

European Studies Report: Lyon 2017

Why I chose to study on the European Studies programme

The option to study abroad for a semester, gain fluency and a qualification in a foreign language were the reasons I was interested in attending the University of Manchester medical programme. I have family who live in France, and so have visited the country often, which is why I was interested in studying French. I was a direct entry student from St Andrews, and got a summer job as an au-pair before starting at Manchester. Although I was told I would have to improve my grammar, I had no issues joining the European Studies programme.

Living and working in Lyon

I chose to go to Lyon because the previous placement reports were all so positive. It is also well located to visit a lot of places. There is the opportunity to go skiing and do winter sports when you arrive, but the weather starts to get sunny in spring.

The University

There are three main public Universities in Lyon: University Claude Bernard Lyon 1 (UCBL1), which is sciences and medicine, University Lumière Lyon 2 which is social sciences and University Jean Moulin Lyon 3 which is humanities and Law.

There are two medical schools at UCBL1, Faculté de Médecine Lyon Est and Faculté de Médecine et de Maïeutique Lyon Sud, which you must choose between. The main campus of UCBL1 is at La Doua in Villeurbanne. Lyon Est is based at the Rockefeller building in Grange Blanche, and Lyon Sud based on the same campus as the Lyon Sud hospital in Oullin. The two medical schools have different structures. Medical students at Lyon Est have 6 weeks of full time placement (des stages) then 6 weeks of study (des cours), whereas students at Lyon Sud have placements which last 3 months which are only in the morning and then study in the afternoon.

As Erasmus students, we only follow the placements. At Lyon Est these follow the rotations of the medical students, doing 3 placements, (the first lasting only 4 weeks, as you arrive after the start of the first block). Placements are mainly based in the hospitals in Bron, Grange Blanche (8th arrondissement) and Croix Rousse. At Lyon Sud, placements are mostly in Oullin. You also do placements full time, and placements are shorter than for their medical students.

Hospitals

Placements are at the public hospitals in Lyon, which are 'Hospices Civils de Lyon'. The main hospitals are Croix Rousse in Croix Rousse, Hopital Lyon Est, which includes the neurology, cardiology, women and children's and psychiatry hospitals in Bron, Hospital Edouard Herriot in Grange Blanche and Hopital Sud in Oullin.

Choosing placements

I chose to study at Lyon Est, because placements are based in Lyon and Bron as opposed to Oullin, which is outside of Lyon, but also because the international mobility co-ordinator at Lyon Est, Madame Brandolese, responded to my emails.

You can request which specialties you would like on the form 'fiche de vœux: stages hospitaliers', which you are asked to complete in advance. You are likely to get the choices you put down. The start of the first placement is 15th of January, and our Erasmus placement did not start until the end of January due to exams, so it is worth noting this on the form too.

Before you go

Mme Brandolese sent a huge list of forms by email, half of which I didn't understand, to be completed and sent before the start of the Erasmus placement <http://lyon-est.univ-lyon1.fr/international/envoi-du-dossier-de-candidature-sending-the-application-822863.kjsp#.WQcVTYVOLIU> . However, the staff at the European Studies office are very helpful and can get necessary documents signed for you, request transcripts and check you filled in forms correctly. You are asked to mail these documents, however, if you scan and send them by email instead then bring a hardcopy with you there does not appear to be an issue. You are asked to fill in an Erasmus Learning Agreement too, which needs to be signed and stamped by someone at UCBL1 then sent back. It is important to send the UoM learning agreement found on My Placements and not the UCBL1 form, because otherwise Manchester will reject the form and getting your Erasmus grant will be delayed.

Manchester My Placements

<http://studentmobility.manchester.ac.uk/> is the University of Manchester site where you can find all the forms which are needed and what pre-placement sessions you need to attend. The University travel insurance policy is also here.

Insurance

There is a UoM travel policy, which is very comprehensive. You should also have an up to date EHIC- carte de sécurité sociale européenne (if you are a UK/EU student). Because we are studying there for less than a year it is not necessary to have a "student EHIC", the normal one is fine.

UCBL1 also requires you to have professional liability student cover, so student health insurance which includes 'responsabilité civile professionnelle pour les étudiants en santé'. This is 28 euros from SMERRA, and can be bought online or in Lyon <https://smerra.fr/4-assurances/10-assurance-vie-etudiante> . It can also be bought from LMDE.

Vaccinations

You need to ensure that you are up to date with vaccinations. Book an appointment with occupational health well in advance, because it gets busy in the run up to Christmas <http://www.occhealth.manchester.ac.uk/> . You are also asked to get a Tuberculin test and Hep B serology. The interferon gamma test is fine instead of the Tuberculin test. You may be asked to pay for these tests and also for a copy of your vaccination history 'because it is for an elective which means you don't have to go' but I explained to the nurse that the term abroad was mandatory for the Medicine with European Studies course and he waived the fee.

