



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHÉ  
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

# Studying or Working Abroad

*Pre-departure  
information*

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# Outline

Preparation checklist

Accommodation (and scams)

Culture shock

Getting the most from mobility

Personal safety

What to do when problems arise

Mobility Assessment / Student Declaration



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# PREPARATION: Checklist

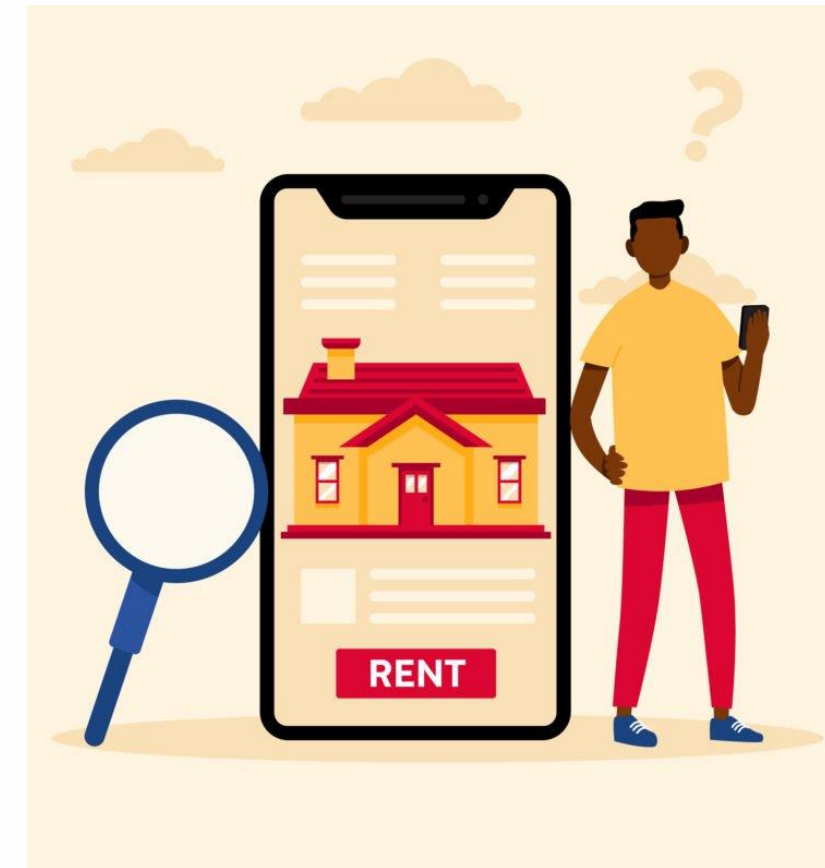
- Passport
- Travel Insurance** (& EHIC?)
- Online banking
- Erasmus paperwork (if applicable)
- Accommodation**
- Register with DFA
- ISIC and/or ESN card
- Unlock phone?
- Academic requirements & contacts













# *Accommodation*

- Standards may vary!
- Research areas/prices in advance.
- Bring enough money to pay a deposit if renting in private sector.
- Read your rental contract carefully.
- Good idea to record and report any existing damage or anything missing at the time of moving in.
- Best not to enter into subletting arrangements.
- Carefully consider with whom you want to share.
- **BEWARE OF SCAMS!!!**





## *Accommodation Scams: some red flags!*

-  Rent below the going rate
-  Bad spelling/grammar in the ad.
-  Contact is made only via social media, Whatsapp, etc
-  A story about renting for a relative / not in the country / can't be there to meet you ...
-  Pushy approach
-  Demands money up front
-  Additional charges appear – legal fees, cleaning, etc
-  Western Union money transfer, PayPal, etc – avoid!



# *Accommodation Scams: Tips and hints*

- Don't be pressurised.
- Do some research online; try to verify the person's identity.
- Letting agency: check if the website is genuine.
- Google the address of the property.
- Check if the "property" has been advertised in multiple cities.
- Look for inconsistencies.
- Trust your gut feeling.
- Avoid paying till you've seen the property.
- Payment by credit card is safest.
- Get a proper rental contract.



