This booklet contains important information – please read it carefully now and make sure you take it abroad with you
INTRODUCTION

Your Year Abroad is an integral part of your Cambridge Modern Languages course. You should be prepared to devote quite a lot of time and effort to planning it during your second year so that it fulfils your expectations and requirements: as a general rule, the more thorough your preparation, the more successful and satisfying your year will be.

In making your plans you should bear the following in mind:

❖ How will my Year Abroad contribute to my Part II course, especially to my Year Abroad Project and the Part II oral and to the development of my written foreign language skills?

❖ How can I best gain practical experience of the foreign language and culture?

❖ How can I gain in personal development? Which of the options would be best suited to me? Studying, teaching, or gaining work experience?

❖ How might I gain useful experience for my future career?

The Faculty Year Abroad Office is here to help you, so please do not hesitate to consult our records and ask for advice. We want the year to be a positive and rewarding experience for you all.

Professor Joachim Whaley
Director of Year Abroad Studies
October 2015
WHO DOES WHAT?

**COLLEGE**

**Director of Studies or Tutor**
- gives preliminary advice on Year Abroad plans
- gives ongoing pastoral support
- keeps students’ personal files
- deals with Local Education Authority and Student Loan Company
- can supply you with personal references for applications

**FACULTY**

**Year Abroad Office**
- offers general advice and help (along with Advisors in Departments and Departmental Offices)
- administers formal University permission
- processes student claims and reimburses foreign university fees
- keeps records of all Year Abroad experiences and maintains databases of students and employers
- operates an email list for quick dissemination of up-to-date information on the Year Abroad, especially as regards employment and accommodation
- maintains a web page containing essential information, advice and useful links
- has a small reference section of travel guides and guides to living and working abroad
- can supply you with general letters of recommendation, academic transcripts and conventions de stage (see Employment) in the appropriate language, and documentation for Erasmus Placements

The Faculty does not make travel arrangements or find jobs or accommodation!
**BASIC RULES**

You will normally spend your Year Abroad in one of the following ways:

- As a teaching assistant or lector
- Studying
- In employment

You must remain abroad in an approved activity for not less than 8 months in total and not less than 3 months in any one country, unless you spend time consecutively in another country speaking the same language. The approved period of residence abroad shall normally coincide with the academic year in Cambridge, and must begin no later than October. **You must inform us if your approved Year Abroad activity has not started by November, so that we can advise on alternatives.**

Assistantships in French schools which run for 7 months are acceptable to the Faculty Board as the equivalent of 8 months. Assistantships in French teacher training colleges (IUFM) which run for only 6 months are not acceptable as the equivalent of 8 months and students wishing to do this will need to organise another 2 months.

If you wish to apply for an Erasmus study place, the **deadline** for submission of form YA.PLAN is 5pm **Friday 16 October 2015**

If you are planning to be an assistant with the British Council, the **deadline** for submission of form YA.PLAN is **Wednesday 11 November 2015**.

**For all other students** the **deadline** for submission of form YA.PLAN is the last Friday of Michaelmas Term – **Friday 4 December 2015**.

| After this date, please keep the Year Abroad Office informed of any changes. **It is a University requirement that all your plans are approved by the Faculty Board before you begin your Year Abroad.** |

Please note that if you are planning to change Tripos after Part IB you will not normally take a year abroad under MML regulations, since you will not be a candidate for Part II of the MML Tripos. You should speak to your College Tutor or Director of Studies if there is any possibility of your changing subject. If you do decide to change Tripos, please make sure you inform the Year Abroad Office.
OPTIONS

i) Assistant/Lector  ii) Studying  iii) Employment

Your Director of Studies, who knows you and your academic abilities and preferences, may be the best suited to advise you in the first instance on which option to follow. The Year Abroad Office keeps extensive records of all our students’ experiences, and consultation of these should be your first priority.

