

# Experiential Overseas Learning (EOL) Recruitment and Selection Policy

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# Experiential overseas Learning Recruitment and Selection Policy

## 1. Equal Opportunities Statement

Study abroad commits to ensuring that its' opportunities are free from discrimination on any grounds. The acceptance of on the programme is made on merit, the sole selection criteria being the individual's suitability to become an EOL. This is in line with UoC equal opportunities policy which can be found here: <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/equality-and-diversity>

Study abroad will not tolerate discrimination or prejudice of any kind. We also resolve to create a positive and welcoming atmosphere for all our students, members of staff, service users and visitors. We are committed to an equal opportunities policy that ensures that no student, member of staff, service user or visitor will be treated less favourably, except on grounds of competence.

## 2. Recruitment

Recruitment of students will initially be carried out via open days and presentations in induction week. We will showcase experiential overseas Learning opportunities and invite students to register their interest in experiential overseas Learning.

### 2.1 Study abroad Website

Students browsing the Study abroad Website will easily find the experiential overseas Learning section and will be able to register their interest via email. The website also details the application deadlines, destinations and other pertinent information including selection criteria.

### 2.2 Notification of Experiential Overseas Learning Opportunities

Once a student has registered their interest in becoming an EOL, their details will be entered onto a mailing list; they will be invited to attend one of four information evenings held through the year and sent a stock email advising them to apply as soon as possible.

### 2.3 General Promotion of experiential overseas learning opportunities

The Study abroad team will at various points during the academic year, undertake activities designed to raise awareness of experiential overseas learning and recruit students.

### 3. Applying for experiential overseas learning; time scales for applications

#### 3.1 timeline of the application and paperwork issued

**At any point during** the year students register are permitted to register their interest via emailing [ahsplacements@chester.ac.uk](mailto:ahsplacements@chester.ac.uk) ; this information is on the website.

All students' who have emailed to register their interest in experiential overseas learning, will have their details entered onto an **emailing list on the next working day**.

All students' who have registered their interest will be invited to an information evening and asked to complete a UoC application form; this invitation and paperwork will be sent **out within 3 to 5 working days of receiving their email during the application cycle**. Outside of the cycle the student can expect to hear **within 3-5 working days of the cycle opening**.

This email contains **four attachments**: an application form; advice for referees and an EOL cost and procedures table (detailed in appendices one, two, and three). The application asks them to write a 250 word answer to the question

“Why would you make an ideal learning in the wider world candidate?”

Completed applications will be evaluated by the study abroad team and students can expect to hear from us **within four working weeks**.

**We cannot guarantee that a student will receive the above if they fail to supply the correct email address.**

#### 3.2 academic and personal suitability for experiential overseas learning

Students who fulfil the **academic criteria, which is an overall average of 45%** or above for their Level 4 studies and predicted similar for level 5; will be invited to have an interview with the international tutor. At this stage the tutor will assess their academic and personal suitability to participate in experiential overseas learning, this interview will take **no less than 20 minutes and no more than one hour** and will be documented against the questions detailed in appendix five.

This will all be documented at interview and notes will be made available in the event of an appeal.

#### 3.3 outcome of applications

**The University of Chester application closing date is around 17<sup>th</sup> of November every year and all successful candidates will be notified by around the 7<sup>th</sup> of December.**

Important to note all students' who complete the application process **at least one month before the final deadline** – including the supplying of references and have attended an interview; will have their applications' **reviewed by the panel ASAP** and the panel will inform these early applicants of their **decision within two weeks** of their interview. The panel aims to convene at least once a fortnight for these purposes and will notify the students in the event this is not possible due to staff absences.

### 3.4 destination specific presentation

Successful students will be invited to attend a destination specific presentation; wherever possible this is done by either students who have been before or the project providers these presentations will take place in the last week of January of the departure year.

