

## LEARNING AGREEMENT: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

[What's the deadline for the learning agreement?](#)

[I'm not on Erasmus: I'm studying in a destination outside of the EU. Do I need to complete a learning agreement?](#)

[Who is the "responsible person" at the University of Galway?](#)

[How do I complete Table B in the Erasmus Online Learning Agreement \(OLA\)?](#)

[I'm having difficulty getting signatures. Does it matter if not everyone has signed the learning agreement?](#)

[Do I need to send my University of Galway coordinator an actual copy of the learning agreement when fully signed?](#)

[Do I need to send electronic copies of my learning agreement to anyone?](#)

[I need to change the learning agreement that I already completed - how do I do this?](#)

[Some modules I planned to take are no longer available to me at my host university. What should I do?](#)

[I'm confused about the ECTS requirement. Don't I need 60 ECTS for a year of study in my degree programme?](#)

[I'm on a full year abroad. Does it matter how I divide up the credits across the two semesters?](#)

### ***What's the deadline for the learning agreement?***

The learning agreement is supposed to be completed before you start your studies abroad. Sometimes this is not possible because the host university is unable to approve or guarantee admission to certain modules until students arrive. You may, for instance, have to take a language test at the host university to determine which level of language module(s) you may join. Some partner universities request that students have their learning agreement signed soon after arrival, rather than before. In those cases, your learning agreement should be signed no later than a few weeks after you've started attending classes at your host university. In many cases, it should be possible to have the learning agreement in place before you arrive.

If there are any special circumstances that prevent you completing the learning agreement within a fortnight of your arrival, you must inform your University of Galway coordinator of the reason for the delay.

### ***I'm not on Erasmus: I'm studying in a destination outside of the EU. Do I need to complete a learning agreement?***

Yes you do. On the [CASSCS News & Resources page](#), you will find the "international exchange learning agreement" which is specifically for your situation.

### ***Who is the "responsible person" at the University of Galway?***

In most cases, that is your Year Abroad academic coordinator. You will find a list of all coordinators and their contact details at the back of the [Guide to Course Selection & Learning Agreements](#).

If you are on a College-level exchange in Linköping, Lund, Malta, Radboud, Uppsala or Utrecht, then the "responsible person" is Mary Lyons, who will consult your two academic coordinators before signing the learning agreement on behalf of the University of Galway.

### ***How do I complete Table B in the Erasmus Online Learning Agreement (OLA)?***

This is very easy. Table B refers to how the courses that you take abroad will fit into your University of Galway degree programme. In your case, the period abroad will be an integral but standalone element of your degree programme, with no equivalent courses at the University of Galway. This means that you can simply write “Mobility Window” for the “component title”, and put down the number of credits that the University of Galway will award for a Pass in the Year or Semester Abroad, i.e. 60 ECTS for a year, or 30 ECTS for a single semester.

That’s all you need to do! Please don’t fill Table B with a list of modules, and please don’t leave it blank either.

### ***I’m having difficulty getting signatures. Does it matter if not everyone has signed the learning agreement?***

Yes, it does matter. It’s really important that all three parties sign it, both the original version and any subsequent changes. The three parties are you, your University of Galway academic coordinator, and your host university coordinator. If you don’t have a fully-signed and up-to-date learning agreement, there can be problems with the recognition of your studies abroad. A properly completed learning agreement is also a precondition for being eligible for the Erasmus grant.

Sometimes the “responsible person” never receives the online learning agreement because their e-mail address has been written incorrectly by the student. If there is a delay, it’s no harm to double-check that you have typed the e-mail addresses accurately.

If you are having difficulty obtaining a signature from your host university, then you will have to persist in requesting it - don’t be afraid to do this!

*Remember: the document isn’t valid unless it has all three signatures.*

### ***Do I need to send my University of Galway coordinator an actual copy of the learning agreement when fully signed?***

If you used the **Online Learning Agreement**, then your main subject coordinator will be able to access it online and won’t need a downloaded copy. If you’re a Joint Honours or Global Languages student, make sure your other subject coordinator(s) can access a copy, or at least ensure they have approved your modules in their subject(s), and that they are fully up-to-date with any changes in their subject(s).

If you used the **Word version** of the document, then you should send both of your coordinators a copy of the final version (and any subsequent amended versions).

Joint Honours and Global Languages students: each of your subject coordinators must be aware of, and approve, all your module choices in their subject.

### ***Do I need to send electronic copies of my learning agreement to anyone?***

- If you are an Erasmus student using the Online Learning Agreement, then no: your academic coordinators and the CASSCS Mobility Officer are able to view your learning agreement in the EWP system (Erasmus Without Paper).
- If you are an Erasmus student using a Word (or other version) of the learning agreement, you should ensure that each of your academic coordinators in Galway has a copy.
- If you are on a College-level exchange in Linköping, Lund, Malta, Radboud, Uppsala or Utrecht, then the “responsible person” is Mary Lyons, who will consult your two academic coordinators before signing the learning agreement on behalf of the University of

Galway. Your academic coordinators will be able to view your online learning agreement in the EWP system: you don't need to send them a copy.

- If you are a Joint Honours student studying in North America or Hong Kong, please send a copy of your fully signed "international exchange learning agreement" to each of your academic coordinators in Galway and to Mary Lyons.
- If you are a student on a denominated programme studying in North America or Hong Kong, make sure to send a copy of your fully signed "international exchange learning agreement" to your Programme Director or study abroad academic coordinator.

### ***I need to change the learning agreement that I already completed - how do I do this?***

If you used the **Online Learning Agreement**, you can find a document on our website about [making changes to your OLA](#).

Sometimes students report that they are unable to make changes to their OLA. A key point is that once you have signed a version, you cannot amend it again until there has been further action on it by the "responsible persons". Please review the scenarios 1, 2 and 3 in the above-mentioned document.

If you used a **Word version** of the learning agreement, you'll find there's a section of this document called Changes to the Original Learning Agreement. This will, once again, need to be signed by all three parties, and you must make sure that each subject coordinator at the University of Galway is aware of any changes to your study plan in that subject area.

### ***Some modules I planned to take are no longer available to me at my host university. What should I do?***

You should work with the relevant Year Abroad coordinator at the University of Galway to identify suitable replacement modules at the host university in that subject area, or to find alternative solutions. You may also find it helpful to consult your host university academic coordinator in the first instance.

### ***I'm confused about the ECTS requirement. Don't I need 60 ECTS for a year of study in my degree programme?***

If you are taking a full year abroad, you will be required to secure 40 or 45 ECTS credits (40 for non-language and 45 for languages students). Provided you pass all your approved modules while abroad and achieve the specified number of credits, the University of Galway will award you a Pass in the Year Abroad, and this equates to 60 ECTS. Likewise, for a semester abroad, you need 20 – 25 ECTS, for which the University of Galway will award you 30 ECTS.

### ***I'm on a full year abroad. Does it matter how I divide up the credits across the two semesters?***

Ideally you should try to maintain a balance of credits between your two subjects in each semester, but sometimes the availability of modules is such that you might end up taking more of one subject in one of the semesters. However, it's not advisable to take on a significantly heavier overall credit load in one of the semesters.