BSc Biology / Biochemistry / Biotechnology with a Language for Science

Information about the third year language project (16 ECTS)

The project should be related to your own interests and should be based on material in the foreign language. It could include topics of local historical, geographical or cultural importance. It should not be of a highly technical nature. The required length is around 10,000 words. It should be written in French / German / Spanish. The Centre for Co-Curricular Studies will be pleased to advise you on the choice of topic if you would like to discuss it.

**Aim:** The aim of your project is to show that you have coherently researched and reported on an aspect of your host country’s culture or history during your year abroad and that you are able to present your findings in appropriately sophisticated French / German / Spanish both in written and oral form.

**Length:** Your project report should be around 10,000 words (including footnotes but excluding your bibliography). Your word count must be clearly stated at the end of your report.

**THE PROJECT MUST BE YOUR OWN WORK.** You must include a list of references, websites and a bibliographical section with all the materials you have used. The usual Imperial College rules on plagiarism apply.

You are encouraged to use interviews when researching your project, where this is appropriate, as this will help develop your language skills. Where interviews have been used as basis for your research, include their transcripts as an appendix to your work.

The **organisation and presentation** of the project are important. Make sure there is a table of contents, an introduction, conclusion and bibliography. Where appropriate, include graphics: photographs and diagrams.

**Project viva voce:** You will have to discuss the project in French/German/Spanish in your oral exam on your return. The date for this will normally be by the end of October, following your return. Please contact your Language Coordinator in due course so that we can fix a suitable date/time. The oral exam, lasting about 30–45 minutes, will include questions and answers about your project and a more general conversation about your study abroad, including your main degree subject study.

**Important dates:**
- Decide on your topic as soon as possible, so that you can start gathering material early on.
- Let us know your topic as soon as possible, at the latest by Christmas.
- Send the Co-ordinator an outline of your project by 31st January at the latest.
- You may submit a 1st draft of your essay for comments by the end of June (optional).

**Submission:** Your project should be formatted in double spacing. It is your responsibility to keep a backup copy in case of mishap. You should submit two printed and bound copies by the relevant deadline and also supply an electronic copy should the examiners request it.

**TWO COPIES** of the finished project must reach us **at least two weeks before the oral examination**- usually by mid-September- so that we can read it beforehand.
Organising your project write-up

We suggest you use the following headings to organise your work.

**Abstract** (no more than 100 words). This should outline the scope of your project (what topics you cover), describe your method and give your main conclusions.

**Introduction.** This should explain why you chose your topic (your rationale) and give a brief background to the subject. You should also be clear here about your 'research question'; what are you investigating? In this section you also have to explain how you will structure your findings.

**Discussion.** In this section you should discuss your findings in a structured manner and provide an analysis (this means that your discussion should not merely be descriptive but should provide an interpretation of your material). You should relate your discussion back to your research question and put your findings in the context of the work of others.

**Conclusion.** You should summarize the main points presented in your work and offer an answer to the questions raised during the discussion. Finally, you should outline what insights you have gained from the project.

**Bibliography.** This is a list of references you cited in your write-up and also other sources you consulted that informed your work but are not directly referred to in the text. It is essential to acknowledge your sources by citing them in the text and in the reference list. If you have used the words of others verbatim, these must appear in quotations marks, cited, and listed in the bibliography. If you do not do this, you will be plagiarising. You MUST consult either the library's resource on how to cite references or the Languages Student Handbook (on the Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication website). Please ask if you are unsure about this.

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### Contacts

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**Language Co-ordinators**  
Keep in contact with your language department at Imperial College. Let them know your address and e-mail as soon as you have settled in:

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