

**2017-2018
 Report 1**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Media and Culture

destination city & country	Swansea, Wales, UK
name university abroad	Swansea University
start date	29 / 09 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	28 / 01 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Finding out where you want to go, what courses/modules you want to take, and all the documents and application is general was the hardest part for me. I was a bit overwhelmed in all the choices you had to make, however, once I knew I where to go, officially applying was quite easy. Swansea has a very good 'Go Global' team that will help you with any questions regarding the application. The website is very clear already though.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The support from the University of Utrecht was great. In the beginning the whole process can be very overwhelming, and you do have to figure out a lot of stuff on your own, however, the staff were always ready to help. They e-mail back very fast or you can just go to their office.
academic preparation	I took two modules regarding media and culture. I took a third year and a first year module. With this I took a 2 nd year module regarding the history of the culture of Egypt. It's cool that in Swansea you can mix different kinds of modules. However, be aware of the fact that you might do a bit of pre-research if you are doing modules you are not at all familiar with (like I did with my Egypt module). For my other modules I didn't 'prepare' more than usual. And I don't think you need to; the modules were all very much 'explaining' itself.
language preparation	I had to take a test like everybody else who applied for the Erasmus Grant. I already had level C2 so I knew 'the lanuage barrier' wouldn't be too high. I didn't do anything to really improve my english before my study abroad semester.
finances	I didn't loan money and I didn't work to save money for the Erasmus. I obviously applied for the Erasmus grant. I got some money from my parents. In general, Swansea isn't that expensive. It's quite similar to the prices in the Netherlands. Especially Swansea is, compared to other UK cities, relatively cheap to live.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	The study programme in Swansea overall is good. I think the level is a bit easier than Utrecht University.

Organisational wise, everything is very clear and people are there to help you. For example, when I got to Swansea I had to change a module because I had two lectures of different modules at the same time. The change of the modules didn't bring me any problems.
academic quality of education activities
Like I said, I think the level in Swansea is bit lower than in Utrecht University. However, you still have to work, it's not easypeasylemonsqueezy. I liked that it was a bit easier than UU though, because now I had time to travel and/or do acitivities every weekend, which you should definitely do in Wales!
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Literally every single person at Swansea University was so nice and helpful. You can e-mail them or stop by the office at any time.
transfer of credits
I didn't get my transcript of records yet.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The 'Go Global' team of Swansea organised different types of organisational stuff. Actually, the whole study abroad semester they organised free lunches, dinners, some little parties, etc. If you go the first semester there is freshers'week which is supposed to be for new, first years students, but you can just join all the parties which is quite fun. Also, there are A LOT of societies you can join. Literally, they have everything (check the website). All these soecieties organise socials you can (you don't have to) join. I would recommend to explore the city with the city with some friends or your flatmates, because that's the only thing they don't really 'organise'.
accommodation
The university offers three on-campus locations: Bay Campus, Singleton Campus and Hendrefoelan Student Village. I lived in the student village and I can recommend it very much. Whereas the others are ON campus, student village is 15 minutes away with the bus (I got a free bus ticket for the whole year due to some constructions). I lived with 5 other Erasmus students who were all amazing people! There are parties you can join always, but you can also take a walk up the hill (where you have a view over the city) or take a walk in the forrest if you need some silence-time. I thought it was very nice to not directly live on campus, that way you can distance yourself from the university and study-vibe. The only bad thing is that you 'll probably need to buy a bus ticket every day (4 pounds for student day ticket),because the constructions are almost done so you probably won't get a free one anymore... And the costs at hendrefoelan are quite good, it's the cheapest university accommodation (including cleaning of the bathroom and kitchen every wednesday).
leisure & culture
Swansea is not the most beautiful city to be honest. They centre is very modern, but it's surrounded with quite old and dirty houses. If you walk to Brynmill however, the houses have their own charm, they're in all different colors. And go to the beach! It's the best thing about Swansea!! I took some beach walks from Swansea uni to Mumbles, which is a cute little village (takes 1.5 hours) where you can have a nice coffee at the pier. The culture is not that different than the Dutch one. The partying in the UK is a lot more outgoing though, and they don't have rooms to put your jacket for
suggestions/tips
During my abroad I travelled a lot. Please do so and go on little adventures! You an check VIVA-trips on Facebook which offers quite good trips for not too much money. Check it when you get to Swansea in your first week because tickets sell very fast. Go with your flatmates, it's so much more fun to go with others, plus, you

are bonding! Also, do NOT miss out on Gower at all times. It's really worth it getting some decent hiking-shoes. And in the first weeks, you can try out a lot of different sports (societies), please do so! I did windsurfing, fencing, wall-climbing, aikido, and more!

