

Year Abroad Policy
A note by the Union President – Paul Beaumont

Background

In July, HEFCE published *Student number controls and teaching funding in 2013-14 and beyond: Summary of responses to consultation and decisions made*. A stated objective of Government within this document was to encourage the uptake of placements both in Industry and Abroad. Government intends to do this by making the courses attractive to students through the introduction of a fee cap intended to limit the cost to the student.

	Paid by student	Paid by HEFCE	Total
Abroad (Non-ERASMUS) (2011-12)	£1,680	£1,713	£3,393
Abroad (Non-ERASMUS) (2014-15)	£1,350	£2,250	£3,600
Abroad (ERASMUS) (2011-12)	-	£3,393	£3,393
Abroad (ERASMUS) (2014-15)	£1,350	£2,250	£3,600

As offered by the College, years abroad typically take the form of a substitution year, rather than an additional year. Hence, students undertaking a year abroad will typically study for four years; the same period of study as a typical undergraduate student. On this basis, and in light of the Government recommended fee cap, the total fees to be charged to a student undertaking a year abroad for their entire degree will be less than for a typical student.

The estimated cost of provision for the year abroad though is higher than the total amount the college would receive though.

This is partly because, on *average* it costs the HE sector very little to put on a 'year abroad' – Arts courses are much cheaper to run than science or engineering courses, even when they include a year abroad. The Government figures have been worked out on the *average* institution that offers a wider range of courses than Imperial does.

Given Imperial is STEM only though, this provides a disincentive to college to offer years abroad.

Resolution

1. Imperial College Union urges the College not to reduce numbers as this is a disadvantage to students.