Splitting the Year Abroad
It is possible to split the Year Abroad between two countries (see ‘Basic Rules’ above). You can normally register for a university course halfway through the year. Internships or stages (see ‘Employment’ below) can run for a variable length of time, so you can arrange one internship in one country and one in another.

If you apply for one semester only (first or second), make sure that the dates fit in with the rest of your Year Abroad plans, particularly if you are studying in two different countries. Semester dates are not the same everywhere and you must fulfil your attendance dates at each institution.

Some European universities will only allow Erasmus study for the whole year.

i) Assistant/Lector
This will normally be arranged by the BRITISH COUNCIL. Application forms are obtained by registering on the British Council website, and you will receive full details about this from the Year Abroad Office during Michaelmas Term. All applications must be sent to the British Council through the Year Abroad Office.

Almost all British Council assistants within the EU are eligible for the Erasmus student mobility programme. Please see page 7-8 for more information on Erasmus Traineeships.

The British Council normally offers a place to everyone who applies, except in those places where supply exceeds demand (for example Italy and Latin America). Remember that the British Council is primarily interested in the contribution you will make as a teacher rather than the experience you will gain by being in a foreign environment.

If you are called for interview, it would be wise to have informed yourself in advance about the problems of teaching English as a foreign language and about the country for which you have applied (especially in Latin America). If you have been allocated
an Erasmus study place, you may not also apply for the British Council. A British Council assistantship is not a backup.

If you apply for an assistantship in France, you must have a verified translation of your birth certificate to present on arrival at your school. Information about this is available on the British Council website.

If you find it necessary to withdraw your application at any stage, please be courteous in your dealings with the British Council: we rely heavily on their goodwill and support. Please also keep the Year Abroad Office informed.

ii) Studying

Many students consider studying abroad. If you are planning to be in an EU country you will normally take up an Erasmus study place at one of our partner universities. Any other form of study in the EU requires special permission from the Faculty Board.

If you are planning to spend all or part of your YA in Latin America or Russia, or some other non EU destination, your course must be approved by the Faculty Board. Fees for approved courses will be paid in full by the Faculty.

Bear in mind that universities in other countries are not as protective as British universities and do not go out of their way to ease the admissions process, so your experience of gaining access will not be at all like applying through UCAS here. Be prepared for a lot of red tape and be patient! Please consult university websites for information about courses and application procedures. It can be a good idea to enlist the help of fourth-year students or students who are currently abroad studying – the Year Abroad Office can put you in touch.

The Faculty will approve courses in a wide range of subjects, provided the medium of instruction is the foreign language. You might consider doing something outside the mainstream of your studies.

You should take steps to find out about suitable courses as early as possible. Please note that some of our Erasmus partner universities place restrictions on the choice of subject.

Please read carefully the finance section on pp. 10-11.
Studying under Erasmus (see also page 7-8)

Cambridge University participates in the Erasmus student mobility scheme. A list of the current Erasmus links is provided in your YA pack. The Faculty does not require you to study Modern Languages, but you should check with the foreign university what courses you may take under the terms of the Erasmus agreement.

The financial benefit of studying under Erasmus is the payment of a small monthly grant. Because of the popularity of Erasmus places, there is a prescribed procedure for their fair allocation. Registration of Cambridge students at Erasmus partner universities is handled by the International Student Team here. Once you have been allocated a place you need do nothing more than wait for instructions from them in the Lent Term. The Erasmus student mobility programme is funded by the European Commission.

Students applying for an Erasmus study place are expected to participate for the full academic year and to accumulate not less than 30 ECTS points to prove that they have attended courses and taken relevant exams. ECTS points are credits awarded by European universities in respect of the courses that they offer. Failure to achieve the required number of points may invalidate your Erasmus Year Abroad. See also page 8.

iii) Employment

It is your responsibility to organise employment; the Faculty does not operate placement schemes, though it has close relations with certain employers. If you are interested in this option, you should start looking for a job as soon as possible and visit the Year Abroad Office to ask for advice.

