



# European Exchanges Application Guide



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# European Exchange Application Guide

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Welcome! We are delighted that you are considering spending a year abroad studying with a partner university. This guide is for **European Exchange** – Durham’s full-year exchange programme at European partner universities. If you are interested in working abroad in the form of a Global Internship or Placement Year, please visit the Global Opportunities homepage for more information: [Global Opportunities](#).

Please note: MLaC students please liaise directly with the School of Modern Languages and Cultures Year Abroad team, to whom you submit your application.

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## 1.0 General Information about European Exchange

The European Exchange Programme is for exchanges with our European partners. All of Durham's European partner universities can be found here: [Europe](#). Places at these universities are awarded using a competitive application process, described below.

The purpose of this document is to guide students from all Departments except MLaC through the application process. MLaC students must apply through the School of Modern Languages.

Kindly note, you will first apply for a place through the Durham University European Exchange programme and, should you be successfully allocated one of your choices, you will subsequently apply to your host institution.

### 1.1 Am I eligible to apply?

The European Exchange programme is open to students from to all degrees. Applicants must, however:

- be in their second year;
  - Physics and Computer Science are an exception to this. Physics students have the flexibility to apply for the year abroad in any application period after their first year. Computer Science students are able to apply in their second or third year. Students should speak to their [Departmental Exchange Coordinator](#) if unsure.
- have a first year average of 55% or above\*.

Please note:

- Students who have received an offer of a [non-European exchange](#) place must contact the Global Opportunities Team to formally withdraw from the non-European programme before making an European application. Students who fail to do this will be considered ineligible for the European exchange programme and will not be offered a place. This is to ensure that students do not hold two offers of year abroad places at the expense of others who cannot receive an offer owing to limited places.
- the application process is competitive; therefore, you are not guaranteed a place;
- some partners may set their grade entry requirements at higher percentage than 55%. A European exchange place is contingent on meeting the partner's entry requirements.
  - \*Owing to partner entry requirements, Law requires a first year average of 60% or above
- some exchange places have language requirements. Please check their programmes to ensure that you have the language qualifications to participate.

### 1.2 When will I go abroad?

The exchange process works as follows:

- Apply during your second year;
- Study abroad during your third year;
- Return to Durham University for your fourth year.

Please note: Exchanges are for the full academic year. With the exception of MLaC students, students cannot study for only a single semester at a partner university.

### 1.3 Additional Year or Replacement Year?

Students can do one of two options, depending on their course:

Additional Year	Replacement year
Go abroad in year three, which will add a year in to your programme. Mostly this extends the length of your degree from three to four years (though for some integrated Masters this is from four to five years).	Go abroad in year three, with the year abroad replacing a year in Durham.  This is only offered by a limited number of four-year degree courses in the Science Faculty. <b>Please check with your <a href="#">Departmental Exchange Coordinator</a> for details before applying.</b>  Not an option for students on a 3-year course.
This is a pass/fail year and the grades do not affect your final degree classification.	Grades count towards final Durham degree mark.
The final degree programme will be <i>[your degree title (BA, MA etc)] XXXX with Year Abroad</i> and you will receive a transcript from their host university to prove what you did abroad.	The final degree programme will be <i>[your degree title (e.g. MSc)] XXXX with Year Abroad</i> and you will receive a transcript from their host university to prove what you did abroad.
90+% of exchanges are additional year	Less than 10% of exchanges are replacement year.

### 1.4 Approximate timeline

The following timeline shows the approximate process for applying for an exchange. Please note the exact timeline may vary according to the exchange processes of the partner university abroad.

<b>Mid-late October</b>	Promotion events for exchanges, e.g. the Global Opportunities Fair.
<b>Mid-January</b>	European Exchange applications open.
<b>Mid-late February</b>	Applications close.
<b>Mid-late February</b>	Applications sent to Departments for approval and assessment.
<b>Late February</b>	Departmental Coordinators allocate departmental places.
<b>Late February</b>	International Office allocates Institution-wide places.
<b>Early March</b>	Students are informed of their allocation.
<b>March - April</b>	Durham nominates students to partner universities.
<b>May - July</b>	Students complete applications to partner universities*
	Apply for partner university accommodation (if applicable)
	Apply for a visa (if applicable)
	Attend pre-departure briefings
	Book travel
	Complete pre-departure process, including health declaration process, Viator travel cover application etc.
<b>August to October</b>	Depart for your year abroad
<b>Within a month of arrival</b>	Submit any paperwork if receiving funding such as Turing.



