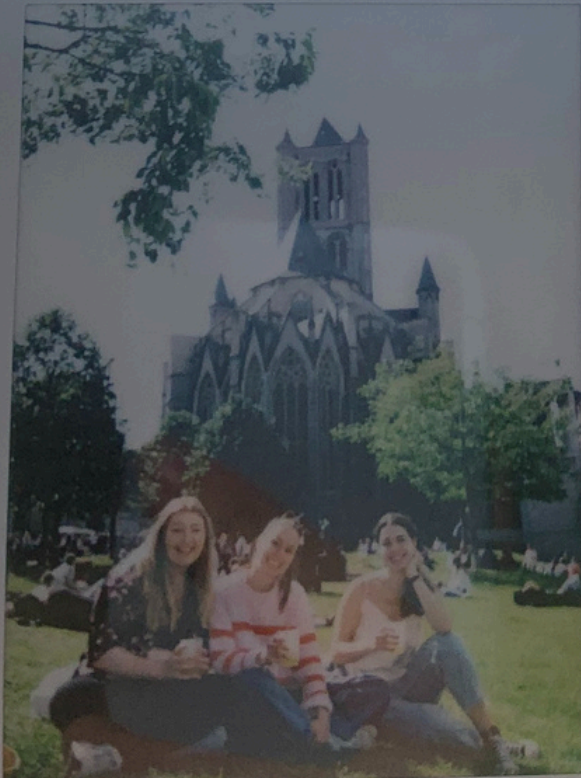


# Welcome to The Liftoff



## Global Opportunities newsletter!



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

**CAREERS,  
EMPLOYABILITY  
AND SKILLS**

And... breathe! Summer is here at last – time to put any thoughts of your studies to the back of your mind for a while and think about something more fun! The opportunity of a lifetime is fast-approaching – your study exchange adventure.



And while there are a number of actions you may need to take, hopefully a short checklist will keep you on track. Why not review the slides from the pre-departure sessions to give you confidence you haven't forgotten anything?

Rachel spent a semester studying architecture at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium and tells us of differences in culture between 'home' and 'abroad'.

Belgians are known for their love of cycling and while I rarely cycle at home I embraced this change to my mode of transport and quickly fitted in with the locals!

I studied in English, made friends outside of class in Dutch, (ordered my morning croissant in Dutch too)! and travelled to French speaking areas of the country in my spare time. By the end of my exchange I was able to understand much spoken and written Dutch.



I was familiar with the Belgian cuisine before I went – waffles, fries, chocolate... but a real benefit of my exchange was cooking with other exchange students. A favourite dish of mine in Belgium was actually Austrian – käsespätzle!



The local Erasmus Student Network was great for day trips, weekends and nights out! At the start you quickly realise everyone is in the same boat and the range of activities are incredible – I even went on a day trip to Luxembourg with the ESN!





While the culture is a little bit different to home – my tips for your transition are to find your own piece of home from home. One place could be the ubiquitous Irish pubs across the globe (even for non-drinkers)! Another is to remember you can connect with others through shared hobbies – sports, yoga, music which you will find the world over.



Matthew spent a semester at the Université de Strasbourg studying International Relations and Politics and has summarised how to prepare for exchange in five easy steps:

“1. Research where you're going. Think about:

