

Higher education study or train abroad grant rate 2015-16

Frequently asked questions and answers for students and parents: 23 February 2015

Overview

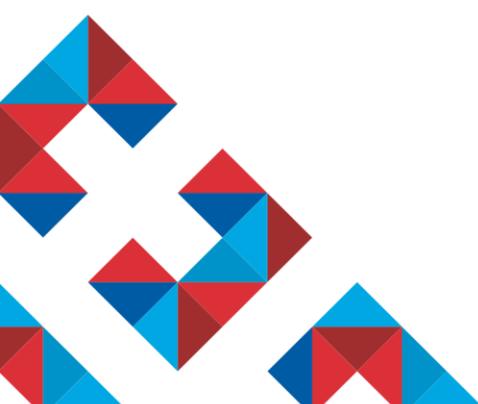
- The Erasmus+ UK National Agency, a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK, is pleased to announce that 50 million euro in Erasmus+ grants will be available for 2015-16 to support UK higher education staff teaching and training and students who want to study or train in Europe.
- The UK National Agency has set the Erasmus+ study and train abroad grant rate for students taking account of what is expected to be a high level of demand from institutions (mainly universities) and students to study or train/work abroad,.
- The grant is a contribution to the costs of studying or training/working abroad, to help as many students as possible to take part in the scheme and receive Erasmus+ funding, and to make the best use of the funding available from the European Commission.
- The monthly grant, for study and training/working abroad, is 100 euro more than the minimum figure allowed by the European Commission.

How much can students get?

- UK students who decide to spend up to a year of their course in Europe in 2015-16 through the Erasmus+ programme will be eligible for grants of up to 300 euro per month for study, or up to 400 euro per month for student traineeships, depending on the country they go to.
- For study abroad, disadvantaged students* will also receive 100 euro more per month.
- This grant is a contribution to the extra costs of living abroad, which is why it varies by country.
- Students still receive their UK maintenance grant or loan, there are no tuition fees in the host country, plus for many students spending a full year of study or training/working abroad, there is a substantial discount on any UK tuition fees for that year away.

What can students spend the grant on?

- The grant is extra money, on top of the maintenance grant or loan and for long term study or training/working of a year, there is a substantial discount on any UK tuition fees for that year away.
- The grant is intended to make a contribution to the cost of living abroad.
- Many universities advise that students should not rely on it to cover every cost and should plan to have enough money to cover their first few months abroad themselves. Rent, food, socialising, travelling and how a student spends the money is very much down to the individual.



Is the grant the same everywhere?

- Each year UK universities must apply to the UK National Agency for Erasmus+ funding for their students.
- 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 country they go to, and if they want to do academic study or a student traineeship.
- All UK students are eligible for the same grant rate, but universities have some flexibility in managing their budget to meet demand.
- With a budget very similar to last year's, and the high demand forecast this year, the UK National Agency expects to fund the majority of the student activity predicted by universities, though this means that universities may decide to fund fewer study or work abroad months where necessary, depending on eventual demand from their students.
- UK students who want to study in countries where there is a high average cost of living, like Norway or Sweden, are eligible for up to 300 euro per month they are there, and in other countries, they can receive up to 250 euro per month.
- There is an additional 100 euro per month for students studying abroad and from disadvantaged backgrounds*.
- If students want to do a traineeship, the amounts are greater – up to 400 euro or 350 euro a month respectively.
- These rates are 100 euro more than the minimum rate specified by the European Commission (which runs the Erasmus+ programme across all countries involved).

These are the high and lower cost of living countries:

400 train / 300 study (euro per month) High cost of living countries	350 train / 250 study (euro per month) Lower cost of living countries
Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Norway, Sweden	Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, 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 as they run Erasmus+ across the European Union and other countries.
- 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.
- For the early years of this new Erasmus+ programme, which started in 2014 and runs until 2020, the budget stays about the same though more UK students want to study or work/train abroad than ever before.
- 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 UK Government and the UK Higher Education International Unit.

- The rate was decided on 9 February 2015.
- The aim is to support as many UK students as possible, and to make it fair, so all UK students studying or working/training in the same countries are eligible for the same rate, though 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 a recent [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.
- 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 and 1 in 3 trainees were offered a position with their host company after graduation, which demonstrates the employability prospects and earning potential of having participated in the Erasmus+ programme.
- Erasmus+ is an affordable opportunity to experience study in another country in Europe as students are able to receive their maintenance grant or loan, their tuition fees abroad are covered, there is an Erasmus+ grant while studying or training, and if there is a whole year of study or traineeship, there is a substantial discount on any UK tuition fees for that year away.

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 EU and how many students from each country go.
- So students could make friends with someone getting a bit more money, the same, or less.

When will students have their grant this year?

- Students receive their funding from their home university and not the National Agency.
- In a typical year, universities receive the funding sometime 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.
- 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.

- Each university then makes its own arrangements for paying its students. Due to a combination of issues in 2014, some students studying or working/training abroad between June and December 2014 may have received their grant later than expected.
- This was due to complications caused by the introduction of this new, Erasmus+ programme, now covering schools, colleges, adult education, youth and sport, as well as higher education.
- This year, the UK National Agency expects the process of paying participating universities to be much smoother for everyone, especially with the grant rate already decided.
- We have learnt from last year's student feedback and we will be working closely with universities to ensure students know when to expect their grant.

Notes:

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