What is the “Physics with Year in Europe” degree?

Students on our four-year MSci “Physics with a Year in Europe” (F309) degree spend their entire third year at one of our partner institutions in France, Germany, Italy, Spain or Switzerland. There, they follow lectures alongside local students and, most importantly, carry out a 9-month research project in a prestigious research group. The first, second and fourth years of study are mostly identical to those of our MSci (Physics) degree, except that in years 1 & 2 you follow language courses in German, French, Spanish or Italian.

Why do a “Physics with Year in Europe” degree?

- **Research experience**: Your research work abroad is more intensive than that of your peers at home. You will spend on average 3.5 days per week in a research laboratory, it will feel very similar to a research job. Many decide to pursue a PhD afterwards.

- **International Exposure**: By spending a year abroad you get to know international scientists and in some cases attend conferences, giving you exposure and links to the scientists, their group and network from across Europe and the world.

- **Competitive edge**: Spending a year abroad gives you a competitive advantage over your peers later in life. It demonstrates your ability to adapt to new environments, to work in a science laboratory, to learn and communicate in other languages. You will gain a deep feeling for and understanding of another country by having lived there. This is an excellent preparation for careers in science, industry and business where employers seek to recruit students with international experience.

- **Personal independence**: In going abroad into a new environment you learn to cope with many challenges, giving you personal independence and helping you grow your personality. This is raised by our students as a key benefit of their year abroad.

International Exchanges at Imperial College

The Imperial College Physics Department has the largest and best established European student exchange programme of any university in the UK. Over 300 Imperial College Physics students have participated in the programme during the last 15 years and over 400 incoming students from Europe have been accepted in return. Our European programme was awarded the 1994 Partnership Award for Innovation in University Physics Teaching.
Where can I go?

We have long-standing exchange agreements with 13 universities across mainland Europe. You will study the relevant language in years 1 & 2 of your degree at Imperial and then be given a choice of where to go abroad for year 3.

**Germany:**
- University of Erlangen-Nürnberg
- University of Freiburg
- University of Heidelberg

**Switzerland:**
- Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale Lausanne

**France:**
- Institut Polytechnique de Grenoble
- Université de Paris-Sud, Orsay

**Spain:**
- Universidad de La Laguna
- Universitat de Valencia
- Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

**Italy:**
- Università degli studi di Padova

What our students have said …

If you’re unsure about going on ERASMUS, don’t be, just go, you won’t regret it!

I just can’t state strongly enough how much I recommend going on a year abroad, I had so many doubts about it, right up to the moment I boarded my plane at the start of September, but they all fell away as soon as I arrived.

It was the best year of my life without doubt.

I can undoubtedly say that deciding on spending a year abroad has been the best decision I have ever made.

The experience of living abroad has made me more independent.
Language training

During the first two years at Imperial College, students follow the normal physics course but have a reduction in physics to make room for language classes taught by specialist language teachers. You need to have demonstrated ability in learning a relevant foreign language before admission, e.g. by having achieved a grade of at least a B at GCSE in a relevant language (Spanish, French, German or Italian). You will study two years of the same language with Imperial’s Language Centre (for credit) before going abroad. If you have an A level or are fluent in a relevant language there is flexibility in the choice of language and other options.

Where will I live and what will it cost?

Accommodation at the host universities is mostly in University Halls of Residence or private flats. Accommodation costs are typically well below those of London.

Students receive an ERASMUS “study” grant from EU funding, typically € 350-450 per month. Separate grant arrangements are in place for Switzerland but are mostly comparable. Grants are a “contribution towards the additional costs of studying abroad, most notably travel”. Students do not pay tuition fees to the host university, while all students pay reduced tuition fees (often 15%) to Imperial College for the year spent abroad. There are thus normally significant overall savings to be made by pursuing a year abroad. Please contact tuition.fees@imperial.ac.uk for further information.

The year abroad

You will spend your third year at the partner university in Europe, attending lectures and working on a research project. We have very good personal links with the local coordinators and other staff at the host universities who always look after our students very well. A staff member from our Physics Department will visit you twice while you are out there and will stay in regular email contact with you throughout the year.

Alongside regular exams abroad, you will write a major report on your research project (in English but with a summary in the host language) and will also give a short seminar presentation to the members of your research group. Both count towards your degree back at Imperial.

More information

For further information about the Msci in Physics with Year in Europe degree:
Email: ph.exchanges@imperial.ac.uk (Physics Exchange Programme Coordinators)
Web: www.imperial.ac.uk/study/ug/courses/physics-department/physics-year-europe