

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES LTD

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Web site: www.rlus.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

All RLUS courses will give you 20 classes per week – a class lasts 45 minutes, taught in double classes lasting 1½ hours. The Tver 32 week course for students from the University of Glasgow has 16 classes per week. Each course will have classes in conversation, grammar and translation from English to Russian. You can also expect classes on the language of the mass media and the language of literature. The curriculum is specified by the RLUS Executive Committee. The members of this Committee are your Liaison Officers.

We offer courses for the whole academic year (32/36 week courses). In the autumn term there are courses lasting 13 or 16 weeks and in the spring term 13 or 18 weeks. Both the 13 and 16 week courses in the autumn allow you to return home for Christmas. There is no difference in the amount of tuition between the 16 and 18 week courses. The 16 week courses have less reading weeks.

In most cases the courses are exclusively for RLUS students. RLUS does not arrange courses where you are studying alongside Russian students, as in the opinion of the Committee your level of Russian is unlikely to be such that you will be able to benefit from them.

If your level of Russian is higher than the average student, perhaps because Russian or another Slavonic language is spoken at home, we recommend that you enrol for the special heritage course at Language Link in Moscow. This course has been specially designed for students who speak Russian or another Slavonic language at home. The other RLUS courses are not at a suitable level for such students.

You will be asked to apply for autumn term courses by mid-January and for spring term courses by early May. The precise dates are in the Booking Form Notes on the website. Please note that once you have applied for a course, no change will normally be allowed.

COURSE DATES AND READING WEEKS

Autumn term courses start at the very end of August or in the first week of September. 16 week courses finish just before Christmas and 13 week ones at the end of November or the first few days of December. Spring term courses start in mid February. 13 week courses finish in the second half of May. 18 week courses finish in the middle of June.

36 week courses also start at the beginning of September. They have a break over Christmas and New Year. There are full details of when they resume for the spring on the website. The 32 week course in Tver for Glasgow students starts at the beginning September, the one in Yaroslavl for Oxford students starts in the middle of September. The course dates are on the website.

Each course has a number of reading weeks. The dates are on the website. The reading weeks will give students the opportunity to travel and see more of the country.

STATE UNIVERSITY OR PRIVATE CENTRE

Some students, when choosing courses, select a course at a state university, as they believe that in this way they will be able to meet Russian students more easily and join in university clubs. This is not necessarily the case, as Russian universities do not organise the range of social activities that you expect at a UK university.

TWO TERMS IN RUSSIA

If you have to spend the whole academic year in Russia, you can either attend one of the RLUS 36 week courses either in Moscow or in St Petersburg. The advantage of doing this is you will have a course specially designed for the whole academic year. Many students want to study in two different centres. This has the advantage of giving you the experience of living in two different towns.

If you choose two courses at two different centres, you will not be able to stay in Russia over the Christmas/New Year holiday. If you want to stay in Russia over the Christmas/New Year holiday, you should choose a 32/36 week course in Moscow, Tver or at the State University in St Petersburg. Your visa will be extended on arrival in Russia until the end of the course in June, and you should have the option of staying in Russia or returning home for all or part of the holiday.

CHOOSING A COURSE

COST OF LIVING

If you are looking for a course where your living expenses will be cheaper, we suggest that you choose Petrozavodsk, Tver, Kazan or Yaroslavl. For those on a very tight budget, Petrozavodsk and Tver offer hostel accommodation at a very cheap price.

LOCATION

When choosing a course in Russia, you will need to decide where you wish to study. Please talk to your liaison officer and to students in their final year who have been on RLUS courses. Your liaison officer will need to approve of your choice.

You should decide whether you wish to go to a large city such as Moscow or St Petersburg or to one of our provincial centres. Moscow and to a lesser extent St Petersburg are more expensive than the provincial centres. Accommodation, transport and entertainment are likely to cost you more. Your accommodation is very unlikely to be in the city centre. As with all large cities, you may find yourself spending a lot of time travelling to and from the city centre and your course. Furthermore, you will find many more people who speak good English and as a result you will speak less Russian.

The provincial centres have a much lower cost of living, and as there are fewer foreigners around, you will end up speaking more Russian. Don't forget, you can always get to Moscow or St Petersburg for a weekend or during your reading weeks. You will also find it easier to meet Russians in one of our provincial centres.

We normally offer courses in Moscow, St Petersburg and Yaroslavl in both terms. In the autumn term we also offer courses in Petrozavodsk; in the spring term we will run a course in Kazan. All courses are subject to demand and we may not run all courses every year. For this reason we ask you for a second choice of course. We will take a final decision about the courses to be run in January for autumn term courses and in May for spring term courses.