\* Please note the difference between applications. In order to apply to a partner university, students must have first successfully applied for a place on the European Exchange scheme. If you miss the internal application process, you will not be able to apply for a place with a partner. Therefore, you need to:

1. Apply internally to Durham's European Exchange programme.
2. If successful, you will be nominated to the partner by Durham University.
3. After nomination, the partner will invite you to complete an external application to their university on the exchange programme. This second "application" is in order for them to register you in their systems and check you meet their entry requirements.

## 1.5 Where can I go?

Exchanges can only take place with partner universities with which we have a formal exchange agreement. Our European partners are listed on the [Europe](#) webpage, if a university is not listed, you cannot apply to go there via the European Exchange scheme. Partners listed are split between two different types of partnership: Departmental and Institution-wide.

### 1.5.1 What is the difference between Departmental and Institution-wide exchange links?

The majority of European links are departmental. These are where there is a specific link from the department at Durham with the department at the partner university. The [Europe](#) webpage has a list of all Departments where students can access information about the Departmental links available to them

<https://www.durham.ac.uk/global-durham/global-opportunities/go-study-abroad/europe/>

#### Departmental Agreements

The majority of exchange agreements are at a departmental level. Please click on your relevant Department to find the agreements available to you.

**Combined and Joint Honours** students are able to choose from agreements within their subject area/s. Students are required to seek approval from all departments including the Combined Honours exchange coordinators.

<a href="#">Anthropology</a>	<a href="#">Archaeology</a>	<a href="#">Biosciences</a>	<a href="#">Business School</a>
<a href="#">Chemistry</a>	<a href="#">Classics</a>	<a href="#">Computer Science</a>	<a href="#">Earth Sciences</a>
<a href="#">Education</a>	<a href="#">Engineering</a>	<a href="#">English Studies</a>	<a href="#">Geography</a>
<a href="#">Govt. &amp; Int. Affairs</a>	<a href="#">History</a>	<a href="#">Law</a>	<a href="#">Mathematics</a>

Institution-wide links are special arrangements with European partners where an agreement has been signed to allow students from across all departments to complete an exchange, as long as appropriate modules are available at the partner university.

Durham is part of the Coimbra Group which has a Student Exchange Network that facilitates the movement of students between participating institutes. These are also institution-wide exchange links.

### 1.5.2 Which exchange links may I apply for?

**Departmental links:** Students may apply for links within their own department. Students cannot apply for links from other departments they do not study with. Example: A Mathematics student cannot apply for a History exchange partner.

All students make only one application (with up to three university choices). Students who study multiple subjects (such as Combined Honours, e.g. Liberal Arts, CHSS, Natural Sciences) also make one application (with up to three partner university choices) but can apply for links from each of their

departments. These students will be required to study the majority of their modules in that specific subject area during the exchange. E.g. a Liberal Arts student that selects a History Department partner, would need to study at least 50% of modules in History at that partner.

[Institution-wide links](#): Students from any department can apply for these links, as long as appropriate modules are available at the partner university. It is your responsibility to identify appropriate modules and their availability during the exchange period.

### 1.5.3 Restrictions

Our institution-wide partners may restrict some subject areas. Restrictions mean that students cannot apply for these subject areas. These are listed in a table on the Institution-wide pages. For example:

Partner Code	Partner Name	Country	Language*	Number of Places	Restrictions (courses to which students cannot apply)
A GRAZ01	<a href="#">Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz</a>	Austria	German, English B2	1	Applications for subjects with restricted admission will be considered upon prior consultation with the departments concerned.
D KOLN01	<a href="#">Universität zu Köln</a>	Germany	German, English B1	1	Medicine, Business Administration and Economics
D WURZBUR01	<a href="#">Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg</a>	Germany	English, German B2	20	Dentistry, Pharmacy and MBAs
E GRANADA01	<a href="#">Universidad de Granada</a>	Spain	Spanish, English B1	1	Architecture and Health Sciences

In the above example a DUBS student would not be able to select Business Administration and Economics modules at D KOLN01. Please note, the above table is a sample and is not exhaustive.

