Utrecht University

ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report
2019-2020

faculty/college	Department of Information and Computing Sciences
level	☐ bachelor's ☒ master's ☐ PhD
name study programme	Computer Science

destination city & country	Lisbon, Portugal
how did you travel to your destination?	Plane
name university abroad	Instituto Superior Tecnico Lisboa
start date	3 / 2 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 6 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The exchange application process went rather smoothly in my case. As with everyone, it took some time and a lot of signatures though. Aside from this, I would say it was not that much work but mostly just waiting for all the parties to sign off on everything.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

My experience with counseling and support at Utrecht University is quite satisfactory. Anytime I had a question I could send an email or simpy walk into the office to get an answer. I would have to say that I never had to wait too long for answers.

academic preparation

Aside from having finished my bachelor's and attending a master's degree currently, I don't think I needed any further academic preparation.

language preparation

Language preparation was also unnecessary since I would be following courses in English. This is also a prerequisite for the Master's degree in Utrecht.

finances

Regarding finances, the Erasmus+ scholarship was not enough to cover rent in my case. It was, however, a nice addition to my student loan. Those two funds together proved enough to live quite well in Lisbon.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

For most of my semester, the education was online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was handled incredibly well in my opinion. Within a week of campus closing down, all of my courses were up and running with online education. In one case, the exam was not held because of problems with the used website, but for my other courses this went fine.

academic quality of education activities
I would say that the academic quality of education activities is quite similar to that in Utrecht. However, I have to say that difficulty really differs per course. This is of course my opinion and I have to say that difficulty in courses also differs in Utrecht.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
In my case I did not end up needing any counselling or support. Therefore, I wouldn't really know anything on this matter. We were, however, assigned some student mentors who helped me to get to know the city and the campus.
transfer of credits
I have not received my final credits at this point (one week after my final exam). For my other courses I obtained grades quite swiftly. The transfer of credits still has to happen at this point in time.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
The welcome & orientation programme at Técnico was amazing. A full week of activities and introductory events. The weekend contained only fun and bonding activities amongst other international students at Técnico, including: parties, BBQs, (optional) surf events, (optional) trip to Sintra.
accommodation
Through the university we received codes for cheaper deals at websites such as Uniplaces. I used this to find my room with much ease, however I heard from other people that they had quite a bad experience with that website.
leisure & culture
Lisbon is an amazing city with regards to leisure & culture. Beaches, bars, nice viewpoints throughout the city, museums and beautiful historic places such as Belém and Sintra within a 45 minute train-ride. I don't think I was ever bored in Lisbon.
suggestions/tips
Definitely visit Sintra with its amazing palaces and nature and Belém for the history and nice museums (and most importantly the Pastel de Nata). The nearby beaches are also really nice to visit (Caparica, Carcavelos, Cascais). I also made it a personal quest to go to every nice miradouro (viewpoint) in the city and enjoy a beer or a sunset (or both).

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would most definitely recommend Lisbon as a destination to others. The city offers so much for an exchange student; you'll never be bored. The university is also the best of portugal for technical subjects (computer science in my case) and on par with the education level of Utrecht.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Even though my exchange was interrupted by COVID-19, I still greatly enjoyed my time in Lisbon.

ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report 2018/2019

contact details	c.j.m.quik@students.uu.nl
faculty/college	Department of Information and Computing Sciences
level	☐ bachelor's ☒ master's ☐ PhD
name study programme	Master Business Informatics
destination city & country	Lisbon, Portugal
name university abroad	Técnico Lisboa
start date	10 / 09 / 2018
end date	25 / 01 / 2019

PREPARATION

exchange application process

Because I applied in the second round, it took a while before I heard whether I was admitted at Técnico. In retrospect, I would have searched for a room in Lisbon right away because mostly you can cancel a room a few months before the exchange starts. Furthermore, everything went well.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I liked the workshop about what to prepare for the stay abroad. This really helped me arranging the things I needed.

academic preparation

I arrranged a thesis supervisor before I left so I would not have to wait for one when I came back. I also showed this teacher the course list in Lisbon to ask for his opinion and which courses he thought would be useful.

language preparation

I did not do a Portuguese course beforehand, but I would recommend this to future students. Once the semester started, I did not have a lot of time to follow a course. Besides that, it is a fun way to already meet exchange students before the semester starts. Because I followed a bilingual program in high school, I did not find it necessary to follow an English language course.

finances

I put some money that I lent from the government aside in case I needed it in Lisbon.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

It is very dependend on the course whether everything is arranged well. In general, the details about deadlines and project/course contents are not known before you start a course. This is the reason why I registered for 7 courses instead of 3/4 so I could choose after following a week of lectures and studing my timetable. I think this was a good strategy. If you are someone who really needs to know the fine details about everything regarding courses in order to perform well, this is something you should take into account before coming to Técnico. In the Portuguese culture, teachers also have a lot more authority than in the Netherlands, which means they have more power over your results and timetable. For example, one time we heard last minute that we were obliged to attend 2 final presentation sessions besides our own for a course. In the Netherlands the students would have complained that they already had appointments scheduled etc. and the teacher would probably change his/her mind, but in Portugal when the teacher demands something it is just the way it is. The program of Computer Science has very interesting courses however and a lot of choice, so I think it was worth it.