Below is a short description of each centre. There are further details in the *briefing documents* section of the website.

MOSCOW

Moscow is a large, bustling, exciting city, as you would expect from the capital city of an enormous country. There is plenty to do with a wide range of theatres, cinemas, clubs, bars, restaurants, etc. Like all big cities it is expensive. However, if you avoid the places frequented by foreign businessmen and rich Russians, it should be no more expensive than in the UK,

and at times surprisingly cheap. The downside of Moscow from the point of view of learning Russian is the presence of a large number of foreigners. You may find it difficult to use your Russian and meet ordinary Russians.

An advantage of Moscow is that there is a huge variety of voluntary work available, ranging from helping out in orphanages to translating/interpreting for charitable organisations. Past students have found work experience in the English language media and teaching English as a foreign language, for which a TEFL certificate is not always necessary.

It must also be said that Moscow is not Russia, in the same way that London is not Britain, and traditional Russian life has been somewhat diluted in the capital, due not least to the influence of the large number of foreigners who live there. However, it is still possible to avoid the Western "expat" experience, and there is no doubt that past students have made very firm Russian friends.

All Moscow courses will be held at **Language Link**. Language Link is based in a modern teaching building in central Moscow, equipped with the latest technical aids. It is a relatively small organisation and you will be well looked after by the teachers and by the two RLUS representatives, who work both for Language Link and RLUS.

Subject to demand, Language Link will provide special courses for students who speak Russian or another Slavonic language. If you opt for one of the courses in the other centres, you may find that the level is not suitable for your needs. You are advised to enrol for the 'heritage' course at Language Link. The courses run for either 36 weeks, or 16 weeks in the autumn term.

Language Link also provides Russian classes for foreigners living in Moscow and courses in English as a Foreign Language for Russians and there may be opportunities for some students to earn some money teaching English as a Foreign Language.

ST PETERSBURG

St Petersburg is the former capital of the Russian empire and retains a grandeur that Moscow lacks. It is now much more provincial than Moscow, but still has a very wide range of things to do. You are unlikely to be bored in St Petersburg! The architecture in the city centre is very much more Western than Moscow and extremely beautiful. It is not as expensive to live in compared to Moscow but as in Moscow you can spend a lot of money in the places designed for foreigners. It also has the impersonality of the large city with lots of foreigners around. You will have to make an effort to make friends. You may also find that the homestay accommodation provided is a long way from the centre.

Most RLUS courses will take place at the State University.

The State University offers courses for 13, 16/18 and 36 weeks. The courses are based in the Politics Department, housed in the buildings of the former Smolny Convent. If your language ability is suitable, there is an opportunity to attend politics lectures with Russian students. There will be a choice of homestay accommodation or accommodation in a hotel in the centre of the city

The Benedict School offers a short course lasting 3 weeks in September. These courses are suitable for students at the end of their first year, but students later in their course can be accommodated, provided RLUS is advised in advance.

YAROSLAVL

Yaroslavl is a beautiful old town on the Volga, part of the Golden Ring of historical towns encircling Moscow. It has many fine religious buildings and is famous for being the home of

the first theatre in Russia. Many of the churches have now been given back to the Orthodox Church, having been museums or warehouses in Soviet times. Within easy reach of Yaroslavl are the Golden Ring towns of Kostroma, Uglich and Rostov Veliki, which have many fine ancient buildings. Moscow is four hours away by train.

A course in Yaroslavl could enable you to enjoy the extra care that you get in a provincial centre (compared to Moscow and St Petersburg) and much cheaper cost of living.

Our 13 and 16/18 week courses, during the autumn and spring terms, are run by the State University. The building where you will study is situated in the city centre. Students, who have attended courses in Yaroslavl, are full of praise for the tuition, care and attention paid to students.

If you are an ab initio student at the University of Oxford, you will attend an 8 month course in Yaroslavl, specially designed for you. Please note that this course (Y32) is not available to students from other universities.

The courses normally consist of language (conversation, grammar, and translation), literary reading and a class on the mass media.

PETROZAVODSK

Petrozavodsk is the capital of the Republic of Karelia, to the North East of St Petersburg. The city was founded by Peter the Great at the same time as St Petersburg. Its main purpose was to build ships for Peter's navy. It is now a pleasant town of about 300,000 population with all the facilities of a provincial capital. It is situated on the banks of Lake Onega, from where hydrofoils operate to the island of Kizhi, noted for its wooden architecture. There are daily trains to St Petersburg, taking five hours, to Moscow and Murmansk.

The course is run by the Petrozavodsk State University. They will offer courses in the autumn term lasting 13 or 16 weeks. Accommodation is available in a recently refurbished hostel at a very cheap price.