### 1.6 Language requirements

Language requirements are stipulated by the partner university. Each university has their own, independent policies regarding the listed required languages. Each page with partners has a table with language requirements if known. For example:

Partner Code	Partner Name	Country	Language	Number of Places*	UG	PGT	PGR
F PARIS648	Sorbonne Universite	France	French B2	3	X	X	
D TUBINGE01	Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen	Germany	German	2	X	X	X
G ATHINE01	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens	Greece	Greek/English	2	X	X	X
I PISA02	Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa	Italy	English	4	X	X	

F PARIS648: specifies that students must meet the entry requirement of French B2 on the CEFR scale. Therefore, students must be proficient in French to take part in the exchange.

D TUBINGE01: the entry requirement is German, but they have not set a defined level. In these cases, the expectation is that students are at a level to fully understand and participate in academic German.

G ATHINE01: lists Greek/English as their required languages. They are confirming that some modules are available in English, and some are available in Greek. It is the student's responsibility to identify the availability of modules in the language they are proficient in and whether they will require proficiency in both languages to take part in the exchange.

I PISA02: the partner teaches in English.

Please note, the above are hypothetical examples. Students are responsible for researching the language requirements of the exchange and ensuring they can meet those requirements for the universities they apply to.

The required level of language and method of evidencing proficiency will be specified by the partner university on their exchange webpages. Required language levels are often described within the [CEFR framework](#) of A1 (lowest) to C2 (highest).

## 1.7 What are my chances of success?

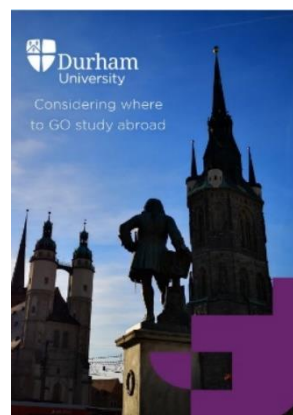
There are limited places at each partner university. The success rate for departmental partner links is approximately 90%, while for institution-wide links it is approximately 40%.

**Departmental links:** Students can only apply for departmental links within their degree subject(s). This means a much smaller potential pool of applicants are able to apply for the available places. Fewer people applying for the places means a higher percentage of applicants will be successful.

**Institution-wide links:** Students across the whole university can apply for these places, which are often very limited in number available. A larger potential pool of applicants means fewer people will be successful in their application.

## 1.8 Which partners should I choose?

Once you have found partners (either departmental or institution-wide) with modules in your subject area, only you can answer that question. Naturally, some universities will be more popular than others. We would, however, recommend that students consider how a partner fits their academic, career and extra-curricular ambitions or how a location fits any support requirements that you may have. Likewise, we would always recommend that students think beyond just university rankings and keep an open mind. We have produced a [Considering where to GO](#) guide that runs through some of the considerations that students may wish to make.



## 2.0 How to Apply

Applications must be submitted via an online application form. The form consists of the seven parts below, all of which must be completed:

- Part 1 - Student Details
- Part 2 - University Choices
- Part 3 - Module Choices
- Part 4 - Host University Research
- Part 5 - Personal Statement
- Part 6 - Upload: Statement of previous year's marks
- Part 7 – Declaration

### 2.1 Application Procedure

We will only accept online applications via the online form. The form will be accessible from <https://www.durham.ac.uk/global-durham/global-opportunities/go-study-abroad/apply/european-application/>

**You need to use a device that is linked to your Durham University account.** You may have to open a browser and enter the DU Hub (<https://durhamuniversity.sharepoint.com/teams/Hub>) which may ask you for your Durham login. To clarify, the application form is not downloaded from the DU Hub, it will be available from the European Application webpage stated above.

The deadline for submission online is:

**Friday 13 February 2026, 12:00 (noon GMT).**



Please give yourself plenty of time to apply in case you experience technical difficulties – we strongly recommend not waiting until just before the deadline to submit your application. Late applications will not be accepted (please see the ‘Late applications’ section below for potential exceptions to this rule).

The online application portal is a MS Form similar to this. You must apply using your Durham University credentials.



## Global Opportunities: Study Abroad - European Exchange Application 2025/26

The European Exchange Programme is for European Study Abroad places only.

