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PIR Exchanges Pre-Application Briefing

- Wednesday 23 October 2024
  and Tuesday 29 October 2024

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Overview of briefing

- Overview of exchanges and destinations
- Requirements whilst on exchange
  - Assessment
  - Courses
  - RDPIR
- Applications
  - Criteria
  - Personal statement
  - Next steps
- Notes of caution
- Further reading and information
- PPE-specific advice
- Language and Politics-specific advice

Overview of exchanges

- Two types:
  - Subject-specific
    - Mostly European, but also some international
    - Applications assessed by the subject area
  - University-wide
    - Mostly international, but also some European
    - Applications assessed by SWAY

- No self-organised exchanges
- Full-year exchanges only

PIR subject-specific destinations 2025-26

- Belgium (Leuven, 3)
- Denmark (Copenhagen, 2)
- France (Paris (Sciences Po), 9; Grenoble 2)
- Germany (FU Berlin, 2; Köln, 1)
- *India (OP Jindal, 3)
- Italy (Rome (LUISS), 2 + 2 reserved for PPE; *Milan (Bocconi), 2)
- *Japan (Akita, 2)
- Netherlands (Nijmegen (Radboud), 2)
- Poland (Jagiellonian Krakow, 2)
- Spain (Madrid (UPC), 2)
- Turkey (Bilkent, 2)

Assessment during an exchange

- Europe:
  - Single honours PIR students complete 60 ECTS in PIR-related courses
    - You are allowed to take no more than 10% of your credits in local language course
    - In order to take courses in languages other than English, you will need a proof of language skills (a minimum of B2 level)
  - Joint honours students complete 30 ECTS in PIR-related courses and 30 ECTS in courses relating to their other subject

- International:
  - The required number of credits varies by country and institution

- You must study graded courses, but the grades do not count towards your final degree classification, unlike for students who do not go on exchanges

- You must pass all courses during your exchange and return the required total number of credits in order to progress into fourth year

Subject-specific exchanges

- You must be able to take sufficient PIR-related courses at the equivalent of honours level:
  - Check your prospective host universities' courses before you apply
- For joint honours: you must be able to take sufficient courses at the equivalent of honours level in all the components of your degree:
  - Check your prospective host universities' courses, and regulations on studying in different faculties, schools, or departments before you apply
- PIR subject-specific exchanges cover courses in PIR:
  - We cannot guarantee that you will have access courses in other subjects at your preferred destination

Choosing courses

- If you go on an exchange, you will complete a Learning Agreement, listing all the courses you will study, which must be reviewed and approved by your exchange coordinator(s)
  - Read the PIR course requirements for your degree

- Requirements for courses:
  - At the equivalent of honours level at the University of Edinburgh:
    - Some institutions indicate course year or level (sometimes in the code)
    - Avoid courses with titles such as “Introduction to…”
  - PIR-related for single honours PIR degrees, or for the PIR part of joint honours degrees
  - Meet the total credit requirements:
    - 60 ECTS credits in Europe
    - Institution-specific outside Europe

RDPIR (PLIT 10106)

- Research Design in Politics and International Relations:
  - Required for single honours PIR degrees
  - Strongly recommended for joint honours degrees if a PIR dissertation is planned

- Check your Degree Programme Table (DPT) regarding RDPIR

- You can:
  - Take it on your return to Edinburgh, in the first semester of the fourth year
  - Try to find a replacement covering the same content on your exchange

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Application stage

- Apply through Mobility Online:
  - If you need assistance with accessing or using the application form, or require it in another format, please contact the relevant team within Study and Work Away, depending on your preferred destination (europe.outgoing@ed.ac.uk for European destination; international.outgoing@ed.ac.uk for International destinations)

- You can apply for subject-specific and university-wide exchanges simultaneously but this means you have to fill in two application forms and provide two personal statements:
  - If an institution is covered by both the university-wide and subject-specific scheme, you must apply to that institution only via the subject-specific scheme