## 4. Selection

### 4 Criteria for Selection

When selecting applicants to move on to the next stage, the Study abroad team will convene as a panel and will rate the applicants based on: their responses to the questions asked in the application form; their interviews and the quality of their references. Selecting applicants must not involve any discriminatory practices and should be done systematically; the selection Panel will involve the whole Study abroad team. If all staff cannot convene there should always be two people involved to ensure a fair and open process.

#### 4.1 academic ability

Students who fulfil the **academic criteria, which is an overall average of 45%** or above for their Level 4 studies and predicted similar for level 5; will be invited to have an interview with the international tutor. At this stage the tutor will assess their academic suitability, including checking their grades on SIS and ascertaining whether or not they are permitted to undertake ML5004 on their course.

#### 4.2 personal commitment to studying abroad

Next the panel will discuss the outcomes of the interviews, one to one sessions, the student's application form, their commitment to the process and their references.

In addition the panel will also be looking for **commitment to the experience** as detailed on the application form; for example details of any previous **international experience**, their reasoning for wanting to engage in ML5004 as a whole and **why this country or programme**; what they expect to get out of it and how they hope to make a difference as an EOL. The panel will be looking of genuine **commitment to wanting to internationalise**, an **understanding of the country specific issues** they may encounter; **a dedication to their academic work**-this is not just about grades but, **their level of attendance on their course and their work ethic**. The panel will also be looking to see them **demonstrating their commitment to raise the funds** for their trip, their understanding of **the responsibility of becoming an EOL** and finally **signs of maturity** in their outlook.

This will all documented at interview and notes will be made available in the event of an appeal

*The students are given the opportunity to try and meet these criteria from the very early stages; after an initial enquiry the students are sent appendices three and four; these provide detailed information about becoming an EOL,, destinations and methods and the need to conduct plenty of independent research.*

#### 4.3 disagreement

If there is a disagreement over the student's suitability, the study abroad panel will send the application form and references to the head of international relations via the study abroad email address for the final decision.

#### 4.4 appeal

In the event a student is unsuccessful for a place on experiential overseas learning and they believe they have fulfilled all the criteria; they are to send a letter to this effect to the Head of the International centre detailing and including evidence of why they believe their application was inappropriately rejected.

#### 4.5 equality

As detailed in the UoC equal opportunities policy: criteria such as age, gender, race, marital status, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy should not be used in any circumstances to determine an individual's suitability to for an exchange.

#### 4.6 documentation

Reasons for selection and rejection must be documented to confirm that the same criteria have been applied to all candidates. All application forms, including those who are declined will be kept and archived for three years once the process is finished.

#### 4.7 withdrawal

Students who withdraw after the closing date will still be liable to pay up to half the administration fee, students are informed of this at the beginning of the process, it is detailed on appendix two and students are advised again in writing immediately before payment is requested.

#### 4.8 alternative destinations

In the event there are more applications than spaces at a particular project; the student will be offered an alternative destination.

**We cannot guarantee that an application will be considered if the applicant fails to supply the correct email address.**

### 5. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in July 2025

### 6. Appendices

Appendix one:



APPLICATION FORM  
**World**

**ML5004 Learning in the Wider**

STUDENT'S PERSONAL DATA  
your passport)

(all information should be as per

Family name: .....

First name(s): .....

Male/ Female: .....

Date of birth: day/month/year .....

Country of birth:.....

Nationality: .....

Passport Number: .....

Home  
address:.....  
.....

.....  
.....

Phone: .....

Email: .....

Student number:.....

Next of kin

Name.....Relationship.....

..... Please print clearly. Use an address that you check regularly\* May we contact them in the event we cannot contact you or in an emergency? Yes/No

I would like to do my placement in:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Costa Rica, with Languages and cultures of Africa | <input type="checkbox"/> Knysna, South Africa with Edge   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lyon, France (IDRAC)                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Uganda with Nurture Africa       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sri Lanka with Travelteer                         | <input type="checkbox"/> USA with IEANA                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cuenca, Spain                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Jyväskylä, Finland |

\*I have an overseas opportunity that I have initiated

Please choose at least two options and number in order of preference

DEGREE for which you are currently studying:

.....