I was also asked to get a Boostrix injection (DTP booster), which was not provided by Occupational Health, however you can get this done whilst in Lyon for free at a centre de sante et de prevention (CDHS).

What to bring with you

You will be sent a list of things which you need to bring with you. For Lyon Est it was the following: <http://lyon-est.univ-lyon1.fr/international/a-votre-arrivee-a-la-faculte-de-medecine-lyon-est-822888.kjsp#.WQcVVYVOLIU>

Scanners and printers can be tricky to find, so if possible scan and take a copy of documents you're bringing with you. If you do need to print something, you can do it in the La Doua library, Medical

building library, or at a corep.fr. If you have a smart phone, getting a scanning app is an easy way to upload documents.

Other things which will be useful:

- Lots of passport photos, at least 8, as often two are required for each thing.
- Scan of birth certificate – this is needed if you apply for CAF.
- Print of UoM insurance policy.
- Print out of UoM Erasmus certificate of arrival and certificate of attendance (Mme Brandolese is not impressed if you ask her to print or scan documents for you).

Getting to Lyon

Direct flights between Manchester and Lyon are inexpensive, starting from around £30 (although hold luggage costs extra). Flybe do flights to Lyon year round, and Easy Jet do flights from December to April only. The airport is outside of Lyon in St Exupery. To get to the centre of Lyon, the Rhone Express, a tram, is around 13 euros with a student card and departs every 15 minutes. Taxis are around 55 euros. Other options would be booking a shuttle bus for around 6 euros which goes to Meyzieu ZI and then you can take public transport to the centre of Lyon, or you can use Bla Bla car, which is really popular in France, and car share from 2 euros.

There is a week of vacation after finals finish, and then you are expected to start your placement the following Monday in Lyon. I went to Lyon during the vacation week in order to sort accommodation and register with the University in order to start my placement on the Monday. This was really stressful to get everything ready straight after finishing exams, especially as it meant I did not find out I had passed my exams until after leaving for Lyon. I would recommend leaving a bit later, registering on the Monday the Erasmus placement starts, and apologising to Mme Brandolese that you could not start any sooner. As you are already two weeks late for the start of the placement, you will have missed any placement introduction anyway so it makes little difference to the first hospital placement.

Accommodation

Student halls

Student accommodation is by CROUS <https://www.crous-lyon.fr/>, and is for students' at all three public universities. This is very cheap, with an ensuite single room costing 267 euros a month, and is also eligible for CAF. Bed linens are 10 euros a month. The deposit is 230 euros, and there are non-refundable administration fees of 110 euros also. Assurance habitation is also required, which costs 38 euros from SMERRA. Fees are paid per calendar month, so it is worth considering getting a hotel or Airbnb for the first few nights, and then renting student halls from the first of February.

Accommodation is quite basic, with one kitchen on a corridor of twenty people. There is no oven, and you cannot keep personal items or food in the kitchen, although rooms include a small fridge.

We were sent an accommodation form in around November, but I applied for student halls after not finding private accommodation whilst in Lyon, so it is a good back up if your other accommodation plans fall through. Most accommodation is near La Doua, but La Madeleine and Lirondelle are in the 3rd arrondissement which is more central.

I was in Monod, near La Doua, next to a tram stop for lines T1 and T4, and close to the Parc de la Tete d'Or. The building also has wi-fi, which not all the residences have. I became quite good friends with other people in the same hall, which was mainly international and masters students

(introducing yourself and asking where people come from when cooking in the kitchen works quite well).

CROUS also arrange free student activities, such as dance classes, language classes, yoga, cycling.

If you would prefer private accommodation, there are lots of sites to help you look for a sublet:

- Airbnb
- <https://www.leboncoin.fr/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/logementslyon/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1432145673746085/> Lyon : Location d'appart, colocation, sous location !
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/locationlyon/>
- <https://www.lacartedescolocs.fr/accueil>
- Appartager.com

Transport in Lyon

Carte Tecely and Velo'v

Lyon has excellent transport, and you can use metro, tram and bus using a Tecely card. The card is 5 euros, and then 'Campus Mensuel' is 31 euros per calendar month for unlimited travel (so for the first few days just buy individual tickets and start it in February). The card can be bought at any TCL agency. You will need to bring ID and a student card (this can be your UoM one)

<http://www.tcl.fr/Tarifs/Les-points-de-vente/Agences-Commerciales> .

The network usually stops at around 12:30, but there is also a night bus during term time on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights <http://www.tcl.fr/Decouvrir-TCL/Tous-les-services-TCL/Les-lignes-Pleine-Lune> .