Students may also talk to their exchange coordinator in your department **before applying for an exchange**. Please be clear about how an exchange fits into your degree programme and if there are any requirements set by your department for a year abroad. Once you have submitted your application online, it will be sent to the departmental coordinator, who will need to endorse the application. A list of coordinators is available online here: <https://www.durham.ac.uk/global-durham/global-opportunities/go-study-abroad/departmental-exchange-coordinators/>

There are seven parts to the application:

- Part 1 - Student Details
- Part 2 - University Choices
- Part 3 - Module Choices
- Part 4 - Host University Research
- Part 5 - Personal Statement
- Part 6 - Upload: Statement of previous year's marks
- Part 7 - Declaration

### 2.1.1 Information required on the online form

Personal Information	
Student ID	This information is required so that we can: a) Check your eligibility b) Nominate you (if successful) to the partner university.
Family Name:	
First Name	
<b>Durham</b> Email Address:	
Telephone/Mobile:	
Nationality	
College	
Year of study	
Disability declared?	This information does not form part of the scoring of applications. It ensures any eligible support / funding can be allocated in a timely manner.
Widening Participation	
Department	This information is required to check that your module choices and academic course abroad are approved by your department. <u>Please list all of your departments if joint honours.</u>
Full Degree Title:	
Programme Code ( <a href="#">see guidance below</a> )	
Additional or Replacement Year?	
Placement Choices	
Choice(s) of host university.	Up to three may be selected
Proposed learning agreement	
This is required to ensure that there are sufficient modules in your subject for a full-year workload at your choice of universities. You must fill out module choices for each university you choose and not just your first choice. Your proposed module choices are not rigid and may change in future.	
Module choices for a full course load for each university	<p>A full course load within Europe is 60 ECTS (European credit system) completed over the full academic year. The modules you provide for each of your choices should equate to 60 ECTS.</p> <p>You will need to list all of your proposed module choices for a full course load*. You <b>must</b> enter the choices in the following format:</p>

	[Module / Course Code (if known)]: [Module/Course Title]: [Number of host Credits].  E.g. Pol 007: Introduction to the politics of James Bond: 10 credits Econ 007: The Economics of Moneypenney: 20 credits Phy 007: The gravity of Skyfall: 20 credits.
<b>Host University Research Table</b>	
What accommodation is available?	This is required to demonstrate that you have considered how partner universities you choose suit your degree programme, lifestyle and budget. You must do some research before applying. The questions are a starting point for your overall research. You must do this for each university you choose.  No units have been specified ... e.g. it is acceptable to give costs per week, month or year.
What will accommodation cost?	
Will I need to pay for a meal plan?	
What are the term dates?	
What is the name of the closest city?	
To which airport would I fly?	
Do I need a visa? If so, what does this cost?	
Can I work with my visa?	
<b>Personal Statement*</b>	
Please describe in no more than 500 words how the proposed study placement(s) will benefit you academically personally and professionally, how you will maximise the benefits of your placement, and how it will enhance your long term career goals.	
<b>Previous Year's Statement of Marks</b>	
Upload of your previous year's Statement of Marks.  <a href="#">(Further guidance available below).</a>  <b>Please save as:</b> <b>SurnameForename.pdf (e.g. BloggsJoe.pdf)</b>	You can obtain your statement of marks from Banner Self-Service. Banner Self-Service is available at the bottom of all University webpages, in the Useful Links section. Once you log in, follow the option for Letters and Forms until you can download your Statement of Marks. <b>Please save as: SurnameForename.pdf (e.g. BloggsJoe.pdf)</b>  This is required as some partners require us to submit this as part of your nomination to them.
<b>Declaration and Submission</b>	
This section ensures that you agree to the terms of the programme.	

### 2.1.2 How to Find Your Programme Code

Your programme code can be found on your Statement of Marks (see the example below), which you will download and submit in part 6 of the application process.

