THINK ABOUT STUDYING/WORKING ABROAD!

Do you know that by the time they complete their degrees, almost 30% of Queen’s undergraduate students have had an international experience of three weeks’ duration or longer?

Will you be in this group by the time you graduate? It’s a good idea to start thinking about this as early as possible so that you can investigate destinations, plan your program, and perhaps take one or more language courses before departure.

This information sheet is intended to get you thinking about the possibility. It provides some introductory information that will help you decide whether, where, when, and how to go abroad, and it points you to additional information and assistance available on campus.

WHY GO ABROAD?
Here are some of the many reasons for including overseas experience in your degree program:

- As a geology or geological engineering student, see first-hand the geology of a different continent/country/region.
- Take courses not available at Queen’s.
- Enhance the experiential learning aspects of your education.
- Live in another cultural environment and enhance your intercultural competency.
- Develop creative thinking and adaptability.
- Travel/tour a new destination.
- Come home with new international perspective.
- Gain a competitive advantage in the job market.

TYPES OF OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE
There are a number of ways to gain international academic experience for degree credit:

- “Exchange” - attend one of Queen’s many partner universities under a formal international exchange agreement.
  
  Exchange agreements facilitate admission and access to courses, assist you in accessing services and support, and simplify credit transfer. While on exchange you pay tuition and student-activity fees at Queen’s and are exempt from tuition and fees at the “host” university.

- “Study-Abroad” - attend a non-partner university as a direct-enrolment “study-abroad” student.
  
  Under this mechanism you apply directly to the host university for admission as a visiting student, and you pay tuition at that school but not at Queen’s. This mechanism provides a wide range of destinations - schools with which Queen’s does not have an applicable exchange agreement. You will need to do research on available courses and other support.
Exchange and Study-Abroad involve study for one academic term or an academic year. Courses completed through these mechanisms will be recognized for credit towards your Queen’s degree provided that Queen’s grants a “Letter of Permission” before you go. Queen’s will enter credits transferred from other institutions, but not numeric or letter grades, on your transcript. (You can obtain a transcript from the host university that shows the marks/grades that you earned there. This may be useful to support applications to graduate studies, etc.)

- **"The Castle"** - spend a term at Queen’s own overseas campus, the Bader International Study Centre (BISC) at Herstmonceux Castle, East Sussex, UK.

  All courses offered at the BISC are Queen’s courses, so grades are transferred automatically. The BISC offers courses primarily in the humanities and social sciences, with only a few science courses, so this is a destination where you might acquire mainly elective credits. The BISC fees cover tuition, field-study, and room and board.

- **Other** - There are also numerous opportunities of shorter duration, such as short courses and field trips offered by universities, both overseas and in Canada (including Queen’s). There are also opportunities for international internships offered by universities or businesses – in some cases an internship may be linked to an academic program. Work experience is also available through IAESTE (International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience) – [www.iaestecanada.org](http://www.iaestecanada.org). On a case-by-case basis, Queen’s may recognize these for credit. Even if not for credit, they enhance your learning and provide valuable experience.

### WHERE CAN YOU GO?

Queen’s has exchange agreements with over 200 universities in more than 40 countries. Of these, 135 include Arts & Science students, and 26 include Engineering and Applied Science students.

For study abroad through direct enrolment, the options are wide open, limited by your language skills and ability to gain admission.

The BISC is a unique feature of Queen’s. It provides a very supportive academic experience with small classes and rich experiential learning through the field-study components of all courses offered. [www.queensu.ca/admission programas/herstmonceux.html](http://www.queensu.ca/admission/programs/herstmonceux.html)

Information on these and other overseas options can be obtained through various advising offices at Queen’s and on line - see below.

### WHEN WILL YOU GO?

The majority of Queen’s students who go on exchange or direct-enrolment study-abroad do so in Third Year, although some go in Second or Fourth Year instead. Third works well because it allows you time to solidify your academic background (including possibly a language course or two – depending on where you are going) and line up the courses you need to complete your degree. It also gets you back in time to wrap up your Queen’s degree at home and satisfy requirements like the Honours thesis or design project.

You will need to do research during your Second Year about destinations and courses in order to go during your Third Year. You may need to plan your program carefully, perhaps switching some required courses from year to year to ensure that your program can be completed on time. You should consult the Department’s Chair of Undergraduate Studies about this.
For exchange, you apply to your Faculty’s international office during the Fall of the year before you go. For direct-enrolment study-abroad, you need to meet the application deadlines of the host university. Short-courses and field trips all have their own application requirements and timetables. In all cases, to ensure that you can get transfer credit at Queen’s for work successfully completed abroad, you need to apply to your Faculty’s international office for an “International Letter of Permission” before you go abroad.