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend Swansea. I had a super great time. You have a lot of societies, the beach, the beautiful nature of Gower (Wales in general too tho). The university itself is very helpful, and from Swansea you can travel quite easily to other cities like Cardiff, Bristol and Bath (definitely go to Bath!).

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Studying abroad has been a great time, but it was mostly also because of the people. I met amazing people who became friends for life and did everything with them. Try to get out of your comfort zone sometimes and you'll be surprised what the world can offer you!

2016-2017

Report 1

faculty/college	Geesteswetenschappen
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Communicatie- en Informatiewetenschappen

destination city & country	Swansea, Wales
name university abroad	Swansea University
start date	29 / 09 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)
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PREPARATION

exchange application process

I started to orientate and explore the exchange destinations at the beginning of my second year in Utrecht. Utrecht University held information meetings and afterwards you could choose your top three of destinations. These meetings were very useful as it prepared the students for the application process, the actual stay abroad, and the arrangements that have to be made when you come back. It is important to start the application process on time. It is not a lot of work but it takes some time to write the motivation letter and to fill in the forms.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I did not receive much counselling or support from the University. The application process wasn't very difficult to understand so it was fine to do without their help. It is possible, however, to e-mail the international office.

academic preparation

I did not need any special academic preparation. The level of education in Swansea does not seem to differ much from the level in Utrecht.

language preparation
I did not need any language preparation since I study English. The Erasmus language assesment gives you an accurate idea of your language level. They will let you know whether improvement is needed.
finances
Since the UK is quite an expensive country to live in I really needed the monthly government student funding and travel compensation, the erasmus grant and my personal savings. Especially since my rent was quite expensive.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I choose modules from the Politics department of Swansea University. The three modules I choose were: Politics and International relations, Globalisation and Global Justice and Human Rights. I felt like much of the content had been discussed in CIW modules of the previous years. The lectures and seminars are not very different from the ones in Utrecht. Assesment is quite different. I feel like there is less pressure in Swansea. You only need 40% for a pass.
academic quality of education activities
I had to write three essays and take two exams. I felt like it was easier than it Utrecht. For exams I only had to answer two of the six questions, they told us in advance so we could prepare the topics we were most interested in. I passed all of my essays with quite good results. Especially when it comes to referencing they were much more relaxed about grading.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The support for exchange students in Swansea is very good. They are always prepared to help. There is an international office right at the beginning of the campus and they can help you with whatever you need. You will also get a personal tutor, however, I only met mine a few weeks before the end of the semester. There are a lot of international students at Swansea University so all of the staff is very understanding.
transfer of credits
The SU credit system is slightly different from the Utrecht system. Your transcript will be converted to ECTS.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
Swansea University organises a 'freshers' week in the first week of the semester to welcome all (national and international) students. During this week students are invited to parties, information fairs, campus tours and many social events. There is also a buddy scheme organised by the international office. I found especially the buddy scheme a good opportunity to meet other students.
accommodation
It is quite hard to find accommodation for one semester only. For EU one semester students it seems impossible to get on campus accommodation. I found a room via SAS, which is the university's student accommodation service.
leisure & culture
During the first week you will get the opportunity to sign up for trips to England, Ireland and Schotland. Some trips even go to Europe but in the first semester this was not the case. During freshers week there is a society market where you get the opportunity to become a member of one or more societies. To me this was my main

social event every week as you meet up once a week. The societies also organise events and trips.
suggestions/tips
First thing to do when you know you are accepted into Swansea University is finding accommodation. It is quite a difficult process to find something so starting on time is very important.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend Swansea University to future exchange students. Swansea is a very beautiful city. It is quite far away from England (by train or bus) but you can easily make a trip to Cardiff or Bristol. The University is very nice, the teachers and international office staff are helpful and many events take place on campus. (most on Singleton campus)
do you have any additional advice or comments?
I do not have any additional advice other than the things previously mentioned. Start on time with paperwork and finding accommodation.