- For subject-specific exchanges, list up to 5 choices:
  - Your preferred universities in rank order

Application criteria

- For PIR subject-specific exchanges:
  - Academic performance:
    - Your average first-year grade, but this is not set in stone so, e.g., list SCs
  - Personal statement:
    - Explain why you would like to go to your first-choice university

  - Additional criteria where applicable:
    - Linguistic ability in the destination country

Personal statement

- In no more than 5,000 characters (including spaces), explain your reasons for applying for an exchange. Demonstrate:
  - Your academic and non-academic achievements so far
  - How the exchange would help you reach your academic aims and goals
  - That you have researched your preferred destination institution:
    - For example, indicate the courses that you plan to study

What next?

- Applications for exchanges taking place in the 2025-26 academic year will be open from Wednesday 30 October 2024 (12 noon, GMT) to Wednesday 13 November 2024 (12 noon, GMT)
- The deadline for students to accept or reject offers will be Thursday 16 January 2025 (12 noon, GMT)
- The period for students to accept or decline re-allocated placed will be late January 2025 and early April 2025
- Full list of deadlines

Notes of caution

- Competitive process
- Can be affected by difficulties with second-year courses
  - Special circumstances have become exceptional circumstances
- Great opportunity, but also a great deal of responsibility

- Practical issues:
  - Level of support varies (a lot) between host institutions
  - Staff availability, teaching style, and types of assessment also vary (a great deal) between host institutions
  - Getting to and from lectures and tutorials can be challenging

Please read

- Subject-specific application guide 2025-26
- University-wide application guide 2025-26
- Partner institution guidance 2025-26
- Full list of destinations 2025-26
- Students on Modern European Languages programmes should refer to the Department of European Languages and Cultures Year Abroad Handbook

More information

- Study and Work Away (SWAY) information on exchanges:
  - https://global.ed.ac.uk/study-work-away/study-exchanges
- SWAY contacts:
  - European Exchanges team – europe.outgoing@ed.ac.uk
  - International Exchanges team – international.outgoing@ed.ac.uk

- PIR general exchange information:
  - https://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/students/undergraduate/current/programme-information/pir/honours-years/studying-abroad/details
- PIR course choice and programme requirements information:
  - https://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/students/undergraduate/current/programme-information/pir/honours-years/studying-abroad/choosing-courses

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PPE-specific advice

- Only apply for university-wide exchanges approved by the School of Economics
- Make sure you will have access to relevant Philosophy courses at your exchange university
- Among PIR subject-specific exchange destinations, you can apply to LUISS, Rome, and Sciences Po, Paris
- Check with the PPE Programme Director when working out your exchange options
- Be careful with your second-year courses

PPE-specific advice

- Institutions (University-wide and Subject-specific) to which PPE students have gone on exchange in the last two academic years:
  - Carleton University
  - LUISS Guido Carli, Rome
  - Sciences Po (IEP) Paris
  - University of British Columbia
  - University of Hong Kong
  - University of Maryland
  - University of Melbourne
  - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Language and Politics-specific advice

- Modern European Languages and Politics, and Arabic and Politics:
  - Academic credit requirements:
    - Europe: at least 20 ECTS credits must be from PIR-related courses
    - International: at least 1/3 of your credits must be from PIR-related courses
  - Because your exchange year is compulsory, it counts towards your final degree classification
  - Your course marks are translated into Edinburgh marks
  - PIR requirements for those doing internships or work experience: the Politics Year Abroad Assessment (PYAA) course involves completion of one 4,000-word remotely supervised PIR essay (in English) per semester

Language and Politics-specific advice

- You must check that your host institution offers sufficient PIR-related courses for you to meet the PIR exchange requirements
- PIR-related courses must be separate to courses taken for the language side of your degree
- PIR-specific information for joint honours Modern European Languages and Politics students