

Higher education study or work abroad: student grant rates 2018-19

Answers to frequently asked questions for students and parents

Updated 23 March 2018

Overview

- Erasmus+ grants are available to support UK higher education students spending time studying or working abroad in [Programme Countries](#).
- The Erasmus+ UK National Agency, a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK, sets the Erasmus+ study and work abroad grant rate for students each year, taking account of the level of demand from institutions (mainly universities). The grant is intended as a contribution to costs while studying or working abroad.
- For the academic year 2018-19, the grant for studying or working abroad equates to €130 per month more than the minimum amount set by the European Commission.

How much grant can students receive?

- UK students who spend up to a year of their course abroad in 2018-19 through the Erasmus+ programme will be eligible for grants of up to €350 per month for study, or up to €450 per month for student traineeships, depending on the destination country.
- For study abroad, disadvantaged students* will also receive €120 more per month, when applied and approved by their university. Disadvantaged students who carry out a traineeship will receive an additional €20 a month on top of the higher grant amount as outlined above.
- Students still receive their UK maintenance grant and/or loan. There are no tuition fees in the host country, and many UK students spending a full year studying or working abroad may qualify for a substantial discount of their tuition fees for the time away.

What can students spend the grant on?

- How a student spends the money is up to the individual.
- The grant is intended to make a contribution to the extra cost of living abroad.
- Students should **not** rely on the grant to cover every cost and should plan to have enough money to cover their first few months abroad themselves for things like rent, food, socialising, and travelling.

Is the grant the same for everyone?

- How much each UK student can receive depends on the funding allocated to their university against the number of students from that university who want to take part. It will also depend on the destination country, and if a student wants to do academic study or a student traineeship.
- UK students who want to study in countries where there is a high average cost of living, detailed in the table below, are eligible for up to €350 per month they are there, and in other countries they can receive up to €300 per month.
- There is an additional €120 per month for students from disadvantaged backgrounds* studying abroad.
- If students want to do a traineeship, the amounts are greater – up to €450 or €400 a month, with an additional €20 a month on top for disadvantaged students.
- In 2018-19 students from Overseas Countries and Territories (OST) will receive extra financial support for travel and a higher monthly grant rate. Students from OST should consult with their Erasmus+ university co-ordinator for further details.

These are the high and medium/lower cost of living countries for UK students:

Higher cost of living countries 450 train / 350 study (euro per month)	Medium/lower cost of living countries 400 train / 300 study (euro per month)
Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

How is the grant rate worked out?

- The total budget for Erasmus+ comes from the European Commission every year.
- The European Commission decides each country's budget and how that money can be split across the sectors and activities involved in the programme, according to a set formula.
- The amount available per student is then decided by the UK National Agency for Erasmus+, the British Council working in partnership with Ecorys UK, in consultation with UK universities, and others involved in higher education in the UK, such as the Government and the UK Higher Education International Unit.
- The rate for 2018-19 was agreed in March 2018.
- Each year UK universities must apply to the UK National Agency for Erasmus+ funding for their students.
- The aim is to support as many UK students as possible, and to make it fair. All UK students studying or working in the same country are eligible for the same rate, although universities can decide to fund fewer study or traineeship months where necessary, depending on how much funding they are allocated and the demand from their students.

Is it expensive to study in Europe?

- According to an [independent survey by HSBC \(featured in The Telegraph\)](#), Erasmus+ students are said to be financially better off than those students who stay in the UK to study, due to tuition fees being covered in the host country and the cost of living abroad in some EU countries being cheaper than others, which is why there are different categories of countries and funding.
- Erasmus+ is an affordable opportunity to experience study in another country in Europe. Students can still receive their maintenance grant and/or loan, their tuition fees abroad are covered, there is an Erasmus+ grant while studying or training, and they may also qualify for a substantial discount on any UK tuition fees for that year away.

What are the benefits?

- The experience gained from studying abroad through Erasmus+ helps students stand out from the competition when applying for jobs after graduation.
- Employers value international experience, as 64% of employers think international experience is important for recruitment.
- According to the [EC's Erasmus impact study](#), the unemployment rate for Erasmus students is 23% lower five years after graduation than other graduates. One in three trainees were offered a position with their host company after graduation, which demonstrates the employability prospects and earning potential of participating in the Erasmus+ programme.
- The British Council report '[World of Experience](#)' surveyed 1,148 UK residents between the ages of 25 and 65 and found that international experience is key to unlocking innovation in the workplace. Almost half of those surveyed who had spent time abroad went on to have an innovation-focused role in their working life. Also, those with international experience were more likely to be in roles with an international focus, with 60 per cent liaising with international colleagues, suppliers and customers, compared with less than 30 per cent of those without international experience.

Do all students have the same grant across Europe?

- Hundreds of thousands of students from all over Europe take part in Erasmus+ every year, and students from each country receive a different grant rate, depending on their country's budget from the EC and the number of students.
- The average grant rate for student mobility across the EU was €274 in 2013-14, according to the EC's [Erasmus statistics 2013/14](#) report published in January 2016, so UK student grant rates for 2018-19 are above that average.
- This means that students could make friends with someone getting a bit more money, the same, or less.

When will students receive their grant?

- Students receive their funding from their home university, **not** the Erasmus+ UK National Agency.
- In a typical year, universities receive the funding between June and the end of September, and then they make the grant payments to individual students. The timescale for funding is slightly different for each university, because checks have to be carried out, every university's application is different and each grant agreement needs to be tailored to the university.
- Each university then makes its own arrangements for paying its students.
- In summary, the funding process starts with the UK National Agency sending a grant agreement to the university, and continues with the university completing and returning the paperwork, then finishes with the UK National Agency issuing the grant payment to the university.
- The UK National Agency works closely with universities to ensure students know when to expect their grant.

What about students going abroad to countries outside Europe?

- Universities are also able to apply for Erasmus+ funding to send students abroad to countries outside Europe, known as [Partner Countries](#). The overall budget allocated for this element of the programme, called International Credit Mobility, is much smaller and fewer institutions apply for this funding.
- Eligible students going from the UK to Partner Countries could receive a monthly grant of €700 and also receive a travel contribution based on the distance they are travelling.
- Students should first check with their university to find out if they offer this activity and then ask for further information from their university's Erasmus+ office.

**Disadvantaged students are defined broadly as those with an annual household income of £25,000 or less, but students should check their eligibility with their home university's student finance or study abroad office.*