2015-2016

Report 1

faculty/college	Arts and Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	History

PREPARATION
exchange application process
I filled in all the necessary documents, which can be found on the site. This process is sometimes very confusing, but it seems more complex than it is. By making lists and checking with both institutions by email I managed to get everything done on time, eventhough I started way too late.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The humanities international office is very quick and helpful in its response!
academic preparation
That wasn't necessary for me.
language preparation
That wasn't necessary for me..
finances
I started borrowing more money from the Dutch government, approximately 4 months ahead.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)
I planned on doing history and writing courses in Swansea, but in the end - due to schedule issues - this didn't work out and I chose a random mixture of modules: Creative Writing, Genocide and Politics and the People. The first two courses were level 5 (which corresponds to UU level 2) and the last one was a level 4 module (corresponds to a first year, level 1, course at UU). Swansea University has a very well-organised online catalogus which can help you find interesting modules.
academic quality of education activities
It has been recommended both by the UU and the EU Erasmus Programme to take first and second year courses. To be honest, those were way too easy for me as a third year, graduating student. Nevertheless, this resulted in lots of free time which could be used for other interesting things which were equally useful!
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
They are very helpful. They always answer their mail on time, and it's even better when you go see them (although their office is a little hard to find). When you don't know where to go, got to My Uni Hub This is a central point on university where they can tell you where to go.
transfer of credits
Hasn't been done yet, seems very bureaucratic and complicated. Swansea is slow with offering the Transcript, so UU hasn't been able to do anything yet.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
Due to fact I arrived the 2 nd semester we missed out on a proper introduction. Swansea Uni offered one morning in which they explained how everything works. It was okay, but nothing special.
accommodation
The University offers 3 places to stay: Singleton Campus, Bay Campus and Hendreloefan Student Village. Although I didn't live in any of these places, I wouldn't recommend it. It might seem easy to accept an offer of the university, but it's very unlikely you'll be living on Singleton Campus, hence, you'll live in the Student Village or on Bay. Both are very expensive and far away from the city centre. It is better to look for an agency (on internet or through Swansea Erasmus Students Facebookpage) to find a house in either Brynmill or Uplands. Those two areas are in between the uni (singleton) and the city centre and it's where most (non-first year) students live. It's lively, cheap and cool. Be aware that some of these houses do not offer things like cutlery, pans, duvets, etc. so you might have to buy these yourself. However, you can do that cheaply at Wilko's or in one of the charity shops in town.
leisure & culture
The British are known for their excessive party culture. TRUE. Make sure you'll enjoy this. Also, British University know a certain 'Student Union' which organizes any activities not related to studies. Just pick one of the many societies (any sport you can think of or more something like painting, salsa or French) so you'll get to know some 'true' people from Wales/England as well (otherwise you'll stay in your Erasmus bubble).
suggestions/tips
Okay, I mentioned so many things already, I don't know. I have many practical things which I would have liked to have known before I came to Swansea. Please don't hesitate to contact me to ask me anything, I'd be happy to share!

CONCLUSIONS	
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain	
Definitely! Not so much because of its academic programme (although it's pretty good), but more because of ability of this town to offer you one of the best experiences ever. It's small, but not too small, it's located in the middle of a beautiful country (and an even more beautiful coast), it has a beach, the weather isn't as bad as you think it might be (at least, if you go from January onwards) and the Welsh culture is lovely.	
do you have any additional advice or comments?	
Too much to write down. Don't hesitate to contact me! (through the International Office)	

Report 2

faculty/college	Faculty of Humanities
Level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Media and Culture

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
This is always a hassle. If you want to study abroad just know that you have to fill out a lot of paper work. Luckily the site and people of the international office will help you.	
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
Sometimes I would send emails with questions or would stop by the international office. They were always helpful. They may not know everything about the receiving university, but that's up to you.	
academic preparation	
Not much preparation here. The courses seemed to align with what I already knew	
language preparation	
I had no difficulty with the English language	
finances	
It seems wise to save up some money. The UK is expensive, especially transportation. Groceries are also more expensive. The Erasmus grant will help, but will not suffice	

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
The courses available seemed really interesting when reading about them. Unfortunately for me one course was already full. Swansea did send me an email on time, so that I had enough time to find a new one. Make sure you read the course descriptions fully, so you know whether there is any overlap between courses.	
academic quality of education activities	
The academic quality is not as good as UU. They do expect you to write good academic text but sometimes fail to give you the right handlebars to do so. The lectures are fun, but sometimes I lacked in depth. Overall the	

courses were nice. I did not have a lot of workload.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I have no bad word to say about the support at Swansea university. There are a lot of foreign students, so they know how to make foreign students feel at home. Kay Llewlyn, who I had most contact with, was really nice and helpful. I could always send her an email or visit her and she would help me right away.
transfer of credits
Do not know yet