# Travel Insurance

- EHIC for EU citizens within EU
- Private insurance mandatory for **all** University of Galway students on mobility
- Must cover
  - ✓ medical treatment
  - ✓ personal liability
  - ✓ repatriation
  - ✓ cancellation/curtailment
  - ✓ personal effects
- Possible providers:
  - [www.collegetravel.ie](http://www.collegetravel.ie)
  - [www.protrip-world.com](http://www.protrip-world.com)

Please be sure to read the advice on insurance!  
(see Erasmus handbook, website)



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# TRAVEL

The DFA provides guidance by country - read the advice on safety/security, local laws, health, etc.

[www.dfa.ie/travel/know-before-you-go/](http://www.dfa.ie/travel/know-before-you-go/)

Irish citizens should register with the DFA.

Note the contact details of the Irish Embassy or Consulate in your host country.





## *Some tips for the early days*

- Be sure to take part in the host university's Orientation Programme.
- Sign up for a Buddy Programme if this is offered.
- Avail of a language course if possible.
- Be prepared for Culture Shock.
- Expect a little chaos for the first few weeks. 😊
- Don't get caught on public transport without a valid ticket!

LANGUAGE

COMMUNICATION  
STYLES

# CULTURE SHOCK

CUSTOMS

CLIMATE

MEALTIMES

FOOD

POLITICS / RELIGION

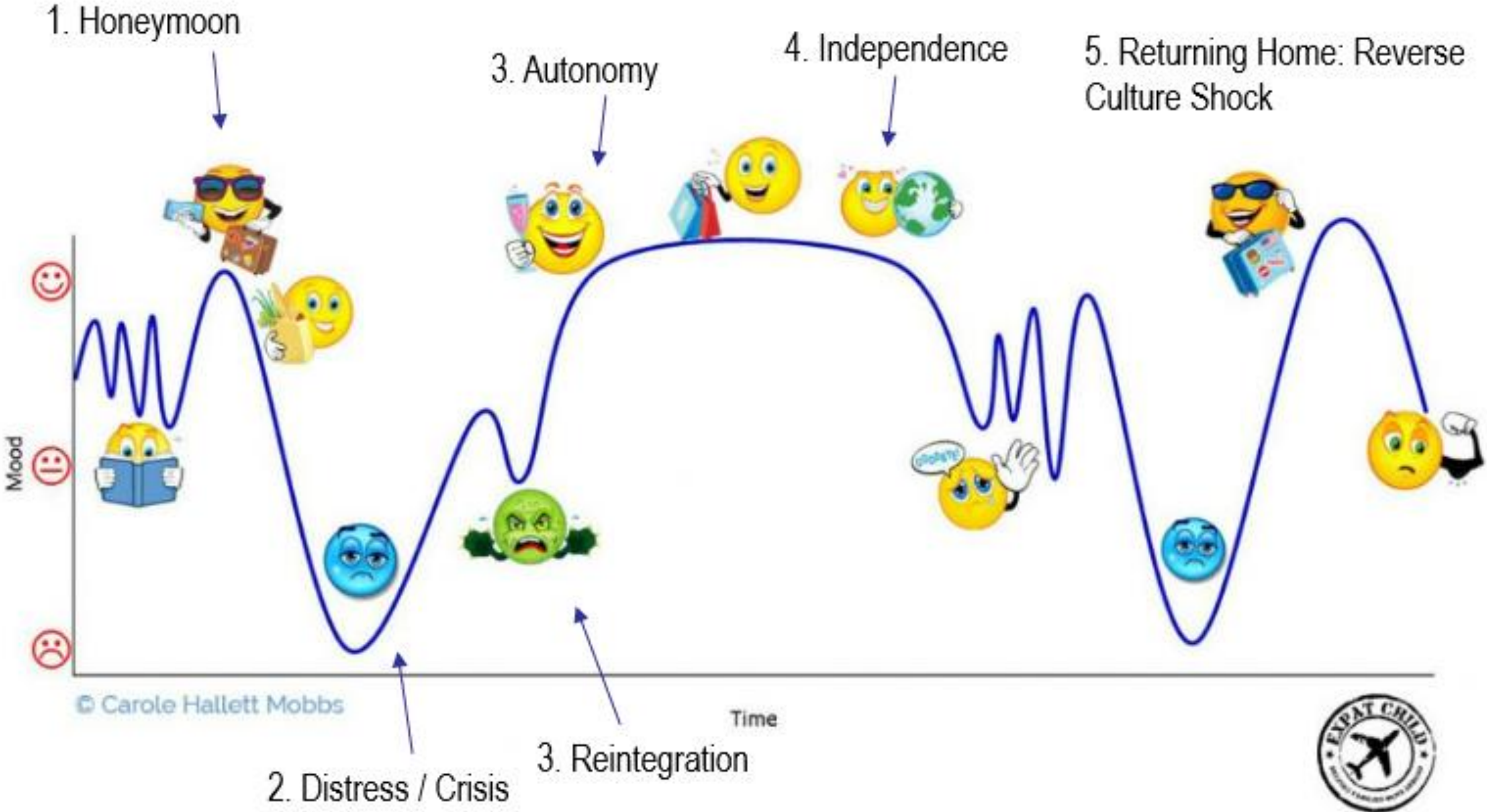




# *TYPICAL DIFFERENCES*

- Climate
- Language
- Communication styles
- Food and mealtimes
- Mindset (politics, religion ...)
- Customs and rituals
- Behaviour and societal norms
- Formality
- Approaches to the law

# STAGES OF CULTURE SHOCK



# *Features of Culture Shock*

- Disorientation due to new environment
- Psychological or physical effects:  
alienation / boredom / withdrawal / isolation / irritation / homesickness / aches
- Frustration, uncertainty, distress
- Adjustment
- Adaptation
- Reverse Culture Shock

# *Coping with Culture Shock*

- Be aware that this is normal and that adjustment takes time.
- Be **patient** with yourself.
- See it as a **learning experience**.
- Good **self-care** and routine
- Reminders of home; comforting, familiar objects
- Find ways to **integrate**: be creative in this!
- Significant problem? Ask for help.
- Resources for all students incl. external supports & self-help:

<https://sway.office.com/N7VYxq6kaGfcE9vA?ref=Link>