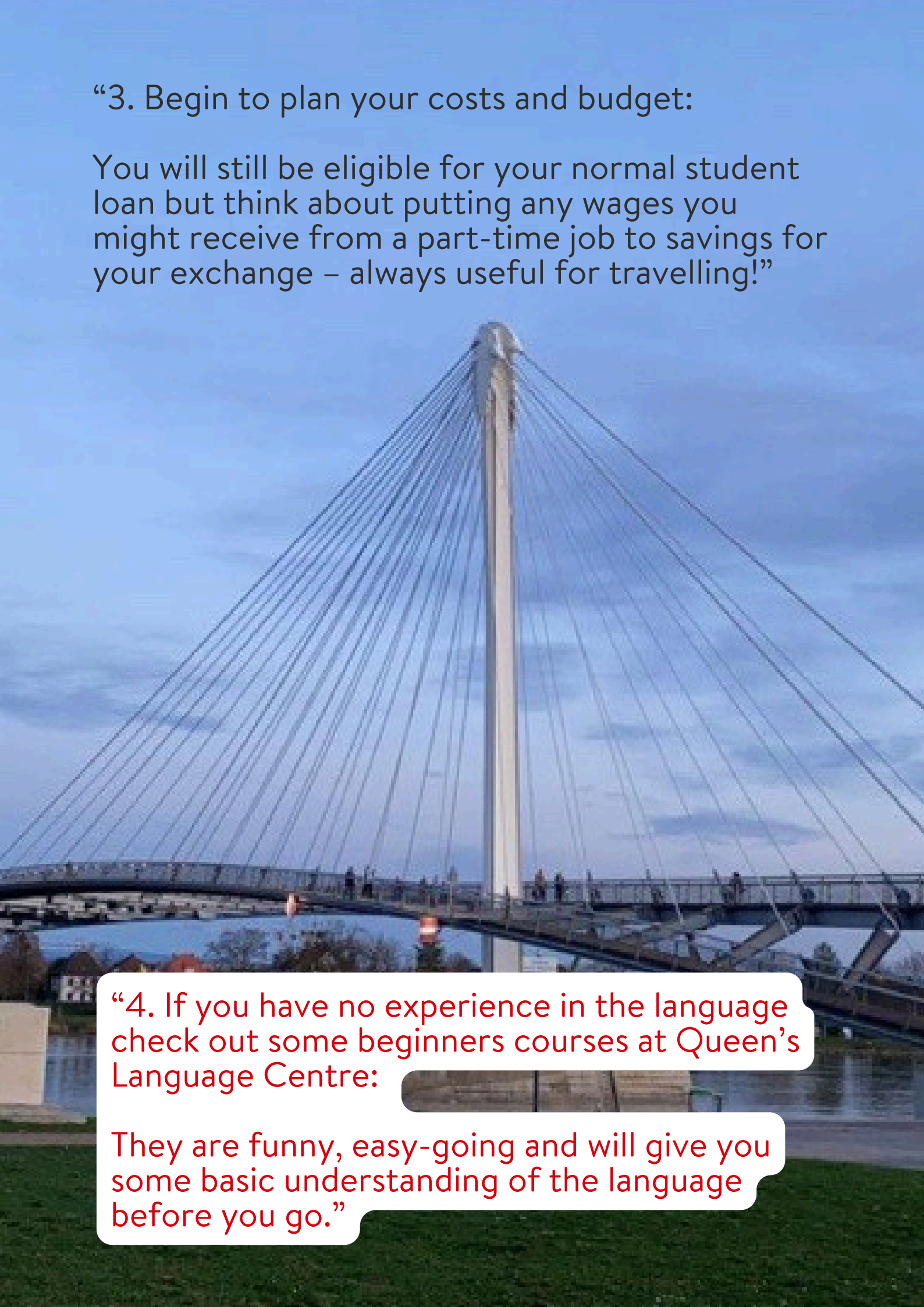
The courses on offer at host universities and if it offers suitable credits for completing your degree at Queen's and any language requirements.”

“2. Sort your accommodation early!

Get in contact with your host university to see if there are any residences offered in halls as this is a great way to make friends or look into private student accommodation.”

### “3. Begin to plan your costs and budget:

You will still be eligible for your normal student loan but think about putting any wages you might receive from a part-time job to savings for your exchange – always useful for travelling!”



“4. If you have no experience in the language check out some beginners courses at Queen’s Language Centre:

They are funny, easy-going and will give you some basic understanding of the language before you go.”

“5. Be prepared to make the most of this opportunity:

Going abroad is a mixture of terrifying, exciting and life-changing moments - be ready to seize every opportunity that comes to you. If you're worried about going reach out to The Global Opportunities Team or your host university.”



With these tips, you will be all set to sit back and enjoy the life you have now built for yourself while studying abroad. So, what are you waiting for?

**Look out for the next edition of  
The Liftoff**   
coming in July.

Don't forget, if you have any queries just pop us an email at [goglobal@qub.ac.uk](mailto:goglobal@qub.ac.uk) or book an appointment with one of our team [here](#)