



UU Report form - Erasmus 2017-2018

faculty/college	Sociale wetenschappen
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Leicester, United Kingdom
name university abroad	University of Leicester
start date	15 / 01 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	08 / 06 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

It was an easy application process. It took a while for me to figure out all the different websites but once I did that it was quite easy.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Very very good. I received a lot of help and support, quick replies to e-mails and every information I needed. Extremely satisfied with the help I got.

academic preparation

I did not really know what to expect, so I prepared myself like I normally would for a semester at home. The faculty (Sociology and Psychology) I studied in barely made use of books, so there was no problem in ordering books or anything either.

language preparation

I trusted my English would be good enough without any preparation.

finances

I looked up 'usual' stuff I needed to buy, and whether those were more expensive than at home. The train turned out to be more expensive, but supermarkets about the same. So I knew before I went that I would probably manage with the same finances I normally have.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

It was very interesting to study here. The modules were motivating and the stuff I learned was different from normal. Studying and seminars were very much based on discussions, which helped me to speak up and get in touch with the language easily through forced participation (in a good way). Professors were very motivated. After a month of being here however a strike started, which lasted over a month. This unfortunately resulted in way less lectures and seminars. Although it did not reflect on my grades in the end, I missed a lot of information that I would like to have learned. We were given enough information about the strikes and it was a nation-wide strike, so I don't have a negative opinion about University of Leicester concerning this, but my experience would have been better if it would not have happened.

academic quality of education activities

Good. I had trouble with writing essays however, mainly because I am not used to essays in this quantity. And now I had a deadline of 6 essays in a week. But apart from that, quality was good and my first-year modules were on first-year level, as were my 3rd-year modules on 3rd year level.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad

This could have been better. There was no real opening week, I had to figure out a lot on my own. Of course there was a counselling desk and everything, but often they did not know everything or they were only there twice a week. I felt like I was very much on my own, up until I made friends after a few days. I think I am not the only one with this opinion, many of my friends felt the same way. You could find the information if you really looked for it, but there was no real mentor or advisor or specific place you could go to for all your questions. Or at least I did not feel like there was.

transfer of credits

Has not happened yet

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

As said previously there was no real opening (except for 1 lecture) or orientation programme. I met my friends by walking up to them myself, if I would not have done that I would not have known where to go to meet friends. I missed the first lectures as well, because I did not have my schedule and did not know where to find it. Maybe this is my own mistake rather than theirs, but it was once again something you really had to find out on your own.

accommodation

My accommodation was nice and clean, close to campus and everything available nearby. My roommates were less open and open to social contact compared to my roommates in Holland, but I guess those are just cultural differences.

leisure & culture

The city does not have the biggest culture, but after really looking for it in museums and events there were enough nice things to be found. I came across a really cool movie theatre where I spend a lot of my days and there a quite a few historic buildings as well. Going out was different and way less bubbly than what I was used to in Utrecht, but there were some nice and cosy pubs which were fine as well.

suggestions/tips

The city is not very cosy, more industrial with some history lying here and there. Going out in the UK is different than in the Netherlands, you'll find yourself more in pubs until 1 a.m. than going out until late in the night.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain

Yes, but you have to know what you're choosing for. It's not a city and university that give you friends and cool places to go easily, but if you trust that you will be able to do that yourself it's a nice place to visit. It's hard work though, and you will meet students who are likewise interested in a good study programme above all.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The international office at Leicester University should have had a better opening week and maybe more counselling opportunities. Being thrown in the deep is satisfying when it turns out okay in the end, but it could also result in a very bad experience.



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PREPARATION

exchange application process

When I decided that I wanted to go study abroad for a semester, the first application period was already finished. But I was right in time for the This left me with only a few destinations to choose from, but fortunately there were still some destinations available in the United Kingdom. I contacted the International office and made an appointment to talk about the application process. After this I emailed that I wanted to go to Leicester and because I was the first one who applied for this destination I could continue my application online.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The support and guidance of the UU during the application and preparation was very good. Emails were answered quickly and the international office was very helpful with any questions or problems you came across with.

academic preparation

I study Psychology and when I went to Leicester I just finished my bachelor. Therefore, I had to ask for a graduate delay (you can apply for this when you want to do some courses abroad). I always found Sociology interesting as well, so I decided to follow some extra courses within this field. The University of Leicester has, for each department, a detailed list of courses you could choose from. This information is enough to make a decision of which courses you want to follow, but this decision is only definite after you arrived in Leicester. So there is enough flexibility in changing your courses.

language preparation

The main language of the courses in Leicester was English. After the language assessment my English level was C2. Therefore, I did not need any other language preparation.

finances

Because the United Kingdom is part of Europe, I received the Erasmus Grant. This, my savings, student grant and some help of my parents were my incomes during my study abroad.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I followed three Sociology courses, of which two first year courses ('Introduction in Social Research' and 'Society in transformation') and one third year course (Sociology of health and illness). There was no need to buy any books, because all the literature needed was provided via Blackboard.

academic quality of education activities



For me, it felt that the courses I followed were of a lower level of education than the ones in the Netherlands. I really enjoyed Society in transformation, but the other two courses were a little unorganised. With some seminars in which you did not learn anything new than what you learned during the lectures. I did learn new things, but I expected to learn more.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I arrived one week after the start of the semester, because of my thesis at the Utrecht University. The Erasmus office and the administration office both were very helpful at showing me around the campus.

transfer of credits

Every course was worth 20 Credits, with three courses I received 60 Credits in total. This is equal to 30 ECTS in total.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Because I arrived one week late, I could not take part in the welcome/orientation programme. What I have heard from my fellow International students, is that it was nothing more than a talk and a tour through the campus. The university organised a weekend trip to London for new arrivals. It was not very clear that there would be a Union Market, I had to learn about this from a friend, but many other International students I have met did never heard about this. Via this market I joined the Hockey Union and the Erasmus union.

accommodation

I stayed at Nixon Court. This is the best accommodation you can stay when you are a Erasmus/International student, because there are a lot of activities organised at this site. The accommodation itself is also fine, it is only a 10 minute walk to the campus and the kitchen and bathrooms are all right. There is a reception that is open 24 hours, which gave me a save feeling during my stay.

leisure & culture

At Nixon Court there was a team that organised multiple activities, from cheese&wine nights on Friday to Yoga lessons on Monday afternoon. This was all for free and thanks to these events I have met a lot of people. Every Tuesday was coffee night, and during these nights the common room was packed with people from multiple accommodations. The city of Leicester has some nice pubs and clubs to go to at night.

suggestions/tips

I would highly recommend to stay at Nixon Court or Opal Court, rather than living in the student village (Oadby). My biggest trouble with choosing my accommodation was that I did not know where international students mostly lived. I asked the accommodation office, but they said that they could not give any information about this. As an international student I could recommend city living above Oadby.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain

As much as I enjoyed my study abroad, Leicester itself was not what I expected an English city to be. The people I have met made my exchange unforgettable, so I could recommend anybody to go study abroad. But because I liked the United kingdom based on places like Cambridge and Oxford, Leicester felt a bit disappointing

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Do not be afraid of going to a place where you do not know anybody, you will meet a lot of people before you know it. My study abroad was one of the most wonderful experiences I have had during my studies!