**Acceptance on the programme is subject to students:**

- Gaining an overall average of 45% or above for their Level 4 studies and predicted similar for level 5

**Tell us about yourself...**

**Please answer the following question in a clear, thoughtfully prepared short statement of 200-250 words**

**“Why would you make an ideal learning in the wider world candidate?”**

***Things to consider:***

- Introduce yourself and tell us some interesting facts about you, for example: specific situations from your past (i.e. extracurricular activities: societies, hobbies, job experience, travel, intercultural experience, even school trips or family holidays and coursework presentations etc. that may have been challenging).
- What would you consider your best characteristic and your greatest achievement?
- Tell us what you hope to gain from this venture? And why this country or programme?
- How will studying abroad impact on your career goals and your final year of study for your degree?
- How has any previous international experience impacted you?
- How will you continue to be a global citizen on your return? For example: further travel, study opportunities, keeping in touch with new friends from abroad and so on.

<b>Short statement (about 200-250 words):</b>
<b>Financing the programme</b>
How do you expect to meet the cost of the Programme?*
In case you are not able to raise the amount of funds necessary, what will be your fall back option?*
Do you have any special dietary needs?

Do you have any health needs which may affect your participation in this programme? **(It is important to mention this at this stage)**

If you have a condition that requires prescribed medication and/or you are under a doctor's advisement this must be disclosed when applying for your travel insurance. Failure to disclose illnesses which you have been affected by in the full-year preceding your application may invalidate your insurance.

*NB. Those selected may be asked to provide a letter from their GP confirming that there are no health reasons why they should not participate.*

**Two references (one from your Personal Academic Tutor and another member of staff) to support your application are required.** These must be submitted with this application. Please indicate who you will ask to provide these. \*\*

Name:

Position/Status:

Name:

Position/Status:

- I will attend all ML5004 sessions and complete all pre-departure tasks set
- I understand that the University of Chester and placement organisations will take all reasonable care to ensure the safety of participants, but that they cannot be held responsible for events outside their control.
- If my placement is approved, I agree to follow the guidance of supervising staff, especially with regard to culturally sensitive matters (e.g. drink, smoking, sexual behaviour, dress code). I accept that failure to show cultural sensitivity may result in my failing the module (where it is assessed for academic purposes) or disciplinary action.

Signed ..... Date .....

**Your application is not complete unless you include:**

- ✓ A photocopy of your passport

- ✓ A references from your PAT
- ✓ A second reference from an academic tutor
- ✓ Your personal statement

I understand my information will be shared in a confidential manner with relevant university departments both here and with the partner organisation

I agree / do not agree to write a short statement (150-300 words) on my return with photographs/without photographs

I do/ do not consent to my data being anonymised and used for research purposes.

Do you have a declared disability (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) Please indicate whether or not this applies to you

Yes     No     declined to indicate

(Please strike through).

Student signature ..... Date .....

**For official use:**

University of Chester study abroad co-ordinator

Signature ..... Date .....

University of Chester study programme lead

Signature ..... Date .....

Please email to [studyabroad@chester.ac.uk](mailto:studyabroad@chester.ac.uk)

\*we will provide advice on fund raising activities and possible bursaries, however it is up to you to fund the opportunity.

\*\* We can provide a template for your reference on request

[Appendix two:](#)

**Character referee questions for consideration:**

Please comment specifically on the applicant in terms of the following:

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant?
2. Academic suitability regarding pursuing a year abroad.
3. Personal suitability for a year abroad
4. Weaknesses (if any) that may require extra support, this usually would not exclude student, but will help us to ensure the placement is equipped for the student.
5. Any other factors that you believe may affect a successful experience.

We are happy for you to create a template and use it for each student (such as the one below), so long as you feel you know each student well enough for you to write the reference.

\*Each student is responsible for the maintenance of the relationship with their PAT and has been advised as such. So if you feel you cannot complete the reference due to this then please let them know this is the case. We will not exclude the student due to a PAT refusal on these terms but this needs to be explicit.