academic quality of education activities
The level is mostly comparable to the Netherlands, but this is again very dependend on the courses you take. I had one course which was a bit easy, one that was comparable in level to the Netherlands, and one that was a lot more difficult. In general, the level is the same but the workload is a lot higher. Every course has a large group project which means that 4 courses of 7.5 ECTS each actually require you to study and work on projects 36/40 hours a week. When me and my teammates procrastinated, we usually had to compensate with working on the weekend. You do get a very nice academic experience back for this. I learned very much and still use the course materials and programming languages I learned there to write my thesis here in the Netherlands. I also decided to follow 3 courses instead of 4 so I do feel like I had enough opportunity to fully experience the social and cultural part of my exchange as well.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad
There is an international office with walk in hours at the university. You can always go there to arrange the things you need. They also have a student organization for international students (NAPE) at the university which will guide you during an introduction period before you start your studies. This is really nice because you can aks them anything and meet other international students right away.

transfer of credits
I asked the exam committee whether the grades in Portugal would be calculated into my GPA and they told me no, because they grading system in Portugal is different (1-20 scale). It takes a while to receive a transcript of records after you leave, so I have not been able to transfer the credits officially yet. The courses at Técnico are mostly 7.5 ECTS per course so this is convenient.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
As mentioned before, the international student organization in Lisbon arranges a very nice introduction program. This is their website: https://nape.tecnico.ulisboa.pt/en/

accommodation
As also mentioned before, I would look for a room right away. Técnico offers very cheap student housing to international students, but this is very very limited. I decided to wait for this and then heard that I did not meet the requirements. Therefore, I would really recommend not to wait. I found a room at Uniplaces.com. They ask a high fee which will be about 120 euros with the discount Técnico gives you. The room I got in the end was from the organization Erasmus Palace which could have saved me the 120 euros when booking directly from there (http://erasmuspalacelisbon.com/manel/). Thus, I would first look around and book through Uniplaces when you cannot find something else that is trustworthy. As for location, Ubers are very very cheap so it is easy to move around when you want to go out at night. It cost me about 4 euros to get home with a Uber mostly which is almost cheaper than public transport. You get a public transport card with a student discount via Técnico which means public transport costs about 30 euros a month. I lived near Saldanha metro station which was a very nice location. I could walk to Técnico and in 20 minutes I was in the city centre (which is mostly the area around the metro station called Rossio).

leisure & culture
Lisbon is a beautiful city with a lot of culture to explore. ESN and ELL are two organizations for international students that organize lots of activities.

suggestions/tips
Bairro Alto is the famous neighbourhood with many nice cafes. I especially liked the jazz café Paginas Tantas, and very good musicians that you can find on the streets everywhere. Other nice places are Lx Factory, Bélem (with the Bélem tower and Jerónimos Monastery), Anjos (with cheap vegan food at Anjos 69 and second hand markets at Anjos 70), the old neighbourhood Alfama with the Sao Jorge castle, and Pink Street if going clubbing is more your cup of tea. You should also try listening to live Fado music sometime.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I fell in love with Lisbon a bit and will definitely come back sometime to experience the incredible vibe and cosy spots I found sometime. So if you are still hesitating about going to Lisbon, I would definitely stop hesitating and go right away. As for the university it depends on whether you also want to go for the academic experience. As I mentioned before, the university is very demanding. If you do not want to commit to studying there at least the same amount as you do here in the Netherlands, it will be a difficult study program to get through.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

You can contact me by e-mail if you have further questions.

ERASMUS+ TRAINEESHIP
UU Report 2017-2018

faculty/college	Science
level	☐ bachelor's ☒ master's
name study programme	Pharmacy research internship

destination city & country	Lisbon, Portugal
name university abroad	University of Lisbon
start date	12/ 03 / 2018
end date	27/08 / 2018

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I emailed the professor in Portugal if there was a place for an research internship in her laboratory. She said yes and I got an e-mail with the application process. I had to fill in the learning agreement for the University in Portugal and the online application forms. For my university in the Netherlands I had so apply on Osiris with also a learning agreement and an English test

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The counselling & support is good at University Utrecht. I emailed the International Office sometimes when I had a question and they answered me fast.

academic preparation

My internship was coupled with a course. I had to do some preparations like research plan. But I did this when I was in Portugal.

language preparation

I did not do a language preparation.

finances

I got some scholarships.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

Traineeship programme (content and organisational issues)

My Traineeship programme was a 5 month internship in the laboratory. I did research in phytotherapy and had to write a thesis about it with a presenation.

academic quality of education activities

The quality was okay. It was a new area for me in pharmacy.

counselling & support at receiving institution abroad

There was an international administration officer, if I had questions I could ask her.

transfer of credits
I have to finish my report still.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
There are two big Erasmus organisations: ESN and Erasmus Life Lisboa. They organise a lot of activities.
accommodation
I lived in a Erasmus house in the city center of Lisbon.
leisure & culture
I did some trips in Portugal, also culture activities with the students organisations ESN and ELL.
suggestions/tips
A lot!! You can email me.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this institution/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, the people are really nice. You don't have to speak Portuguese because everyone can speak English. It is a cheap country and the weather is good. The university of Lisbon are very welcoming. Its good to learn the difference in the laboratory in Lisbon with the Netherlands.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Erasmus in Lisbon was one of my best experience!