There are also city bikes called Velo'v's, which can be rented. This can be added to your Tecely card online for 15 euros for the year <https://velov.grandlyon.com/?L=1> . Taking out the year subscription using the Tecely card means that the first hour of use is free instead of 30 minutes.

Transport Apps:

- Google maps. Although, it does not give you routes on public transport.
- TCL. Official app for public transport.
- Citymapper. Worked better for public transport routes than TCL
- SNCF
- Navmii France- offline map of France
- AllBikesNow for Velo'v station bike availability

Travelling outside of Lyon

At Lyon Est you are given 5 days of holiday leave (although your service may not require you to be there full time anyway).

From Lyon it is easy to get a bus or train to places like Annecy, Marseille, and Chamonix, as well as Geneva in Switzerland and Turin in Italy. Flights to Barcelona are cheap, but another Erasmus student from there suggested getting the overnight bus (around 10 hours duration) as it was cheaper and avoided the hassle of going through the airport.

Useful sites and apps:

- SNCF
- Ouigo
- Ouibus
- Flixbus
- Busradar
- Bla bla car

If you prefer organised trips, ESN Cosmo Lyon do several:

<https://www.facebook.com/ESNCosmoLyon/>, <http://lyon.ixesn.fr/>.

Bank accounts

French bank accounts are needed if you want to apply for CAF, or get a French mobile phone contract. Also, there are still a few things which insist on payment by cheque. You can only take out large amounts or change account details at the branch you sign up with. You need to arrange an appointment to open a bank account, which may need to be booked a few weeks in advance. At the appointment, you need to bring identification (UK driver's license does not count as ID), passport size photos, proof of residence (rent contract), and proof of studying at the University (university ID). There is normally a monthly fee to keep a bank account open, however there are normally offers such as free for students, or free for the first year.

I signed up to BNP Paribas, but would not recommend it as they refuse to give cheque books to foreign students for the first year. The account is free whilst you are a student, but if you want to keep the account open after you finish, you have to pay the monthly fee, which is around 5 euros.

Money

The Erasmus grant was just over 300 euros per month. This was given on a Mastercard cash passport. You must complete all compulsory Erasmus documents (grant agreement, learning agreement, and certificate of arrival) on My Placements, and your request processed, before any money will be loaded on the card. The first instalment did not arrive until March. This means you should bring euros or be able to access your UK account to pay for things initially in France <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/travel/cheap-travel-money>.

Shopping and eating

Post-brexite, the exchange rate from pounds to euros is not great, making shopping in France quite expensive. The cheapest supermarkets are Lidl and Leader Price, but fruit and veg is often cheaper at the markets. My local market near La Doua was in Place Wilson. There is also a pretty, touristy market along the Saone on Quai Tilsitt.

The winter sales go on until 21 February, which is useful for buying anything you forgot to bring with you. The main shopping areas are in Part-Dieu, Bellecour and Confluence. Shops are closed on Sunday.

The hospital cafeterias are for staff only, and is called the 'Self'. You are given a hospices civils de Lyon card which you can load with money online and pay for meals with. The meal is 4.05 euros. At Hospital Lyon Sud, students are not allowed to use the Self, and instead eat at the Lyon Sud medical school cafeteria, which is 3.25 euros and is paid for using your student 'izly' card.

Lyon is known as the French Gastronomic Capital. There are traditional 'Bouchon Lyonnaises' as well as Michelin starred restaurants. There are often lunch time set menus as a (slightly) cheaper way of eating out. Apart from in Vieux Lyon, the touristy area of Lyon, most restaurants tend to be closed on Sunday and Monday.

Museums and tourist attractions

Carte Jeune Musee can be bought for 7 euros and gets you unlimited access to several museums. <http://www.lyon.fr/page/culture/exposition/la-carte-musees.html>.

CAF

It pays for about a third of your rent, and is open to all students, including European and international (although not if you are subletting). On <http://www.caf.fr/> go to : Accueil > Aides et services > Les services en ligne > Faire une demande de prestation > Aide au logement. You need to have a French bank account, and have a scan of your passport, birth certificate and the document you receive with all your student details when you register with your university. You also need a SIRET number and code locataire which your halls of residence will be able to supply you with (If you are in halls).

University sports

As Erasmus students you do not have to pay a fee to play sports at the university. The rock climbing instructors are very open to having Erasmus students, even if you sign up late, and are very patient teachers. To sign up to a course, you must email the teachers directly, whose details can be found on the SUAPS website <http://suaps.univ-lyon1.fr/presentation/secteur-sante/contact-sante-751745.kjsp?RH=1396037815563>.

Learning French

As part of Erasmus, you are given access to online language learning site OLS.

There are also weekly language classes held in the Rockefeller building at Grange Blanche. These classes cover French culture as well as medical French, commonly used French phrases and expressions. You will be asked to sign up to these in advance by emailing the tutor.