**Grid for Academic reference:**

Please indicate the applicant's ability and academic **competence in comparison with other individuals whom you have known at similar stages in their academic careers.**

	Below average	Average	Above average	Outstanding	Inadequate opportunity to observe
Knowledge of degree subject					
Motivation and seriousness of purpose					
Ability to plan and carry out research/ independent study					
Ability to express thoughts in speech and writing					
Emotional stability and maturity					
Self-reliance and independence					

\*For example:

XXXXX is a student at UoC. She began her studies in and I have known her since xxx in xxx capacity.

Xxxx is a conscientious student who has shown a keen interest in her studies, she did well in her first year achieving an average of at least 50%. Her attendance and punctuality are both very good and she is able to express herself well both orally and on paper. She has demonstrated the ability to work as part of team via the assignments she has undertaken and she has the ability and initiative to work independently as shown in her academic achievements and extracurricular involvement in xxx.

Xxx is reliable and to the best of my knowledge honest and trustworthy. I recommend her to you for consideration for a year abroad.

[Appendix three:](#)

Welcome to study abroad and congratulations for making the first step in securing your **experiential overseas learning (EOL) provision**. Before moving on to your application, please read the following information and familiarise yourself with the general process of applying.

Places on ML5004 Learning in the Wider World are popular so the application procedure is competitive; therefore the application process will determine who will be eligible for a place. It is essential that you follow the steps below carefully.

### Important deadlines to note:

- The **Application Cycle** for outgoing students in **2023** runs from: **May 14<sup>th</sup> 2022**.
- All applications **must be in the study abroad office** by: **3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022**.
- You must complete part one of a detailed risk assessment by **January 7<sup>th</sup> 2023**. Failure to do this could mean that your place is given to someone else and that you are put on the waiting list.

	Process	Details	Costs	Deadlines
	<b>Stage One: Applying to become an EOL</b>			
	<b>Student: what you must do</b>	<b>Study abroad team: what we will do</b>		<b>The criteria stated under the deadlines section are mandatory, although mitigating circumstances with supporting documents may be considered.</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Contact</b> study abroad	A PowerPoint, procedures document and application form will be provided <b>via email</b> and we will invite you to attend a presentation evening.		These will be staged throughout the year in January, March, May, October and November.
<b>B</b>	Ensure you are registered on WB5101 AND that <b>you are able to undertake ML5004 on your programme.</b>	You will be transferred from WB5101 if you are successful, but you <b>MUST</b> be registered for WB5101 to apply.		This can be done from March of your first year.
<b>C</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research destinations available</li> <li>2. Choose your preferred option.</li> <li>3. Complete and your application form</li> </ol>	Your application will be evaluated and you will hear back from us within four working weeks.		Spaces for appointments are limited and are <b>allocated on a first come first serve basis</b> the earlier you complete the application form the better.
<b>D</b>	<b>Attend</b> an Information Evening as soon as possible.	These are designed to help you make your destination decisions. We will also offer advice on <b>fund raising*</b> , student finance and bursaries available, at these sessions.		As soon as an information evening is available; but do not wait to have attended before you apply.