The Year Abroad Office maintains records of previous employers who have either employed, or offered to employ, our students. You will be given more information about how to access these during Michaelmas Term. Firms interested in employing Year Abroad students usually make their first contact with the Year Abroad Office and we disseminate information via our email list – they often ask for applications to be submitted at very short notice and during University vacations, so it is worth checking your email regularly.

We exchange information with the University Careers Service, who will also be able to offer you general advice, and of course they have information on all manner of general employment possibilities.

You must submit to the Year Abroad Office proof from your prospective employer that you have a firm offer of employment before your application can be finally approved (this is usually sometime after the submission of your
YA.PLAN form). You must also provide us with brief details and the exact dates of your employment. The Faculty will approve a wide range of employments, provided that (a) you will be working principally within the medium of the foreign language and (b) there is some intellectual challenge or professional skill involved. Please note that the Faculty does not consider nannying, au pair or waitressing work as a suitable employment for the Year Abroad.

For employment in France, the Year Abroad Office can supply you with an approved form of contract, known as a convention de stage, and the Director of Year Abroad Studies acts as the University representative for the purposes of this contract.

Students going on approved traineeships (work placements) in EU countries can benefit from the advantages of the EU Erasmus student mobility programme. An Erasmus Learning Agreement for Traineeships must be completed and signed by the university and participating employer before the start of your Year Abroad. Work placements can range from 2 to 12 months and benefit from the payment of a small monthly grant. In order to fulfil the requirements of the MML Tripos Year Abroad you must engage in an approved activity for a minimum of 8 months. More information is available from the Year Abroad Office. The Erasmus student mobility programme is funded by the European Commission and we are obliged to administer it according to the rules they lay down.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ERASMUS

1) Students of all nationalities are eligible for Erasmus work and study places, and can receive the Erasmus grant.

2) You must advise the Year Abroad Office of the number of months you wish to study and/or work on Erasmus, and in which country or countries, by the end of Easter Term 2016, so that the correct amount of grant funding can be budgeted. This is required even if you do not have confirmed placements.

3) Erasmus study students may have to pay their host university for matriculation and incidentals, and these items are not refundable by the Year Abroad Office.

4) Students who receive the Cambridge Bursary may continue to receive it even if they have an Erasmus grant, though the grant must be declared as ‘other income’.

5) Erasmus Intensive Language Courses are sometimes available to students intending to spend the Year Abroad in Belgium, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands or Portugal engaged on any activity eligible for the Erasmus student mobility scheme during the summer before the start of their Year Abroad. Please contact the Year Abroad Office for further information.
6) **Disability grants** are offered by the Erasmus scheme. If you think you might be eligible for such a grant, please contact the Year Abroad Office as soon as possible. Applications must be made at least one month before you start your Year Abroad.

7) **Widening participation grants** are available to students who come from households with incomes under £25,000 pa. Additionally, **hardship grants** are also available.

8) **Time off for illness** of more than a few days must be reported to the Year Abroad Office. It may be necessary to make a medical case to the British Council to minimise any loss of Erasmus benefit.

9) All **students** are required to complete a mandatory online language assessment at both the beginning and the end of their exchange period.

10) **Failure to complete** all the Erasmus paperwork promptly before, during and after your YA, as required by IST, may result in you having to repay all the Erasmus money you have received.

www.ist.admin.cam.ac.uk/erasmus-plus/current-cambridge-students/paperwork

If you do not complete your Erasmus placement, or meet the agreed conditions, you will automatically cease to be eligible for the benefits of Erasmus and you will have to repay any money that you have received.

For students who study under Erasmus, the agreed conditions include the requirement to gain 30 ECTS points by means of course attendance and examinations. Failure to achieve the required number of points will mean that you may be obliged to repay the grant you have received.

If you enter into an Agreement with an employer or university under Erasmus, you should expect to fulfil the terms of your contract.

