

Regulation of the Undergraduate Research Abroad Year (in French « Année de Recherche Prédoctorale à l'Étranger » ARPE)

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The academic year in which the training will be carried out is referred to as "year {n}", the preceding year as "year {n-1}" and the successor year as "year {n+1}".

1- Principles

1-1 Concerned student public

The ARPE year is a training year, intended for teachers (students enrolled in the ENS Paris-Saclay diploma), carried out in an academic research laboratory located abroad¹.

The ARPE year is, as far as possible, completed before the second year of the Master's degree in research (M2R), and is therefore the third year of the standard "research" training programme. More rarely, it can be carried out after the M2R, particularly when the internship discipline was discovered late in the academic year (due to the organization of studies or the singularity of the student's path).

It may also be considered, at the student's request, as part of a year of leave without pay for personal reasons, when he or she sees an opportunity to strengthen his or her study path (for example, in addition to a "teaching and research" path).

1-2 Training objectives

The main objective is the practice of autonomy in a research activity. The duration of reception in the laboratory is therefore at least nine months. Exceptionally, an alternative scheme comprising two successive periods in two separate laboratories, each of which lasts less than 9 months, but whose cumulative duration is at least equal to 10 months, may be accepted; in this case, one of the two reception periods will have a minimum duration of six months.

The practice of autonomy requires that the student be the main actor in the project; he or she nevertheless defines the modalities in a dialogue with the heads of his or her department. The training year is thus organised in close collaboration with the School, both in its preparation and implementation.

A second important objective is the discovery of a research system abroad; therefore, a welcome in a laboratory of a foreign research institute will be preferred to a welcome in a laboratory of a French institute abroad.

The ARPE year requires that the student devote himself or herself fully to his or her research work. The student may be able to take advantage of the host period to take courses, but this activity must remain marginal in relation to the time spent on research work.

1-3 A schedule built over four successive periods

In order to ensure a good articulation between the administrative and pedagogical procedures preceding, concomitant and consecutive to the reception period, the following timetable will be followed, divided into four successive periods :

- **Period 1**: discussion period, located no later than the spring of the year {n-1}, and leading to an authorization given no later than June of the year {n-1}. The steps required to obtain a visa (when necessary) are taken as soon as the agreement is given. The International Relations Department is informed by the department as soon as the host laboratory is defined.
- **Period 2** : september of the year {n}. Supervised work to prepare for the research activity.
- **Period 3** : october to June of the year {n}. Training in the foreign laboratory.
- **Period 4** : september of the year {n+1}. Final evaluation.

¹ Without excluding French-speaking countries.

1-4 Definition of the pedagogical program

All students in the ARPE year, regardless of their enrolment department, are subject to the same obligations. Nevertheless, for each of the tests, the exact procedures must be specified in order to be adapted to the codes of each discipline.

This disciplinary implementation of these regulations shall be specified in a program, validated annually by the department head after discussion in the department council, which :

- defines precisely the expectations for the various oral and written tests specified in paragraph 4 of these rules. These expectations may be modified from one year to the next to take into account the experience acquired.
- specify, if not precise dates, at least the periods corresponding to the results of the various tests.
- is communicated no later than the beginning of the year {n} on the one hand to the students concerned and on the other hand to the vice-president in charge of studies and student life of ENS Paris-Saclay.

1-5 Support modalities

In each department, a teacher-researcher responsible in charge of the ARPE year monitors each student over the 4 periods and ensures that these regulations are followed. He or she ensures that the International Relations Department and the Department of Tuition and Student Life have the necessary information at the right time to assist the student in carrying out his or her project.

When the number of students to be monitored is less than or equal to five, the ARPE year manager shall establish contact with the student and the internship supervisor himself or herself during period 2, as indicated in paragraph 3-2-1.

When the number of students to be followed exceeds five, the head of the ARPE year appoints for each, in agreement with the head of the department, a tutor from the teaching team. It is then up to the tutor, on behalf of the School, to establish contacts during the period 2. as far as possible, the tutor is chosen for the proper adequacy of his scientific skills to the research project.

Finally, when the research theme is outside the field of competence of the department's teaching team, a person from outside the department (researchers from the School, external researchers or teacher-researchers) is called upon as a scientific expert. The scientific expert does not in any way substitute the tutor, but assists the department in the scientific evaluation of the work (for written and/or oral tests).

2- Validation of an ARPE project (during period 1)

2-1 Submission of an application to an ARPE

As soon as possible, and no later than February of the year {n-1}, the student shall inform the head of the ARPE year in his or her department that he or she wishes to complete an ARPE year the following year.

A dialogue is established between the student and the supervisor, which allows the student to propose, no later than April of the year {n-1}, a built project.

Members of the ENS Cachan laboratories can be asked to help the student to build his or her project, using their professional networks, or even their collaborative networks.

Under no circumstances will the dialogue established replace the personal work that the student must do, including in the exchanges to be carried out with the putative host laboratory(s).

2-2 Authorization to register in ARPE year

The student's department shall decide, by June of the year {n-1} at the latest, whether he or she is authorized to complete an ARPE year in the following academic year. The decision necessarily takes into account the following four criteria :

- The excellence of the study path. For students from the first year entrance examination, the excellence of the study programme is assessed over the period following their admission to the School. For students from the second or third year entrance examination, the period preceding admission to the School may also be taken into account.
- Relevance to the student's professional project.
- Adequacy between the disciplinary prerequisites of the internship and the student's training.
- Relevance and solidity of the project. Authorization is given for a clearly defined project, specifying at least: the host laboratory, the identity of the supervisor in the host laboratory, the problem of the research work as well as the planned work.

