

RACE 2 Paris

Starts Friday 6th February 2008 from a secret Edinburgh location

What is it?

The Race to Paris is a new fund-raising event organised by Edinburgh Students' Charities Appeal. The idea is for participants to get to a designated point in Paris (France) in the minimum amount of time, without spending any money on transport (we don't expect you to go on hunger strike as well while taking part... and actually, if all else fails, we don't mind you paying for the ferry crossing from Dover to Calais). You can hitch, blag travel on a train, a plane, even ask for donations to pay for a bus. As long as your tactics are legal (both in the UK and any other countries you pass through) and you organise your trip on the day (none of this "getting free flights before you go" shenanigans) you can use whatever means you can imagine!

The Rules of the Race to Paris

Whilst this is obviously intended to be a fun event, there are obviously some risks involved and consequently some rules must be needed.

They're quite simple, easy to follow, and designed to ensure your safety.

1. You can not spend any money on travel - but you're still allowed to eat. Make sure you do, you will probably be travelling overnight, and there is nothing like a good hot cup of tea and a bacon (or vegetarian alternative) roll at a service station just outside London at 3am. Obviously, if you can convince someone to buy your food for you, even better...
2. Teams are of two people (no more, no less) of which at least ONE must be male. This is a safety requirement, not just random matchmaking on ESCA's part (for speed-dating see Nightline or CHV). It's not that a team of two girls are less likely to be able defend themselves, but they are much more likely to attract unwanted attention. Each individual is responsible for their own safety and that of their team-mate, and consequently all participants must be aged 18 or over at time of departure.
3. Participants must pay the £25 registration fee (per team member). You will be refunded your fee if your team raises over £300. The refund will come out of your sponsorship and the remainder will be sent to the charity you have chosen. Less is not more in this instance, the more you raise, the more you help your charity.
4. You can choose the charity you wish to support. We prefer one charity per team, but if you really must support more than one charity this can be accommodated. Remember, the more charities you support, the less each of them get. Only legally recognised charities can be supported.

5. Don't do anything illegal! Please don't make a fool yourself, ESCA or the University. This includes things like jumping on trains without a ticket with the intention of avoiding paying the fare (you should organise this with the station staff before getting on – or even find the train staff on the platform before the train leaves and check that they will let you on for free). Likewise, hitching on Motorways, slip roads and some dual-carriageways is also illegal (and guaranteed to get you a lift from the next passing Police patrol). It is also illegal to board ferries on trucks if you are not the truck driver, and you will be treated as a stowaway if found. It's also advisable not to go anywhere near the Channel Tunnel on foot. Also note that police in France are very strict. If we find that you have done something illegal you will be considered to have cheated and may be disqualified.
6. Don't accept anything you feel uncomfortable with, EVEN IF IT'S FREE! If anything about a ride looks dodgy, decline it. It could be the people offering it, it could be the vehicle itself or it could be the route they're taking. Prepare a couple of excuses beforehand. You may have been waiting for a lift for an hour, but it's better to be safe and waiting for another lift than the alternative.
7. Teams must check in by text message periodically as a security requirement. This requires that you have a phone on you at all times (with sufficient credit for both using in Great Britain and in France). If you have two, bring two. Just let us know all the numbers so we know who messages are coming from (also, only keep one on, so you can save your batteries until they are needed). If you don't check in, we'll assume the worst, and call the relevant Police with your last known location (even if you are in France). Please check in to avoid everyone's embarrassment!
8. If you're fed up, you have two options; you can either pay your way to Paris and join us for the party (but obviously your time will not be counted), or go home. If you decide to go home you MUST tell us so as we don't sit up waiting for your texts and then have to call the Police.
9. It's not strictly a rule, but you are much more likely to get a lift if you smile and have fun!

A note on blagging transport

This is a race, yes, but first and foremost, it is a charity fund-raising event. Blagging means that you go to any official member of staff of a certain transport and plead your cause persuasively but politely and attempt to obtain a ticket for free. If this fails, you must find another means of travelling.

And again, please note that pre-arranging free tickets is cheating, as this is done before the race even starts. Please play fair.