**STATEMENT OF MARKS**

**Name:** [Redacted]

**Date of Birth:** [Redacted]

**College:** [Redacted]

**University ID:** [Redacted]

**HESA ID:** [Redacted]

**Qualification Aim:** Bachelor of Arts

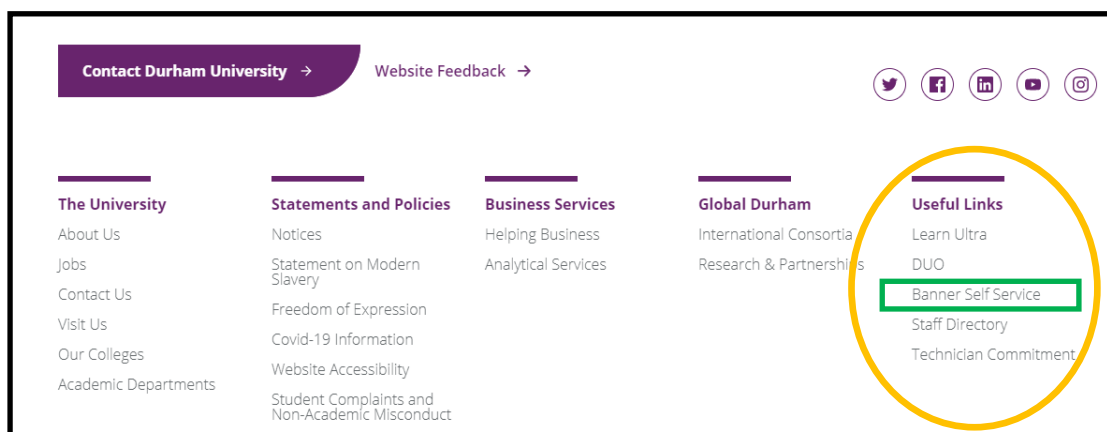
**Programme Title:** Geography

**Programme Code:** L702

Your code will be written here.

### 2.1.3 How to Download Your Statement of Marks

Your Statement of Marks can be downloaded from [Banner Self-Service](#). Banner Self-Service is available at the bottom of all University webpages, in the Useful Links section. Once you log in, follow the option for Letters and Forms until you can download your Statement of Marks.



### 2.2 Late applications

Applications have a set deadline and we have to be fair to applicants who submit within time limits. We strongly encourage you to submit your application early in case you experience technical difficulties and save a doc draft of your personal statement prior to the deadline. If you miss the official application deadline, the online application link will no longer work, and you will not be able to apply. Exceptions can only be made for late applications if you can **provide evidence** of either of the following:

- That you tried to apply before the official application deadline and were not able to do so for technical reasons, OR;
- That you were unable to apply due to exceptional unforeseen circumstances (for example, hospitalisation).

In such cases, please inform the Global Opportunities Team ([exchanges.studyabroad@durham.ac.uk](mailto:exchanges.studyabroad@durham.ac.uk)) immediately. We will only be able to grant you an extension if you meet ALL of the following criteria:

- 1) You have contacted the Global Opportunities Team no later than 12 hours after the application deadline has passed. After this time, your application can no longer be considered.
- 2) You have provided us with details about the unforeseen circumstances which prevented you from applying by the advertised deadline and are able to back up your claim with third party evidence
  - a. This evidence could include, for example: a medical certificate; a screenshot showing the issue at the point of failed submission, **including the exact date and time**; a draft doc version of your personal statement emailed to the Global Opportunities Team in which in the > File > Info > Related Dates > Last modified date and time is on or before the deadline.
  - b. You may be required to back your claim up with multiple pieces of evidence. E.g.

- A screenshot showing the internet is down will need to be backed up with the Word document timestamp (which can be saved on your local drive without the internet). This is to demonstrate that no advantage can be gained by post-deadline editing.
  - A Word document timestamp will need to be backed up with a screenshot showing the internet is down at or before the submission deadline. This demonstrates that an applicant has not simply neglected to submit in time.
- 3) You have sent a doc copy of your personal statement by email to the Global Opportunities Team within 12 hours of the application deadline.

If you are granted an extension, we will get in touch with you to instruct you on the next steps. You will need to make sure you submit your application during the allocated time slot. Failure to submit your application during the allocated time slot will result in your application not being accepted.

## 2.3 Departmental Approval

Once your application has been submitted, it will be sent to your [Departmental Exchange Coordinator](#) for approval. This is to ensure that there are sufficient modules in your subject for a full-year workload at your choice of universities. **It is your responsibility, via your own research, to ensure the partner university is able to deliver appropriate modules for your degree subject that meet the full course load requirement.**

Since academic approval is a requirement, we strongly recommend that you speak to your Departmental Coordinator prior to making an application. Indeed, for Replacement Year students this is a requirement to ensure grades can be transferred.

## 3.0 Allocation of Places

Prior to allocation, any applications that are not approved by [Departmental Exchange Coordinators](#) will be withdrawn.

