

# [1. as to learn what it means](https://assignbuster.com/1-as-to-learn-what-it-means/)

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1.    INTRODUCTION The Erasmus student exchange programme is one of the few Europe successstories everyone can agree on. United Kingdom risks exiting of the Erasmus programafter the vote to leave the European Union. Brexit refers to the United Kingdom’s decision in a referendum on June23th, 2016 to leave the European Union (EU). Brexit is an abbreviation for” British exit”. The vote’s result was unexpected and roiled globalmarkets, bringing the British pound to fall to the lowest level against thedollar in 30 years. Erasmus is the main student exchange program in the EU and this yearcelebrates its 30th anniversary.

The name comes from a philosopher of DutchRenaissance-era. The Erasmus program was established in 1987 with 11 members, including the United Kingdom. Since then, over four million students have hadthe opportunity to study in another European country by funding their scholarsipand waiving their tuition fees. In 2014, Erasmus expanded and included apprentices, volunteers, staffand youth exchanges and even jobseekers. Meanwhile, the number of countriesinvolved has tripled over the years.

Today, Erasmus has 33 full members, including several non-EU nations such as Norway and Iceland. It also boastsmore than 160 partner countries. Nowadays one can speak of “ Erasmusgeneration”, there being over one million children born of couples who metthrough this program. The Erasmus program has enabled a whole generation to make importantexperiences useful for the modern labour market, such as to learn what it meansto live and work alongside people from another culture and to develop theskills and versatility. It is a generation that has gone on to find some of thebest jobs. After an Erasmus experience, the students acquire greater maturity.

They have a clearer sense of what their own institution has to offer. Thisexperience makes for a more mature relationship with their institution and aclearer idea of what opportunities are available to them and what they canexpect. They are also much more pragmatic and improve the ability to recognize thelimits of what their institution can offer (Byrne, 2012).    2.   EU and UK agreements: current situation The leaders of the 27 countries of the European Union, meeting on 15thDecember in Brussels, acknowledged that “ sufficient progress” wasmade on the three points of the negotiation on the exit of the United Kingdomfrom the EU. These points concerned the rights of European citizens in GreatBritain, London’s financial obligations to the Union and the border betweenIreland and Northern Ireland.

Allproblems have not been resolved in this meeting, but the second part of thenegotiations has begun, the one on future relations when the United Kingdomwill be outside of a united Europe, about trade, security and other sectors. The second phase will start in March, and attention will be focused onthe duration and modality of a transition phase (to be agreed between the twoparties) starting on March 29th, 2019, when Britain will formally leave EU. Inthat date, Britain will not leave the EU at all, in fact it will continue toenjoy the benefits and respect the laws for at least another two years (thetransitional period), therefore until March 2021. It is a necessary transition time to give the business and other sectorsto prepare for the new regime, to understand what will have to change in therelationship between the Gb and the EU and what will remain intact. Oneconsequence of the transition is that the Erasmus university exchange programwill remain in place at least until the end of 2020. It is possible that thenegotiation will decide to keep it even after Brexit (Franceschini, 2017).  3.   implications and perspectives About 16, 000 British students spend a semester or year abroad as part ofthe Erasmus program each year.

The most popular destinations are France, Spainand Germany. The number of UK students leaving for an Erasmus experience isincreasing, as many universities in Europe offer English language modules, which helps to increase the number of UK students able to participate even ifthey do not have previous language skills. While students try to adddistinctive character to their CVs, the number of participants in the UK hasincreased.    For example, the exchanges between Italy and the United Kingdom thatinvolved Italian students (for study and training) from 2007 to 2015, saysIndire (2016), have grown by 80%, with an average annual increase of 11percent. In 2007, Italian students leaving for the island were almost 1, 500, while in 2015 they increased up to 2695.

In 2014/2015 the United Kingdom rankedfourth among the most popular countries for study reasons, after Spain, Franceand Germany, while on the training front, after Spain, the second place in theselection includes the British companies that host 1, 303 trainees, with anincrease of over 40% compared to 2013/2014. The United Kingdom is a destination much loved by teachers: according toIndire, it is the fifth most quoted for teaching trips (after Spain, France, Germany and Poland) and the third for training trips, involving both professorsand technical-administrative staff. According to the latest data available at European level on highereducation (2013/2014), explains the Indire (2016), the United Kingdom is one ofthe favourite destinations of European university students under the Erasmus +Program. The British state has accepted 27, 401 students from the other EUcountries, 25% of whom are French, 16% are German, 15. 4% are Spanish and 8. 5%are Italian. Also, the Erasmus program depends on the exit agreement between the UKand the EU before the UK leaves on March 2019. There is the possibility thatthe United Kingdom will continue to be part of the program until the end of thecurrent program (2014-20), with the creation of a separate agreement.