<b>D</b>	<b>Attend interview</b> with Study Abroad Tutor.	You will be invited to have an interview with the study abroad tutor, to assess your suitability for experiential overseas learning at your chosen destination.		From the May prior to your intended departure the following May. For example from May 2022 for outbound May 2023.
<b>E</b>	<b>Await early decision*</b>	Students' who complete the application process at least one month before the deadline – including the supplying of references. Will have their applications' reviewed by the panel ASAP		<b>3<sup>RD</sup> OF OCTOBER</b> final deadline for an early decision  The panel will inform early applicants of their decision within two weeks of their interview.
<b>F</b>	<b>Await decision</b>	The Study abroad team scrutinise application as a panel and notify students of the outcome. Priority will be given to those who have attended an interview. You will need to have your interview by <b>29<sup>th</sup> of October</b> to support your application. If you have not been able to attend interview you may be offered a place pending interview.		<b>3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER ABSOLUTE DEADLINE</b>  Successful candidates will be notified by university email by <b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022.</b>
	<b>Stage Two you have been accepted as and EOL</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
	<b>Student: what you must do</b>	<b>Study abroad team: what we will do</b>		
<b>A</b>	Once places and destinations are confirmed, you will be required to complete and submit <b>part one of the Risk Assessment.</b>	We will send you part one of the risk assessment and corresponding dvice ppt. to help you prepare by <b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of December.</b>		This must be returned by email by midnight on <b>Thursday January 7<sup>th</sup> 2025</b>
<b>B</b>	Download a <b>module change form</b> from portal, get you HoD to Sign form and bring to international centre.	Once this is completed and approved you will be transferred from WB5101 to ML5004. You will be		<b>8<sup>th</sup> January 2022-11<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b>

		notified of rooms and times for module tuition		
	<b>Stage Four-</b>	<b>Preparing To Leave The Country</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
	<b>Student</b>	<b>Study Abroad Team</b>		
<b>A</b>	Destination specific interview and application	Will support your application to the project and provide evidence that you are suitable		11th January-18 <sup>th</sup> January
<b>B</b>	Pay destination specific deposit	The study abroad team will provide you with deposit information as we receive it*; there are early bird rates and other financial incentives to paying regularly and early	Between £300-400	18 <sup>th</sup> January -1 <sup>st</sup> February*
<b>B</b>	You must attend all sessions and complete pre-departure work for this 20 credit module	We will offer at least two times for the sessions and you will have all the resources needed on Moodle; as well as a detailed module handbook		All work will be set to clear deadlines, all classes are compulsory and will take place week commencing: 31 <sup>st</sup> of March *destination specific
<b>C</b>	Book flights*	Some projects will book flights for you; study abroad will also advise you on the best method of getting to your destination	Between £200-£800	2 <sup>nd</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> March *some projects will require you to book flights others will leave that up to you; just be aware that the flights prices can go up and up.
<b>D</b>	Organise jobs and other health related issues	We will inform you of best place to get jobs and which ones are necessary	£60-£110	4-8 weeks before you depart 2 <sup>nd</sup> -March- 2 <sup>nd</sup> April
<b>E</b>	Pay destination specific instalment	We will provide the payment details via your project providers and aid you with funding ideas	Between £300-700	11 <sup>th</sup> April-18 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>F</b>	Attend final departure brief and social	We will provide the venue and soft drinks	Whatever you decide to bring!	21st April
	<b>Stage Five-</b>	<b>Leave the Country and work towards becoming a global citizen</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
	<b>Student</b>	<b>Study Abroad Team</b>		

<b>A</b>	Catch your transport on time be a great ambassador for Chester and make a difference wherever you go whooo hooo you have reached the start of your adventure!!	Be here to support you via email, Skype, Facebook and in an emergency-telephone.	Your choice of suitable spending money. Our team will advise you of what students have needed in the past but ultimately it is up to you	Make sure you catch your flights, buses trains and coaches on time.
<b>B</b>	Participate, keep in touch, keep reflective diary and gather research	Be here to support you via email, Skype, Facebook and in an emergency-telephone.	A good awareness of risks and bags of confidence	Keep to all deadlines and timings set by your project provider
<b>C</b>	Write and hand in via Turnitin all course work for ML5004	All work will be set to clear deadlines; you will be given a reading list and academic support to achieve these deadlines	Possibly internet café if you decide to stay overseas	Exact deadlines will be given in February. In 2024 they were 12 <sup>th</sup> and 18 <sup>th</sup> of June
	<b>Return and share your experiences</b>	We will provide a returning debrief session and social	Souvenirs, post cards, photos, stories	<b>Exact debrief time will be voted on and set in April. In 2024 it was the 16<sup>th</sup> of June</b>