**HOW MUCH WILL IT COST? HOW WILL YOU PAY?**

You may be concerned that going on exchange or study-abroad would be prohibitively expensive, but depending on your destination and the mechanism (e.g., exchange), in some cases the cost will be similar to or even less than the cost of staying at Queen’s. Of course there is the added cost of airfare, but this may be offset by lower living costs at some destinations.

When you go on exchange, you continue to pay your normal Queen’s tuition and student-activity fees. Scholarships and financial aid that you hold remain active for students who are participating in a formal Queen’s exchange. While participating in direct-enrolment study-abroad you will not be registered as a Queen’s student, and so eligibility for financial support will be suspended for the term.

The BISC is part of Queen’s and so your eligibility for scholarships and bursaries continues. You may receive additional financial support from the BISC.

Queen’s has a number of scholarships and bursaries that support students during overseas study on exchange and at the BISC. For information consult the Office of Student Awards or visit http://www.queensu.ca/studentawards/financialassistance/abroad.html.

**WHAT ABOUT SAFETY?**

Safety is a prime concern. Queen’s has an Off-Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP) under which the responsibility for safety is shared by the university and participants. The focus is on education and preparation through identification of hazards and mitigation of risks. All undergraduate students participating in overseas activities must complete the OCASP pre-departure training and risk assessment before embarking on their overseas program. For more information, visit the QUIC or http://quic.queensu.ca/education-abroad/your-safety-abroad/.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Faculty of Arts and Science and the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science both encourage students to gain international experience during their degree programs, and both are party to numerous academic exchange agreements. The two Faculties have offices that administer student mobility. The Queen’s University International Centre is an excellent source of information and provides non-academic support, both before you go and while you are abroad. Career Services provides information on internships. The contact information for these offices is provided below.

**ArtSci students:**

For information on international opportunities, consult the International Programs Office (IPO), Mackintosh-Corry Hall, room B206.

Contact info: email [ipo@queensu.ca](mailto:ipo@queensu.ca)

phone: 613 533 2815

[www.queensu.ca/ipo/contact](http://www.queensu.ca/ipo/contact)

The IPO can provide information on many types of overseas experience. For Information on exchanges, visit [www.queensu.ca/ipo/outgoing-students/exchange](http://www.queensu.ca/ipo/outgoing-students/exchange). For information on compatible
schools based on courses/majors:
www.queensu.ca/ipo/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.ipowww/files/files/pdf/exchange/Where%20to%20go%20by%20Degree%20Concentration.pdf. The IPO has a database of courses at partner universities that have been deemed appropriate substitutes for specific Queen’s courses. You may consult this in preparing for exchange.

Note: Participation in the exchange program requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.6, and some partners require a minimum GPA of 3.0 for admission, so take care in researching your options and eligibility.

For information on Study-Abroad options (other than formal exchanges), visit
www.queensu.ca/ipo/outgoing-students/independent-study-abroad. This website has lots of information on many different types of study-abroad.

**Engineering students:**
For information on Exchange opportunities, visit www.engineering.queensu.ca/Undergraduate-Programs/Exchange-Programs/
If you are considering going on an exchange, it is highly recommended that you make an appointment with Anne-Marie Bergman in the FEAS Faculty Office, Beamish-Munro Hall, room 300.
Contact info: email: committees@appsci.queensu.ca
phone: 613 533 6000 ext 74091

The constraints of engineering accreditation make it a bit more difficult to set up a program of study on exchange that meets your program’s requirements. The Faculty Office can provide advice on this, including which courses at various partner schools have already been evaluated for credit transfer.

Note: an Engineering Cumulative GPA (ECGPA) of 2.70 is required to qualify for exchange, and an ECGPA of up to 3.0 may be required for admission to some host schools.

**For all students:**
The Queen’s University International Centre (QUIC, located in the JDUC) is a great source of information on education abroad options and about preparing for your overseas experience. It has Information about info-sessions, access to contacts from other schools/countries and much more. www.quic.queensu.ca/education-abroad/education-abroad-advising/.

**Career Services** can provide information on internship opportunities (including the Queen’s University Internship Program (QUIP) which provides for a 16-month work term after Second or Third Year). http://careers.queensu.ca/students/services/employmentprograms/quip.html

**Advice within the Department of Geological Sciences and Geological Engineering:**
Dr. John Dixon, a prof in Geology, was formerly the Vice-Provost (International) at Queen’s, with responsibility for exchange agreements and other partnerships. He can provide information about exchange and study-abroad, and can direct you to sources of information and advice on campus. You may contact him by email at john.dixon@queensu.ca with questions or to schedule a chat.

For information and advice on fitting an exchange or study-abroad term and specific courses into your program, consult the Undergraduate Coordinator: Dr. Ron Peterson for GeoSci, and Dr. Vicki Remenda for GeoEng. Contact them through Larke Zarichny in the Departmental office (B240).