# *Tips*

- Do your research before you go so you have an idea of what to expect.
- Remember that you are rarely alone in what you are experiencing.
- Try to approach things with openness, curiosity and humour.
- Respect for host country and its culture

# *Settling in: good advice from a former student*

*“Make as many friends as possible at the start, so you don't feel homesick. You can really enjoy the experience by getting to know not just the country's culture but the other international students' too.*

*“It really is the experience you make it to be. Absorb everything new but practise the same common sense you would living away from home in Ireland. The first few weeks can be tough adjusting but if you want to make the most of your Erasmus - outside your comfort zone is where the magic happens.”*







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# General Survival Tips and getting the most out of the experience



# *Getting the most out of it*

- **Assimilate** with native and other international students
  - e.g. when arranging accommodation, or pursuing interests/hobbies.
- Make the most of the time abroad, because it will go by very quickly!
- Be **open-minded!**
- **Travel** when you can, but get to know your host city too.
- Be aware of and **respect cultural differences ...**
- **Embrace the differences** – the time abroad is short so make the most of every day.
- Journal, blog, photographic record?



# *Visiting home during the semester?*

## Consider:

- Difficulty settling back in afterwards, interrupting the momentum
- Lost time = lost opportunities to travel, explore or take part in local activities
- Unnecessary air travel and your carbon footprint





# *Avoiding problems*

- Take precautions to prevent unpleasant experiences.
- **Alcohol** ... if you drink, please drink responsibly.
- Please read the yellow Safety Advice Sheet.
- University of Galway **Code of Conduct** applies to our students while abroad for studies or traineeships.



# *PERSONAL SAFETY*

- Arriving with a large amount of luggage, be extremely vigilant at railway or bus stations!!!
- Don't look conspicuous or carry valuables / large amounts of cash.
- Don't take risks. Heed your gut feeling.
- Exercise caution generally when out and about, especially at night. Look out for each other!
- Alcohol ... if you drink, please drink responsibly.
- Read the yellow Safety Advice sheet.



