



**French**

**Year Abroad Handbook**



Swansea University  
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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR ABROAD

Broadly speaking, the Learning Objectives for the Year Abroad may be considered under three headings:

### 1. Linguistic Learning Objectives

The most obvious reason for a linguist to visit the country where the language they are studying is spoken is clearly **to improve competence in language skills**.

Providing you make an effort to meet and get to know plenty of native French-speakers there should be no problem about practicing and improving **listening and speaking skills**.

- ☺ try to develop an awareness of the language that you can hear around you;
- ☺ listen to the radio or watch television whenever you can;
- ☺ note regional varieties of accent, vocabulary and structure;
- ☺ try to spot nuances of tone and register, for example when people are joking or angry;
- ☺ keep notes of your observations, including new or unusual items of vocabulary, or structures which interest you.

Remember also that you should use this opportunity to improve your **reading and writing skills** too. You need, at the very least, to read newspapers (a local one is likely to be fairly easy linguistically and will tell you what is going on in the local community) and magazines regularly. Practise writing in French too: you might consider keeping a diary in French, or writing letters or e-mails to French-speaking friends, who might correct them, in return for your doing the same to their English letters or e-mails to you.

**Above all, you should take every opportunity you can to practise your linguistic skills!**

### 2. Cultural Learning Objectives

One of the benefits of spending a prolonged period in a foreign country is being able to appreciate it in much greater depth than is possible during a brief summer holiday. 'Intercultural Awareness' is a skill many international employers are looking for and you have a unique chance to develop your sensitivity to another culture during your Year Abroad. As with your language skills, however, you must not be passive in this respect; you need to develop a kind of journalistic inquisitiveness about what is going on around you.

Start by trying to find out all you can about the place where you are: its size, what there is to see and do there, what local political issues are making the news. Make sure that you know what is going on in the national news too; and note any differences in the way international stories are reported in comparison to the UK.

On a broader level, use your experiences to reflect on the way French society is organized and functions. Try, for example, to answer questions like these:

- ☺ What is the attitude of locals to outsiders – to immigrants and to you, as someone from the UK?
- ☺ What is the attitude towards Europe?
- ☺ How does bureaucracy operate in France? How do people react to it?
- ☺ Are you aware of class differences between the people you meet?
- ☺ What is the attitude of the French to authority, e.g. politicians, the police, bosses, landlords, university teachers?
- ☺ How do young people see themselves in society?

Remember, once again, that you are in a unique position to assess issues like these by comparing your new experiences with life in the UK. Your attitude towards British society will probably change too – and remember also that future employers will respond well to someone who has developed an open-minded attitude to other cultures in this way.

### **3. Personal Learning Objectives**

The Year Abroad gives you the opportunity to become almost entirely independent. The Department, your parents and friends, and contacts you already have in France will do all they can to help you. However, you have to make all the practical decisions and live with the consequences, in a way that you probably have not had to do up to now. This may be daunting in prospect, but it is a challenge that most students cope with very well, and the result is a growth of self-confidence and maturity.

You will also find that the Year Abroad offers you a chance to break new ground, to meet new people, make new friends, develop new interests or pursue familiar interests in new surroundings. Make sure that you take maximum advantage of everything that is on offer in this respect – you might even surprise yourself and discover some hidden talent!

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

On completion of your period of residence in France you should have:

- ☺ developed your language skills (and language-learning skills) to near fluency;
- ☺ acquired or developed language skills/cultural knowledge through university study (where appropriate to the programme);
- ☺ acquired vocationally-oriented experience (where appropriate to the programme);
- ☺ developed your general understanding of French society and culture as well as your intercultural awareness;
- ☺ developed an understanding of the French business/working environment (where appropriate to the programme);
- ☺ developed your personal and professional skills.

## SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

During your Year Abroad you will have the opportunity to use and develop a number of skills and qualities that employers look for in a graduate employee. These include:

- ☺ **Key skills:**
  - Improving your own learning and performance
  - Communication
  - Information Technology
  - Working with others
  - Problem solving
  
- ☺ **Personal qualities:**
  - Self-reliance
  - Adaptability
  - Drive
  - Common sense
  - Self-confidence
  - Creativity
  
- ☺ **Knowledge of different organizations:**
  - Academic institutions in France
  - Schools in France
  - Businesses in France

## PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

<b>Angers</b>	<b><a href="http://www.univ-angers.fr">www.univ-angers.fr</a></b>
<b>Brest</b>	<b><a href="http://www.univ-brest.fr">www.univ-brest.fr</a></b>
<b>Besançon</b>	<b><a href="http://www.univ-fcomte.fr">www.univ-fcomte.fr</a></b>
<b>Brest (Bretagne Occidentale)</b>	<b><a href="http://www.univ-brest.fr">www.univ-brest.fr</a></b>
<b>Chambéry (Savoie)</b>	<b><a href="http://www.univ-savoie.fr">www.univ-savoie.fr</a></b>
<b>Lyon III (Jean Moulin)</b>	<b><a href="http://www.univ-lyon3.fr">www.univ-lyon3.fr</a></b>
<b>Pau</b>	<b><a href="http://www.univ-pau.fr">www.univ-pau.fr</a></b>
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