There are also many opportunities for Tandems and Language exchanges:

- <https://www.facebook.com/BlaBlaLanguageExchange/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TandempartnerLyon/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/LanguageExchangeLyon/>

Medical School Societies

There are French medical students who act as 'Parrains'. You can contact the students in charge of organising international student events and ask for one. You should also be invited to join the international medical student groups, which should have titles something like Sorties Etudiants Internationaux & Français and Médecine Lyon 2017-18 Etudiants Etrangers Médecine Lyon Est Et Lyon Sud 2017-2018. The student MedSoc for Lyon Est is called ACLE: <https://www.facebook.com/ACLE-Culture-et-Sport-934645499956352/>

Erasmus organisations

There are a couple of international and Erasmus student organisations which arrange events and trips, which are really welcoming:

- Erasmus Student Network Cosmo Lyon <https://www.facebook.com/ESNCosmoLyon/>, <http://lyon.ixesn.fr/>
- iStudent Lyon <https://www.facebook.com/lyon.erasmus> <http://istudent.fr/>

Online resources

The UCBL1 medical school version of OneMed is called Spiral Connect. It has useful information about your placements, and also resources marked under FLE (Francais Langue Etrangere) for international students. Spiral Connect can be found on the UCBL1 portal under Ressources & Outils then clicking 'Connexion LYON1' on Spiral Connect to access the resources.

Placements

My placements were paediatric endocrinology, obstetrics and gynaecology, and pathology.

Paediatric Endocrinology at HFME

As a medical student on this placement, you start at 8:30 and finish at around 18:30. There are paediatric endocrinology consultations, day patients (usually patients learning to control their diabetes), and an in patients ward, for around 30 patients. Although it is an endocrinology ward, there are also general paediatric admissions from A&E. The role of the medical students (externs) is to clerk any new patients on the ward and document this in the patient notes, then present this to one of the junior doctors (interns). You can also attend the consultations with the consultants. There are a lot of consultations about diabetes, but also growth disorders and rarer endocrinology diseases. You can also attend patient counselling sessions about diabetes management. Although the day was quite long for a first placement (from talking to other students, a lot of the paediatrics ones are), and I found it difficult to see patients by myself and talk in French, I did learn a lot on the placement and enjoyed it.

Obstetrics and gynaecology at HFME

The placement was arranged so that students rotate around the four different services in O&G at HFME. The services you rotate through are: gynaecology surgery, gynaecology ward, pathology of pregnancy, and post-natal ward. To see births and c-sections you have to follow a French medical student doing 'La Garde'. I did not find this placement very rewarding. A lot of this placement seemed to involve completing patient documents. Because I rotated to a different service each week, it meant I was always trying to come to grips with the paperwork I was expected to do as a medical student, and by the time I had got to grips with it, and figured out what all the abbreviations were, I had to move to a different service. Also, the interns are less willing to explain things, as they don't have time to show new students what to do every week. There is the opportunity to go to consultations, however these were often completely filled by midwifery students.

Pathology at Lyon Sud

Although this placement was marked as being at Croix Rousse, I found out on my first day of placement the service had moved to Lyon Sud over a year ago. In the morning I was in the gross pathology lab, where pathologists cut up specimens taken from surgery to put into cassettes which can then be prepared into histology slides. In the afternoon you sit with the interns and go through slides. This placement was quite relaxed. There is no job for medical students, which means you can follow what doctors are doing, but also means it's a lot of watching and not doing much. As a lot of

the specimens were tumours, I did learn a lot more about different types of cancer. I also learnt a lot of French anatomy vocabulary by spending time in the gross pathology lab.

Differences between the French and UK medical systems

At French medical school, anyone can attend medical school in the first year. At the end of the first year, there is a 'Concours' exam, and only those who pass this exam can continue to the second year. The course lasts 6 years, and in the final year, there is another national concours which is used to rank medical students and decide which jobs they can get. At Lyon medical school the first two years are non-clinical, the third year you do half time at the hospital, then years 4-6 are clinical years. From fourth year onwards, students are paid a small amount for the work they do at the hospital, usually filling in paperwork and clerking patients, depending what year they are in. They also have to do on-call (La Garde) for which they are also paid. On-calls are 24 hours. Foreign medical students are NOT paid in Lyon.

There are no foundation years, and from medical school go straight to do an Internat in a speciality as an Interne. They do not have the title Dr until they do a thesis and finish their Internat, which is around 5 years. The consultants are called 'Chefs'.

European Studies Programme

In terms of linguistic development, I have gained hugely from being able to complete the Erasmus programme. I would like to continue to develop my French, possibly by working or doing a masters in France or a French speaking country. I am very glad I had the opportunity to participate in the Erasmus programme and love my time in Lyon.