

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES LTD

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Web site: www.rlus.co.uk

RLUS COURSES 2010-11

INTRODUCTION

All RLUS courses will give you 16-20 classes per week – a class lasts 45 minutes in most places and you are usually taught in double classes lasting 1½ hours. 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. In some places you will be able to join optional courses in literature, history and politics. 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.

COURSE DATES AND READING WEEKS

Autumn term courses start at the beginning 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. Most spring term courses start in the 3rd week in February. Most 13 week courses finish in the third week in May, 18 week courses finish at the end of June. The 13 week spring term course at the State University in St Petersburg in the spring is designed for students studying in another country in the first half of their year abroad, who cannot be back in the UK in time to start a course in February. It starts at the end of March and finishes at the end 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 starts at the beginning September, the one in Yaroslavl starts in the first half of October.

The precise course dates cannot be fixed until the group lights have been booked. This should be by May for the autumn term courses and November for the spring term ones.

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.

LEVEL OF RUSSIAN

RLUS courses are designed for students on their year abroad in Russia. We are aware that some students' level of Russian may be above that of the average RLUS student. This may be because you speak another Slavonic language, but there could be other reasons. If you think that is the case, please consult your university liaison officer. If your liaison officer confirms this, you would be advised to take a course at the State University in St Petersburg. This is the only RLUS centre to offer courses at a variety of levels, as there are regularly other groups of foreign students from a variety of countries, whose level of Russian is higher than RLUS students. The St Petersburg

State University is willing to let you join these groups, if they assess your level of Russian to be suitable. Please bear in mind that the syllabus for such courses will be different from that offered to RLUS students.

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. Furthermore, of the four state universities where RLUS arrange courses, only in Petrozavodsk and Yaroslavl will you be in the same building as Russian students. In Tver, you will be next door to the main university building. In St Petersburg you are taught in the buildings of the Smolny Convent, which is a long way away from the main university building.

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 at the Benedict School 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. Some students choose to book two one term courses at the same centre. If you do this, you are likely to find that the spring term course will repeat a lot of the material that you have covered in the autumn term. You would be better advised to take one of the 36 week courses.

COST OF LIVING

Russia is thought to be a cheap place to study by many students. This was the case in the 1990's, but it is no longer the case. If you are looking for a course where your living expenses will be cheaper, we suggest that you choose Yaroslavl, Petrozavodsk or Tver.

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.

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 run courses in Tver and Volgograd. All courses are subject to demand and we may not run

all courses every year. We will take a final decision about the courses to be run by the beginning of February, at which time you will be asked to fill out an application form.

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 brand new 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. 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.

RLUS has two centres. 13 and 16/18 week courses operate at the St Petersburg State University, 13, 16/18 and 36 week courses at the Benedict School.

St Petersburg State University offers a 13 or a 16/18 week course in both the autumn and spring terms. The courses take place in the buildings of the former Smolny Convent. They can arrange either homestay accommodation or accommodation in a university hall of residence.

The Benedict School is a small private organisation, which arranges both courses in Russian for foreigners and English for Russians. Being small, you will get to know everyone in the School and should find it easier to make friends. The classes take place in a newly refurbished building close to the centre of St Petersburg.

The Benedict School also offers short courses 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.

The Benedict School also arranges courses in English as a foreign language for Russians and there may be an opportunity to earn some money teaching English.

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), literature and a class on the mass media. Extracurricular activities (some for additional payment) include dancing, balalaika playing, art, sport and drama.

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 eight hours, to Moscow and Murmansk.

The course is run by the Petrozavodsk State University, who have been providing highly successful courses for students of the School of Slavonic Studies in London for the past ten years. They will offer courses in the autumn term lasting 13 or 16 weeks. They hope to have a newly refurbished hall available for autumn 2010.

TVER

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, two and a half hours by local electric train or bus. It is on the train line to St Petersburg -- about four hours by the fastest train.

The course is run by the Tver State University, in a special building which contains both modern classrooms and a small hall of residence. RLUS will offer courses in the spring term lasting 13 or 18 weeks.

Students at the University of Glasgow will attend a specially arranged 32 week course in Tver. This course is open only to University of Glasgow students.

VOLGOGRAD

Volgograd is a city of about a million inhabitants and has all the facilities you would expect of a large city. As the site of the battle of Stalingrad, it would be a great centre for anyone interested in recent Russian history. There are plenty of museums and monuments reminding you of the battle, including the enormous sculpture on Mamaev Kurgan. There was nothing left of the old city of Stalingrad after the battle. The city centre was completely rebuilt during the immediate post war years.

The climate in Volgograd is warmer than in other RLUS centres. They do have some snow, but it often does not last for long. It would be a good centre for students who do not like the cold!

It is 20 hours by train from Moscow. There are also daily luxury buses, which take slightly less time and are cheaper than the train. There are also regular cheap plane services to Moscow.

The course will be run by Language Link, who provide RLUS with highly successful courses in Moscow. The teachers on the course also teach at universities in Volgograd, as well as other Language Link students. The school is situated in a modern building in the city centre. RLUS plans a course in Volgograd in the spring term lasting 13 or 18 weeks.

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 on the website. Please make sure that you have a passport that is valid for at least 18 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 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. The State University in St Petersburg and Tver will also offer you the choice of accommodation in hall.

Some students choose accommodation in hall, as they are under the impression that they will be living alongside Russian students. This is not normally the case, as halls where most Russian students can afford to live are of such a low standard, that we are not able to use them.

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. If you find your own accommodation, you will either have to register yourself, or seek the assistance of the institution where you are studying. This can involve considerable extra expense.

COSTS

The costs of the courses are given in the Price List. The prices will be confirmed by February 2010. 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 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 very high and 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

RLUS has an arrangement with Study in Russia to provide group travel for all RLUS courses. Details will be sent with your application form. Please note that if you travel with the group (or book a ticket yourself on the same plane as the group), you will be met free of charge and taken on to your accommodation. Otherwise, you will have to pay extra to be met in Russia. This could mean that a cheap flight will in the end cost you more. Please also note that you cannot travel even one day before the start of the course, as your visa invitation will be for the course dates. You should also be aware that if you arrive even one day late, you are likely to miss the initial briefing session, which provide you with valuable information both about the course and the town where you are studying.

INSURANCE

All students attending RLUS courses must be insured. Some universities arrange their own insurance. Otherwise, you will have to arrange your own insurance. RLUS recommends Endsleigh insurance and you will be sent details when you apply.

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