### 3.1. Departmental Places

Departmental Exchange Coordinators assess your application and allocate you one of your chosen universities, if possible. When making allocations, Coordinators may take a combination the following into account:

- academic performance (see below);
- language requirements;
- person statements and;
- the ability to place the greatest number of students at partners.

### 3.2. Institution-wide Places

If you have applied for an institution-wide link, those choices will be considered centrally by the International Office in conjunction with your Coordinator, taking into account any departmental choices you have provided. Predominantly institution-wide allocations are made using academic

performance alone, however, the ability to place the greatest number of students at partners may also be considered.

### 3.3. Academic Performance

Academic Performance Academic scores are taken from your first-year performance relative to your class-peers for each module taken. The score for each module is then combined to produce an average ranking relative to your peers.

- This removes any bias towards departments who may have marked exams more generously but subsequently moderated with high grade boundaries for degree classification.
- The ranking takes into account module credit size.
- The ranking excludes marks where concession have been raised.

The data for scores is taken from the Academic Office records. The Global Opportunities Team can only accept the scores provided by them.

### 3.4 Notification of outcomes

The International Office will inform students of the outcomes of all applications via email. The estimated timeframe for receiving your outcome is early March.

## 4.0 What Happens Next?

### 4.1 If successful

You will be nominated by Durham to the host university. Thereafter, you will have to apply to the host university (so they can register you) and complete Durham's pre-departure process.

### 4.2 If unsuccessful

You are unable to undertake a study exchange. If you are interested in completing an alternative activity such as work or volunteering abroad, please visit the Global Opportunities webpage for further information: [www.durham.ac.uk/global-durham/global-opportunities/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/global-durham/global-opportunities/)

## 5.0 Info on Personal Statements

The best person to describe what you can gain from a Year Abroad and what you can contribute while there, is you! The best personal statements are personal to you, rather than a list of why a year abroad is generally a good thing.

### 5.1 The use of AI

Writing aids are commonplace and cross a broad spectrum: from simple spell checkers in MS Word to generative AI. While the exact line between what may (such as spell checkers) and may not be appropriate (generative AI) may be moot, the overriding principle is that your personal statement should be indeed yours. Thus, we do not recommend the use generative AI to write your personal statements. There are two key reasons:



First, to quote comedian Tom Lehrer: ‘Life is like a sewer. What you get out of it, depends on what you put into it.’ AI does not know you; it does not know your ambitions; it does not know what modules you may wish to study; and does not know all that you have done in the past. Asking generative AI to produce a personal statement without feeding it in-depth information about you and your planned exchange, will only produce extremely generalised statements.

## 5.2 Advice on writing a personal statement

Remember that you are applying to specific places, therefore, the best applications are able to weave a thread about these places through their application. As an example:

- You could justify applying for three universities in a single country by highlighting your interest and proposed dissertation in indigenous relations. You could highlight some courses you wish to attend and ideas for a dissertation.
- You could justify applying for three universities across countries in a region owing to their rugby excellence centres at which you wish to coach at (which intersects with your role of XXX in Durham’s Rugby team and your career ambitions for Y).
- You could justify a spread of universities in different countries and regions as they are tech hubs, which intersect with your academic course and career ambitions.

This approach that weaves a justification or theme throughout also means that you can give your first choice slightly greater focus, while still alluding to and justifying your second and third choices.

You do not need to show previous experience of travel/studying abroad (so we don’t disadvantage students who have not had access to such experiences in the past and ensure these opportunities are available to students from all backgrounds).

The Personal Statement asks you to describe in no more than 500 words how the proposed study placement(s) will benefit you academically personally and professionally, how you will maximise the benefits of your placement, and how it will enhance your long term career goals.

You are, therefore, encouraged to consider the following points:

- How does the proposed placement fit with and could potentially enhance your programme of study at Durham?
- Can you provide adequate academic justifications for the year abroad at each host?
- How does the placement support your future career aspirations?
- What benefits would the exchange placement bring to your final year back at Durham? This may be academically or otherwise.
- What personal benefits do you envisage you can gain through the exchange placement? For example, intercultural skills, language skills.

None of the above is a prescriptive magic formula! It is just a guide to help you to consider how to articulate your motivations for studying abroad and your qualities, skills and experience more generally, so that you can show what you can bring to the placement and act as a representative of Durham at the partner institution.

Finally, well done for reading this far and good luck!