Students praise the high quality of tuition and the help given by the teachers and staff in helping students to find their way round the town. There is likely to be a possibility of attending lectures with Russian students. Students also report how easy it is to meet Russian students.

TVER (for students at the University of Glasgow)

Tver is one of the ancient Volga towns near to Moscow. Although records go back to the 13th century, the town was built of wood and was totally destroyed in the 18th century by fire. The oldest buildings date back to that time, when it was an overnight stop for the coaches on the way to Moscow. It is now a town of about 460,000 population and a regional capital.

Tver is close to Moscow. You can be in Moscow in an hour by train. The course lasts for 32 weeks and has been arranged for students at the University of Glasgow.

KAZAN

Kazan is the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan and is one of the largest cities in Russia. It is called the third capital of Russia. It was the centre of the Tatar Khanate in the Middle Ages and became part of Russia when conquered by Ivan the Terrible in 1552. In Kazan you will find mosques alongside Russian Orthodox churches and as a result it would be a good place for any Muslim students to go. The Tatar language is spoken by the local population and all the signs are in Russian and Tatar.

The centre of the city has been recently beautifully restored. Culturally there are museums, art galleries and a very beautiful Kremlin, which contains not only a fine 16th century Russian Orthodox Church, but also a newly reconstructed mosque. It also contains the government buildings of the President of the Tatar republic. It has the highest concentration of educational institutions in Russia. Students will not be bored in Kazan! There are plenty of restaurants and bars and excellent sports facilities. Prices are much lower than in Moscow or St Petersburg.

The course will take place at the Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities. They have 20 years' experience in teaching Russian as a foreign language to students from a variety of countries. For a number of years they have been running courses for students from University College London. The teaching staff are highly qualified and also teach at the state university. You will have 20 classes per week to include Oral, Grammar, Translation, Mass Media and Phonetics.

Homestay accommodation will be arranged by the Institute and should be no further than 15 away by public transport from the Institute, which is situated in the city centre. The host families will all be encouraged to help student improve their level of Russian.

If you want to experience a large multi-ethnic Russian city with great facilities, Kazan is the place for you. If you are on a tight budget, you will find the cost of living in Kazan much lower than in Moscow or St. Petersburg.

VISAS

You will be expected to apply for your own visa. You can do this once you have an official invitation from the course organiser in Russia. We hope to be able to send this to you 3-8 weeks before departure. There are full details of how to apply for a visa in the *visa* document on the website. Please make sure that you have a passport that is valid for at least 21 months after the end of your course. As it can take some time to renew a passport, please check it now and renew it if necessary. If you were born in Russia, you will be required to travel to Russia using your Russian passport. You will not be given a visa with your British passport. If you have dual British and Russian nationality and do not have a Russian passport, please apply for one immediately. You will not need a visa to go to Russia.

ACCOMMODATION

RLUS itself does not arrange accommodation. However, all of our partner institutions will provide accommodation and RLUS will pass on your accommodation requests to them. All of our centres will find you homestay accommodation. Tver and Petrozavodsk can arrange hostel accommodation and in St Petersburg accommodation can be arranged in a cheap hotel in the city centre.

You can if you wish arrange your own accommodation. However, please note that you will not be met and taken to your accommodation free of charge, even if you arrive on the group flight. Everyone arriving in Russia has to register their visa. This will be done automatically for you if you choose accommodation arranged by our partner institutions.

COSTS

The price list for courses will be confirmed by February. Please check with your university what your university will pay and what they expect you to pay for.

There are details of current accommodation costs in the *accommodation* document on the web. You will be expected to pay for accommodation in Russia. RLUS does not take any money for accommodation. Please check the prices shortly before you leave for Russia, as

inflation is higher in Russia than in the UK, the exchange rate can vary and therefore prices can rise significantly.

SAFETY

RLUS is assured that all teaching accommodation and accommodation in hall complies with local fire and safety laws. RLUS is also assured that all homestay accommodation is inspected by the host organisation. Few countries are as stringent as the UK in setting general standards for safety, hygiene and fire precautions and the local authorities in Russia may not have adequate resources to monitor and enforce standards. Please note that it is common practice for fire exits in Russia to be kept locked with a key being available with a nominated official. This is to alleviate the serious security threat posed by emergency exits being left open.

TRAVEL

You will be responsible for arranging your own travel. If you arrive on the recommended flight and are in accommodation arranged by the centre where you are studying, you will be met and taken free of charge to your accommodation.

INSURANCE

All students attending RLUS courses must be insured. Some universities arrange their own insurance. Otherwise, you will have to arrange your own insurance. Please read the *insurance* document on the website.