

Stage 3 2020/21 BA International Modern Languages and DN530 EEWL pathway: Information for students

As you know, following UCD's decision, communicated on 15 May, to suspend outward and inward mobility for student and staff exchanges in Trimester 1 of 2020/21 you will unfortunately not be able to take up your place for study abroad in the autumn. However, we hope that exchanges will be running again in the spring for those who wish to travel. We acknowledge that this is very disappointing, frustrating and challenging for you and we understand how important the study abroad opportunity is for you personally and academically.

Your Programme Managers and Lecturers have been making arrangements to help you to continue your studies and below we outline the choices available to you. These are, of course, responses to an evolving and unprecedented situation and therefore they all involve compromise. However, they aim to support you in your learning and in maximising your potential, whilst minimising the impact on your degree GPA. Importantly, they seek to give you as much flexibility as possible to make the choice that best suits you and your personal circumstances.

Option 1: Study at UCD in autumn trimester with a reduced workload (min 20 credits) and go abroad in spring 2021

- UCD autumn trimester: modules will be offered on a blended or online basis.
- Students who cannot attend any face to face sessions will not be penalised.
- Credits will be counted towards your Stage 4 GPA.
- You should take first semester (level 3) language modules. This would allow you maximum flexibility in the event that travel abroad is still not possible in the spring. However, special consideration will be given to students who have fully engaged with a language 3a module but are unable to meet standards.
- Your Programme Director and Programme Manager will support you in choosing your modules and planning your studies in Stages 3 and 4 to ensure you find the best solution for your needs and circumstances.
- Ex-beginners may be allowed to take level 2a language as extra elective credits to boost language learning.
- You will spend the spring trimester at the host university: you will complete a minimum of 50% of the credits usually required, the remaining credits will be completed as a project to be submitted in the summer.
- You return to complete your degree in September 2021: your workload would be reduced (i.e. only 40 credits if you completed 20 credits in autumn 2020)

[1a. If study abroad is cancelled again in spring 2021 students will choose from options 2, 3 and 4.]

Advantages of option 1:

- The impact on your Stage 4 GPA is minimised and you have more time to focus on modules in the autumn when you return for your final year.
- If you change your mind about going abroad you may still choose option 4 and complete your degree in summer 2021, provided you have completed level 3 core modules in semester 1, or you may still choose to take a leave of absence and reapply for study abroad at a later date.
- You may maximise your time abroad by either staying on independently in summer 2021 and/or by taking a leave of absence in autumn 2021 and staying abroad until Christmas (subject to host country immigration regulations)
- You will be able to graduate as planned in 2022.

Disadvantages of option 1:

- You will only spend one semester at the host institution.
- You will need to take some level 3 modules in the autumn.

Option 2: Complete all your level 3 modules in 2020/21 and take your year abroad in your final year of study.

Advantages of option 2

- Unless government restrictions apply, you will be able to take a full year abroad at a host institution.

Disadvantages of Option 2

- You will need to reapply for an Erasmus place as your current offer cannot be deferred.
- You will need to complete all of your level 3 credits before going abroad.
- As the award of a BA International degree requires successful completion of modules taken abroad, you will not be able to graduate until your transcript is complete. As this can take until the autumn, depending on the system in your host university, your graduation date may be delayed until Christmas 2022.

Option 3: Wait to take your year abroad in 2021/22 and complete your final year in 2022/23.

- To avail of this option you will need to apply for a leave of absence for the academic year 2020/21

Advantages of option 3

- You can complete your degree in the normal sequence.
- You can use your leave of absence year to boost your CV and your skills by travelling or working, depending on government restrictions and independently sourced options.

Disadvantages of option 3

- You would need to be mindful of keeping your language competence going during any leave of absence.
- Graduation would be delayed by a year.
- You will need to reapply for a study abroad place. It is not possible to guarantee the same place that you have been offered for 2020/21.

Option 4: Decide not to go abroad as part of the degree

- Transfer to BA Arts and complete your degree in summer 2021.

Advantage of option 4

- You will complete your degree more quickly

Disadvantages of option 4

- You will have to complete all of your level 3 modules without having had the study abroad year.
- Those wishing to become language teachers need to prove they have completed an extended stay abroad. You may therefore not be eligible to be accepted to the teaching council at a later stage unless you undertake an independent stay abroad.