Although not obligatory, the department head may ask each student to present his or her project to a board of examiners appointed by him or her, which may include a researcher or teacher-researcher from outside the School.

In the event of disagreement between the department and the student, the vice-president in charge of studies and student life may be notified.

2-3 Administrative procedures to be completed before departure in the host laboratory

The person in charge of the ARPE year sends the tuition department, no later than June of the year {n-1}, the list of students completing an ARPE year during the year {n}.

If a visa application must be made, the Department of Tuition and Student Life shall, at the request of the head of the department, issue a certificate describing the student's educational contract with the School during the year {n}.

In September of the year {n} :

- the student registers for the diploma of the ENS Paris-Saclay in "ARPE" training ;
- the hosting agreement is established.

3- Pedagogical contract during periods 2,3 and 4

3-1 Pedagogical contract during period 2 - Sept. of the year {n}

The student does the following work that is evaluated by the department :

- **Test 1** : Writing in French and defense of an argumentative research project, based on a personal analysis of the bibliography of the host laboratory. Possibly, the presentation of an article from the host laboratory in connection with the internship project may be explicitly requested.

The student must also attend the support of students who have completed an ARPE year during the {n-1} year. Active participation in the discussions should be encouraged.

3-2 Pedagogical contract during the 3- host period

3-2-1 Follow-up of the student by the School

The department appoints, for each student in the ARPE year, a tutor who must be chosen from its teaching team. The tutor comes into regular contact (at least once every three months) :

- on the one hand with the student,
- on the other hand with the supervisor of the host laboratory.

The tutor must not interfere in the scientific conduct of the research work, but he or she must ensure that the supervisor and the student listen to each other and that the general conditions, including material conditions, are met.

The tutor may, however, give advice or answer questions from the student about the various documents he or she must produce, or about the attitude he or she must adopt in the face of possible difficulties.

3-2-2 Documents to be produced by the student

At mid-term, at a deadline defined by the department, the student sends an intermediate written report in English (test 2). This report is the subject of a feedback, if necessary by seeking the opinion of the scientific expert.

At a deadline defined by the department, no earlier than the end of the reception period, the student submits a final report in English, whose expectations are close to those of a second year master's report (test 3).

3-3 Pedagogical contract following the reception period (period 4)

3-3-1 Work to be produced by the student

The evaluation of these different documents is carried out in September of the year {n+1,n+2}, but some of the documents may be required by the department during the host period.

Test 4: oral defense in English before a board of examiners constituted by the head of the department, composed of at least three teacher-researchers or researchers, at least one of whom must be from outside the School.

Test 5: preparation of a poster, written in English, (a presentation may be requested, but is not required in these regulations).

Test 6: preparation of a summary in French (or possibly, according to the department's choice, a simile facsimile of an article in short format).

3-3-2 Use for communication purposes

The poster with the highest score, as well as all abstracts, will be forwarded to the communication department, which may use them for internal and external communications, subject to the agreement of the host laboratory.

Each department is also encouraged to use these different documents for communication via its own web pages.

3-4 Opinion of the internship supervisor

The ARPE year manager will collect the opinion of the internship manager in the host team on the progress of the internship and the work done by the student. Eventually, he or she may be asked to carry out an evaluation of the student, which may be taken into account as a component of test 4.

4- Possible interruption of an ARPE year

4-1 Interruption conditions

The vice-president in charge of studies and student life may cancel the teaching contract and request the student's repatriation under the following conditions :

- the student does not satisfy the obligations of the ARPE year (break of the teaching contract) : unjustified absences from the laboratory, failure to provide the requested documents.
- the tutor, in his or her interactions with the student and/or his or her supervisor, gathers information indicating that the student is in difficulty (psychological, defective reception conditions, etc)
- any exceptional situation independent of the student (deterioration of the geopolitical situation of the host country, natural disaster, etc).

4-2 Consequences on the learning contract

If the interruption of the teaching contract results from a student's default, he or she is immediately placed on leave without pay for insufficient results.

In all other cases, a discussion is held with the department head and the vice-president in charge of studies and student life to redefine the educational contract.

5- Validation of the ARPE year

A final grade is assigned to each student according to the scale detailed below.

test n°	title	language	coefficient
1	Research project and oral analysis of an article from the host laboratory	french	3
2	Mid-term written report	english	2
3	Final report	english	3
4	Defence of the final report	english	4
5	Writing of an abstract	french	1
6	Making of a poster	english	1
Total sum			14

Any test not performed shall be assigned a score equal to zero, unless there is a duly justified exceptional situation.

The department shall draw up a report, addressed to the vice-president in charge of studies and student life, summarizing in a tabular form the results assigned to each of the students.

The department then prepares, for each student who has obtained a final score greater than 10.0 / 20.0, an individual attestation of achievement, signed by the department head and the vice-president in charge of studies and student life, in accordance with a matrix provided by school the administration department.

Failure to complete an ARPE year leads to a year without salary for insufficient results for the "normaliens élèves", if it results from a clear intention to avoid the obligations set out in these regulations or if the student obtains a final score of less than 10.0.