

National University of Ireland, Maynooth, English Department

Letter of motivation: Helena Obermeier

Applicant for September 2014 admission to Erasmus Program

I am applying for the Erasmus exchange program with the UK and Ireland as part of my studies. My name is Helena Obermeier and I am currently studying to become a primary school teacher at the University of Munich. After completing one year of studies to become a grammar school teacher, I changed my course to primary school education. I realised that my teaching interest lies with primary school children rather than secondary school pupils. However, English is still my major subject.

As I have always planned to spend some time abroad during my studies, I am very happy to use the opportunities given to us by the International Office. I chose the Erasmus program instead of the intercultural project or the assistant teacher program, because I am particularly interested in spending a year at an English-speaking university. I think this is a unique opportunity to combine my university studies with first-hand experience of life in an English-speaking country. In my opinion living on campus at another university in a foreign country is an extraordinary opportunity which can only be experienced during the time of my studies. After I have finished my studies, I will still be able to go abroad and teach or work, but I will not be able or allowed to study at another university anymore.

The National University of Ireland, Maynooth, is my first choice for my stay due to the variety of courses they offer. On the National University of Ireland's website I have read that they even offer an Irish language course. I understand that there is an extra fee for this course, but I am very eager to learn this new language. In addition I am very interested in the courses *Ireland 431-800/ 800-1169*, *Women in the Celtic World* and *Introducing Celtic History*.

Alongside improving my spoken and written English and Irish, I also hope to gain insight into the various aspects of Irish culture and history. Due to the manifold courses on offer in Medieval Irish & Celtic Studies, unique among the Erasmus universities of the United Kingdom and Ireland, I hope to learn as much as possible in this short period of time.

I am also interested in studying at the Royal Holloway University of London, the University of Sussex or the University College Cork. They also offer excellent course programs and I am especially excited about their English literature courses – particularly about the ones on Shakespeare and medieval literature.

I have always been fascinated by the culture and history of Ireland. Unfortunately, I have not had an opportunity to visit Ireland yet. The Erasmus program would be a unique chance to fulfill this ambition and experience life in Ireland and learn more about the culture through first-hand experience and university courses. After three weeks of extensive travel throughout England and Scotland in summer 2011, I now want to get to know Ireland much better.

I have an excellent command of the English language which would enable me to adjust easily to an English-speaking country and university. This is partly due to my work at the Language Centre at the University of Munich since July 2012. I am working in a team together with two native speakers and am therefore accustomed to an English-speaking work environment. Since I am very interested in languages and different cultures in general– I specialised in English at school and took my school leaving exam both in English and Spanish – I am confident that I am a strong candidate for the Erasmus program.