# *YOUR SAFETY*

- It is not advisable to be out alone at night.
- NEVER, EVER go off somewhere at night on your own without telling someone where you are going. This applies regardless of whether you are male or female.
- Identify and avoid districts known to be unsafe.
- After dark, avoid deserted areas, public parks and badly-lit streets and alleyways.
- Don't walk home alone late at night: take a taxi.
- Avoid political rallies and demonstrations.



# *SAFETY AND WELFARE*

- Good idea to note local emergency numbers just in case ...
- Register with a doctor in the host town or city.
- If you have a medical condition, take translated copies of any documentation and ensure you will be able to get your medication.



## *If an INCIDENT should occur where you are ...*

- Contact your family without delay to let them know you are ok.
- Follow instructions issued by the authorities.
- Avoid crowded areas if possible.
- Report any suspicious packages or persons to the police.
- Your host university or organisation should issue advice. Contact them with any concerns.





# CONDUCT

- You are an **ambassador** for your country & University.
- Remember that you are bound by the regulations and the **Code of Conduct** of both the host university and of University of Galway.
- <http://www.universityofgalway.ie/codeofconduct/>
- It is expected that you show respect for the host country, its people and its customs.



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## *Keep in touch!*

We like to hear from you and know how you are getting on!

If **problems** arise, do not hesitate to contact either:

Mary Lyons, your CASSCS Mobility Officer

([mary.lyons@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:mary.lyons@universityofgalway.ie)) , or

your University of Galway academic coordinator, or

International Affairs Office

*or, if in distress,*

University of Galway Counselling Service

**\*\*Contact your family on a regular basis!\*\***



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# *Student Counselling at University of Galway*

offers support, both for

**ongoing Mental Health Issues**

and

**problems that may arise while you are abroad**



# *If mental health issues arise during your time abroad*

- You can e-mail [counselling@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:counselling@universityofgalway.ie)
- Registration forms will be sent to you.
- A preliminary online assessment is organised.
- Assessments and counselling sessions are offered via MS Teams or Zoom.



# ATTENTION ERASMUS STUDENTS!

Please be sure to read all the information provided and attend to your paperwork!

[www.nuigalway.ie/erasmus-programme/outgoingstudents/latestnews/#tab2](http://www.nuigalway.ie/erasmus-programme/outgoingstudents/latestnews/#tab2)

[www.nuigalway.ie/erasmus-programme/outgoingstudents/erasmustraineeships](http://www.nuigalway.ie/erasmus-programme/outgoingstudents/erasmustraineeships)

## Latest News

Overview
Study in Ireland
Offer Holders
The International Student Experience
Incoming Visiting Students

Outgoing Erasmus 21/22 **Outgoing Erasmus 2022/23**

Paperwork Explained

### Students going on Erasmus in 2022/23

Please note that this page relates to Erasmus study visits (to universities abroad). If you are planning to go on an Erasmus traineeship (work placement), please go to the [Erasmus Traineeship web page](#).

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS BEING NOMINATED FOR STUDY VISITS STARTING AUTUMN**

Registering at University of Galway

**You must be registered as a student here at University of Galway for the year in which you are going abroad.**

You will be able to register online in late August, and you should **follow the instructions,**



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# *ERASMUS learning agreement*

## **Who is the “responsible person”?**

That’s the person who must review and approve your course choices.

➤ Your **academic coordinator**.

The “contact person” can be Mary Lyons, but the “responsible person” must be your academic coordinator.

You’ll find information about the learning agreement here:

[www.universityofgalway.ie/erasmus-programme/outgoingstudents/latestnews/#tab2](http://www.universityofgalway.ie/erasmus-programme/outgoingstudents/latestnews/#tab2)



# *Mobility Assessment and Student Declaration*

- The **Mobility Assessment** is an online form you must complete no less than 2 weeks before travel.
- It requires you to consider topics like travel, risks, health issues, safety, etc
- It contains, at the end, 2 questions relating to the **Student Declaration**.
- The **Student Declaration** is about **your responsibilities** regarding academic performance, good conduct, your health, insurance, safety, risks, etc
- I will send you the Declaration by e-mail: please read it carefully, as you will be asked to indicate your agreement to it in the Mobility Assessment.



**Thanks for your attention!**

**Any Questions?**

*mary.lyons@universityofgalway.ie*



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