their dealings with the local university. This is rare but if it does happen you should write immediately to the **SSEES International Tutor or to your Personal Tutor**. Information about your key year-abroad contacts in UCL and SSEES are given in the next section.

## 12. Key points of contact

In addition to the support services you will be introduced to during enrolment at your year abroad institution(s), there are a number of important UCL and SSEES points of contact concerning your academic programme, your YAP, financial matters and your personal well-being. Before contacting those listed below, however, please consider whether you can find the answers to your questions through one of the following web resources (if not in this *Handbook*):

**SSEES:** <https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=25716>

**UCL:** <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/studyabroad>

RLUS: <http://www.rlus.co.uk>

### **1. SSEES Year-Abroad Administrator - Mr Robert Bodden: [ssees.yearabroad@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ssees.yearabroad@ucl.ac.uk)**

Contact Robert if you have queries about year-abroad administration relating to your SSEES placements, both while you are planning your year abroad in your second year and while you are on your year abroad in year 3.

### **2. SSEES International Tutor - Dr Aglaya Snetkov: [a.snetkov@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:a.snetkov@ucl.ac.uk)**

Contact Aglaya if you have queries about: your year-abroad destinations or options; the UCL academic and workload requirements during the year abroad; any pastoral or welfare concerns; anything else.

- By appointment via Teams or in person: please email me to arrange a mutually convenient time.

### **3. Your Personal Tutor**

Your personal tutor will remain in contact with you throughout your year abroad. Check your Portico account if you are not sure who your PT is.

### **4. UCL Study Abroad Team**

There is a huge amount of information about all aspects of your year abroad on the webpages of the UCL Study Abroad Team, and this should always be your first port of call if you have any questions about your year abroad: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/studyabroad>

If you cannot locate the information you require on these webpages, contact the Team as follows:

- Email: [study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:study-abroad@ucl.ac.uk) or <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/askucl-student-enquiry-system>

If you have queries regarding financial matters, contact the UCL Study Abroad Team.

### **5. SSEES Programme Administrators and Programme Coordinators**

You should contact your Programme Administrator and/or Programme Coordinator with any questions about your SSEES degree, even while abroad (e.g. module choices for year 4 etc). The people in these roles do change from time to time, so you should check on the SSEES website to find their names and contact details, here:

Programme Administrators: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/people/student-administration-office>

Programme Coordinators: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/people>

### **6. RLUS**

For students on RLUS placements only, if you have any questions about any aspect of your RLUS placement, contact Lynne Attwood, the RLUS Operations Consultant: Lynne Attwood [L.attwood7@btinternet.com](mailto:L.attwood7@btinternet.com)

### **7. UCL Global Student Assistance Programme**



The UCL Global Student Assistance Programme offers free, 24-hour confidential support to all Study Abroad students while they are abroad. This programme gives you access to a team of highly trained advisors and counsellors, who provide in-the-moment support and advice on a range of issues, with structured counselling by telephone. They can also provide country-specific advice and signpost students to further resources on a variety of topics, including housing, legal, financial and health matters. This service is completely free to students and is independent from UCL, providing an impartial, confidential source of support. For contact details and more information see: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/while-youre-abroad/global-student-assistance-programme>

## **KEY SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SUMMARY)**

### **1. UCL Study Abroad Team Website**

Please spend some time browsing this website. It contains a huge amount of useful information that you will need now, as you prepare for your year abroad, while you are on your year abroad and after your year abroad has ended and you are preparing to return to UCL for the final year of your degree.

Home page: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/studyabroad>

Preparing to go abroad: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad>

UCL Pre-departure preparation programme: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/preparing-go-abroad/pre-departure-programme>

Support while you're abroad: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/global-opportunities/study-abroad-and-erasmus/while-youre-abroad>

(Information about: Personal and emotional support; Support if you're a victim of crime or antisocial behaviour; Financial support; Insurance; Emergency support; the Global Assistance Programme) is available through this page).

Documents and Forms: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/global-opportunities/study-abroad-and-erasmus/documents-and-forms>

Returning to UCL: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/go-abroad/study-abroad-and-erasmus/returning-ucl>

### **2. SSEES Moodle sites:**

#### **SSEES Year Abroad Preparation (for Year 2 students)**

You should now be enrolled on this Moodle site. Write to [ssees.yearabroad@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ssees.yearabroad@ucl.ac.uk) if you are not enrolled on the site and should be.