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The welcome was very brief, but nice. The orientation programme is only one day. As you would probably hang out with the international students the most, I would strongly recommend making friends on that day. Swansea will give you enough information to get around the University and who to visit if you have more questions.
accommodation
Was not difficult to find. There are a lot of foreign students that are leaving every semester, so there are a lot of options. So be picky. Look at international student accomadation Facebook page and people will even ask you to go and live in a house (or at least in my experience). It is a cheaper option than living on Campus. I recommend looking in Brynmill or Uplands. It's in between the city centre and Singleton Campus. If you have lectures on Bay campus make sure you live somewhere near the city centre. I do not recommend living on Bay Campus it's like the Uithof during holidays or weekends.
leisure & culture
Three Cliffs bay is really beautiful. Walking on the beach and cliffs there is really nice (if the sun wants to come out). Swansea city is not really that interesting. Cardiff is a much nicer city which I do recommend going to. Or Bath, go to Bath. You may want to visit the Travel shop on Singleton campus, they arrange trips to different locations (I went to Dublin). Popular amongst international students as this is a cheap and easy way to travel with a lot of other internationals. People will probably ask you to go to Windstreet on Wednesdays. That's the place to go out. Or go to Sin City on Thursday (in my opinion way better).
suggestions/tips
To be honest, for me it was difficult to adapt as many students liked to go out and party (and thus drink a whole lot). So whenever I wanted to meet people alcohol was in play. It did not affect my schoolwork as it was not too difficult. I ended up with a lot of spare time and nothing to do. Make sure that Swansea is for you. Read about it. Talk to people about it (or me). Especially because Swansea and the area is in my opinion not the most interesting part of Wales.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, If you know what you are up to. Maybe Swansea is not for you. Maybe it is.
do you have any additional advice or comments?

Ask yourself what you want out of this. Then ask yourself what kind of place or kind of people would fit into that idea. Then make sure that Swansea is that place. If you are not certain, then read about Swansea (the place and university) and ask people (about the atmosphere and culture).

Report 3

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	English Language and Culture

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Was quite stressful. It was not always too clear which courses I could apply for on which university and whether I would be able to actually do the course due to timetables. However, when all that was sorted out, the real struggle began: writing a proper motivation letter. I found it quite hard to write a proper one, so I've spent many evenings writing and re-writing bits and pieces until I was satisfied. When all forms were filled in, the waiting began, and that was rather excruciating. After a while, it didn't really matter where I went, as long as I could go abroad.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The contacts with the international office were quite quick, so that was nice. I didn't really need much help, so I'm unable to provide a lot of information on this topic
academic preparation	None, I knew I would be doing very different subjects so I didn't really know what to expect.
language preparation	None, my level of English was already rather sufficient (which should be bc I study English).
finances	I had saved my money to go on an exchange for several years already, so I figured I would be able to manage.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	My study programme was very nice. I enjoyed my courses and everything was organised quite well.
academic quality of education activities	I wouldn't want to go as far as to say that it was way easier, but I must admit that the educational standards in Utrecht, and in the Netherlands in general, are quite a bit higher than in Swansea. I did have to study to get the grades I wanted, but it was easier to pass an assessment there than usually is here.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	The counseling and support at Swansea is very good. It has loads of facilities for students who struggle a bit. Of course there are tutors who check up on you once or twice a term, and the teachers are all very kind as well. Everyone is really willing to help you with either silly questions about the library system or with more serious struggles.

transfer of credits

Swansea university uses Swansea credits. It seems a bit redundant, but every Swansea credit is 0.5 ECTS. I did 3 courses of 20 Swansea credits, which comes down to 10 ECTS each.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Fresher's week was awesome. Swansea has a thriving student society with loads of opportunities to completely submerge in there community

accommodation

I had arranged a place to live outside the university system, because I thought that would be cheaper. Looking back, it didn't make much of a difference, but I wouldn't want to have it any other way, because my housemates were the best.

leisure & culture

Swansea university is one street away from the beach. When you're in the proper buildings, you can actually see the tides going in and out. I loved the city and the university's many societies. There's something for everyone. I joined the dance society and the longboard society. There are all kinds of sports societies, religious societies, music societies and even fandom societies (HP, sci-fi etc.).

suggestions/tips

Do become a member of some sort of society! you'll get to know a lot of people. Go to Cinema&Co (just go, you'll see why when you're there), go to Rhosilli Beach and walk to wormshead, walk the trails through the waterfall county, do the karaoke in Yantes at WhindStreet, go dance Salsa every Sunday evening at Bambu, enjoy the beautiful weather (it really exists), enjoy the beach, and live.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes of course! Swansea is not fancy and it is not very pretty. But it is beautiful. The people are absolutely lovely and incredibly kind. The university is pretty ok and the teachers are good, the library is open 24/7, so you can actually still be in the library at 5am if you want to. I would say that Swansea is authentic. People don't give a crap about what anyone thinks of them so they'll dress the way they want and they'll behave the way they want.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Need I say more than I already did?