Erasmus is an EU program and established by EU law. Whether or not theUnited Kingdom continues to be part of the post-Brexit depends on the exitagreement between the UK and the EU. Other non-EU European countries are part of the Erasmus program(Iceland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey) as permitted under Article 24 of the Erasmus regulation.

This couldtherefore be an option to replace the Erasmus program after 2020. The UK will need to contribute to the financing of the programme andobey all the relevant rules without having the opportunity to influence them. The case of Switzerland is instructive: Switzerland, which has neverjoined the EU, used to be a full member of Erasmus. In 2014, Swiss voters approveda more stringent and strict referendum on immigration. As the result violatedEU freedom of movement rules, Brussels suspended Switzerland’s participation inErasmus and demoted it to a mere partner country.

In order to allow mobility tocontinue nonetheless, Switzerland set up its own student exchange scheme, theSEMP (Swiss-European Mobility Programme). This is based on a series ofbilateral exchange agreements and it provides students receive a scholarshipinstead of an Erasmus grant. The future participation of the United Kingdom could therefore depend onthe commitment to give free circulation to researchers and students, but the UKgovernment seems to remain loyal to the end of free movement in thenegotiations. With only very detached participation, or no formal agreement with theEU on Erasmus, universities would be able to form bilateral agreements withEuropean universities. This is, after all, how UK universities exchangestudents with institutions elsewhere in the world. These agreements, however, operate without providing funds to students, who must cover their own expenses. This is likely to prevent low-incomestudents from easily participating in the Erasmus program, and in the same timethe mobility guaranteed by the agreements between the countries within the EUof the Erasmus program would be affected. Essential mobility for the future jobsearch and the future economic needs of graduates.

The argument that the UK contribution to the EU budget, which coversErasmus can be simply diverted to a national scheme, does not take into accountthe costs of setting up a parallel system, as the Swiss example shows. A solution for the UK government can be the replacement of fundingallocated for participation in the Erasmus program in the United Kingdom (€ 113million in 2015) to give students the opportunity to participate on the samebasis. No guarantee has been made in this regard. On the universities side, the administrative costs of individuallynegotiated grants are much higher as the Erasmus program provides a commonlyagreed contractual framework. One consequence of this could be a lower demand from EU students tochoose the UK as a destination for their Erasmus. This would be a negativeaspect for both students and universities in the United Kingdom (Cardwell, 2017).            4.    CONCLUSION The UK government’s view of a new “ Global Britain” must surely includeequipping graduates and young people with the cultural ability to understandthe world beyond national borders of the UK and plug the post-referendum skillsgap.

Probably one of the most effective methods are exchange programs. Ruth Sinclair-Jones, Director of the Erasmus+ UK National Agency, said that the priority should beto try to make sure that the UK can stay fully participating in Erasmus+, because of the benefits to everyone, not just the UK. The SEMP (Swiss-European Mobility Programme) could be a positive model tobe imitated in the United Kingdom. However, British universities will continueto attract students whatever happens, in part thanks to the English language. It must be considered that Switzerland has now approved legislation thathas reduced the imposition of immigration quotas, thus mitigating thereferendum result.

That compromise allows it to start talking with the EU tofully rejoin. There are still the legal aspects that should not be underestimated. Let’s be clear: being in Erasmus means accepting freedom of movement. WithDowning Street pushing for a “ hard Brexit”, this scenario appearsincreasingly unlikely. Brexit could cause a significant reduction in the number of studentsfrom all over Europe who choose to go to the UK to continue their studies. Onecause could be the increase in tuition fees, as EU students could be treated asinternational students.

Another cause could be the major difficultiesconcerning visa practices. This could cause a decrease in the free movement ofstudents. United Kingdom students trying to avoid high school fees and deciding tostudy in other European countries may lose this possibility, considering thattuition costs increase outside the UK.

The visa process is likely to become more complicated and lessattractive for students who are looking for the opportunity to live abroad andexperience other cultures while studying. The cultural and educational enrichment of Erasmus has been sosignificant that it begins to increase the concern about what the future holdspost Brexit. Once Britain leaves the EU, the access that British students couldhave to this programme looks very uncertain. Britain could face exclusion from this program entirely, althoughstudents currently using the programme are not at risk and there is some hope thatmembership of Erasmus could be maintained as part of EU negotiations.