If you are planning a UK summer internship, please think carefully how this will fit into the Erasmus terms and conditions, and your Year Abroad Project work.

**APPROVAL OF YEAR ABROAD PLANS**

You must register your initial plans for approval by the Faculty Board by the last day of the full Michaelmas Term (Friday 4 December 2015). You will find form YA.PLAN in your Year Abroad folder. **We are aware that not all plans may have been finalised by this stage, but it is essential that you keep the Faculty Board (through the Director of Year Abroad Studies) and your Director of Studies informed of any change of plans.**
Forms & Documents

All necessary MML forms are in your folder and on the website. The forms include:

- The **Email Permission Form** (YA.EMAIL) giving agreement for your email address to be disclosed to fellow students for the exchange of YA advice, and to allow your YA reports to be made available online to future students.

- The **Registration Form** (YA.PLAN) to gain approval from the Faculty Board for your Year Abroad plans. This must be returned to the Year Abroad Office by **Friday 4 December 2015** whether or not your plans are finalised by that stage. The deadline is earlier for Erasmus study and British Council applicants (see page 3).

- All students must submit an online **Risk Assessment** form before leaving Cambridge. See page 12.

- An **Address Form** (YA.ADD). This should give BOTH the address of the employer, university or school AND your private address while abroad. This should be returned as soon as you have moved into your new accommodation abroad. Alternatively, you can submit the same information by email.

- An **Attendance Form** (YA.ATT) to be signed & stamped by your university, employer or school at the end of your year abroad and to be returned by the **second Friday of the full Michaelmas Term 2017**. (Alternatively you may submit an Erasmus certificate instead).

- A **Report Form** (YA.ASST, YA.STUDY or YA.WORK) to be submitted immediately after each placement during your Year Abroad, according to your activity. It will be made available (unless you request that it be confidential) for consultation by those going abroad in the future.

- A **Final Report Form** (YA.REP) to be submitted at the end of the year abroad, giving a short evaluation and your advice to future students.

The submission of these forms is a formal course requirement, but more importantly they help us to help you – please return them promptly.

- Also included in your folder is a **Refund Application Form** for those studying without Erasmus funding. See page 11.

**Claims for reimbursement will not be considered after 30 April 2017**
FINANCE

All students will remain personally responsible for all travel and living expenses during their Year Abroad, regardless of whether they are studying, volunteering or undertaking work placements.

University Fees

Year Abroad students pay 15% of the University Composition Fee via their College. (This policy is determined by central government and is beyond the control of the University.) Overseas MML students are required to pay fees at 50% of the overseas rate during their Year Abroad.

Student Loans

Depending on personal circumstances, Year Abroad students are normally eligible for a Student Loan and it may also be possible to apply for an additional loan. Eligible students can apply for funding support from Student Finance (www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance).

Reimbursement of University Fees Abroad

Students are not expected to meet the foreign tuition fees that arise from approved educational arrangements during their study abroad. This means that students will be able to claim reimbursement of full tuition costs incurred during the Year Abroad, however it should be noted that the approval of any Year Abroad plans will be based on both educational and financial considerations.

Students affected will primarily be students of Russian and students of Portuguese and Spanish who undertake a Year Abroad outside the EU. Students who undertake a Year Abroad in the EU and who wish to study will normally be expected to do so at a university with which the Faculty has an Erasmus exchange agreement. Permission to undertake study in the EU at other institutions may be granted in exceptional circumstances, subject to academic considerations and financial constraints.

The Faculty expects students who study in Latin America or Russia to follow a full-time state university course designed for home students, and the level of reimbursement reflects this.

Students intending to study in Russia may be eligible for a grant of up to £2,000 from a fund generously provided by Gazprom in addition to the fee grant made by the Faculty.
For all other countries, students in receipt of a special grant or scholarship (e.g. a grant from Santander in the case of students going to Latin America) are not eligible for a tuition fee claim. (But see also the special grants for students on Erasmus noted on p.8).

**Vacation courses will not** be funded (a vacation course is defined as a course which takes place outside the minimum 8-month Year Abroad residence period); students wishing to undertake a vacation course at the end of their second year or the beginning of their fourth year should apply to their Tutor or Director of Studies.

**Using the YA.FEE refund application form**

Please read the instructions on the **YA.FEE refund application form** carefully. You must pay all fees **in advance** and then claim reimbursement, by sending a completed claim form to the Year Abroad Office accompanied by a copy of the **receipted invoice(s)**. The refund form must show the exact date of payment. Claims will not be considered without a copy of the invoices.

You may submit more than one claim form (e.g. if you are paying for a university course on a termly basis). Payments can be made in Euro (if you have paid for your course fees in Euro) or in pounds sterling, either to you or a nominee (e.g. a parent); claims are paid to you in the form of a cheque and posted to an address of your choice.

Reimbursement will be made at the exchange rate current on the date fees were paid, regardless of when the claim form is submitted to the Year Abroad Office.

**Claims arising from the Year Abroad 2016-17 will not be considered after 30 April 2017.**

**The Faculty cannot help with normal travelling expenses, living expenses, health or travel insurance.** You may be able to claim extra loan in respect of travel and living expenses if you spend your Year Abroad outside Europe.

Please remember that in case of emergency or dire need while you are abroad you should contact the Year Abroad Office straight away. We will be able to advise you and may be able to assist in such circumstances.
Health and Safety, and Insurance

All students must complete an online Risk Assessment before they embark on their Year Abroad. Instructions will be given in the Easter Term. The completion of this form is a formal requirement of the Year Abroad and without it you are not covered by the University’s insurance arrangements.

All students are advised to ensure that they have personal health and other insurance cover for their Year Abroad. This insurance should be appropriate cover for studying or working abroad for the whole year. Standard travel insurance is generally limited to 90 days and does not cover study or employment. It is your own personal responsibility to ensure that you have the kind of cover that you need for your Year Abroad.

Students intending to spend their Year Abroad in Europe are advised to obtain a European Health Insurance Card before they leave England. Further information may be obtained at www.ehic.org.uk.

You are advised to take a photocopy of your passport and keep a separate note of your passport/visa number. Enter two ICE (in case of emergency) numbers on your phone. One for a family member back home, the other for a local contact such as your landlord/landlady, flatmate or work mentor. Also take with you the emergency number to report loss of credit or debit cards.

FAQs
For advice on all aspects of the Year Abroad, please go to:

www.mml.cam.ac.uk/ya
COMMUNICATING WITH THE YEAR ABROAD OFFICE

While you are in Cambridge

The Year Abroad Office is on the first floor of the Raised Faculty Building. When the Administrator is there you may consult the files and other materials available. Office hours are clearly posted on the web (www.mml.cam.ac.uk/ya) and on the office door. We send out circulars and other information by email, and we encourage you to communicate with us by email as well (www.mml-year-abroad@lists.cam.ac.uk).

While you are away

Year Abroad students are still members of Cambridge University and therefore should bear in mind that their actions can have repercussions for the University and for future students going on their Year Abroad.

Don’t forget that while you are abroad we are still available to help in case of need or difficulty. Be sure to take this handbook with you as it contains all our contact details, which are as follows:

- Telephone: +44 (0) 1223 335008, Faculty Office: 335000
  (You should enter these numbers on your phone).
- Fax: +44 (0) 1223 335062
- Email: mml-year-abroad@lists.cam.ac.uk

You can also access our web pages which are updated regularly:

- Home page: www.mml.cam.ac.uk/ya

You can still use your Cambridge email account while abroad – all you have to do is connect to www.webmail.hermes.cam.ac.uk.

Please check your email regularly during your Year Abroad – we will always use your Cambridge email address to keep in touch with you.