

**2018-2019**

**Report 1**

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

destination city & country	Mannheim, Germany
name university abroad	Universität Mannheim
start date	01 / 02 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 06 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

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

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	Applying was quite easy. You only had to register through one of the systems of the university of Mannheim, where you had to fill in your personal data and your insurance. For me personally it was quite stressful, because I didn't receive an e-mail with the link to be able to apply to the systems of the university, so I first found out in october that I had to fill in my data. So I would give the advice that in case you haven't heard anything from the university in september, simply send an e-mail and ask, just to be sure.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The counselling at Utrecht University was good. Everytime you have a question you can simply send an e-mail and you will get a quick response, sometimes even on the same day!
academic preparation	For me personally I didn't have to prepare academically. I heard from other students, who went abroad to Germany, that the level would be a bit lower in Germany in general, so I didn't prepare and everything turned out fine.
language preparation	As a language preparation you will have to take the OLS from Erasmus, but it is depending on your level if you need to prepare or not. As I did the OLS I ended up having the highest level and I could get along in the german seminars. The only thing that's a bit harder, is that almost everyone will be a native german speaker, so they will obviously have a bigger vocabulary than you do, so sometimes I had to ask in class what something meant, but every teacher and student was fine with international students asking questions about some words.
finances	For going to Germany you are able to apply for a scholarship from DIA (Duitsland Instituut Amsterdam). I did that as well and I became a scholarship, so in this way I was able to finance my time abroad without having to take an extra loan. Over all is Germany quite cheap: when you go out for drinks, do groceries, go to museums, theater etc. is all way cheaper than in the Netherlands, but housing can be more expensive depending on what type of housing you can get.

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
	At the university of Mannheim there are many courses you can take, ranging from languages to sociology to economics, which are mostly offered in German and some also in English. For my specific studies (German language and culture) there was a wide scale of possible seminars since they have more culture based courses, linguistics and literary science as well. Also they offer more introductory courses, but also courses at a more advanced level, but in general the level is a little bit lower than in the Netherlands. About the organisation of the courses, you will have every course one time per week and they will last about one and a half hour. If you have any issues with the organisation of the courses, you can always e-mail someone with questions and they will try and help you to their best ability.
academic quality of education activities	
	As I already said, the academic level is a little bit lower than at Utrecht university, but because the courses are quite different from the ones in Utrecht, you will have to change perspective on your way of studying (since you won't have to prepare for classes that much and you won't get many tests, mostly only a presentation and a paper). The professors value it very much if you try to be as active in class as you can and openly take part in group discussions, which can be hard because of the language difference. Communication with teachers can unfortunately be a bit hard, because German professors only reply during working hours, so not in the evening and not in the weekends.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	
	The university and its employees are all very helpful and can assist you in German and English. You will mostly have contact with the International Office and all the employees are really friendly and try to help you in the best way they can and are happy to answer your questions.
transfer of credits	
	For me it took quite some time for the teachers to only put your marks online at the system of the university. Per example, I took a test at the end of may, but now, in the second week of july, I still haven't got my mark back. Something that's also important to think about: if you're writing any papers you will get to the end of the 'Semesterferien' to write those, so that will probably during the time that you already came back to the Netherlands. That means, that it might take quite some time to write the papers and to get the marks of your papers. That's why I would advise to do as much oral exams as possible, because you will get your mark within two minutes after your exam and the professors upload your mark quite quickly online as well and: you won't have to write any papers when you are having your summerholiday.

<b>STUDENT LIFE</b>	
welcome & orientation programme	
	The welcome and orientation programme wasn't that big and eventful as you might expect it to be. In the week before the seminars actually start you will have some obligatory things to do, like register for the university, register for the council of the city, visit a library tour and attend a few meetings, where they will explain the main things about this university. For me the hard part of this was, that there wasn't really an event organised to simply make friends. All the activities are aimed for your academic stay and not that much for having fun and meeting new people, so if you're a bit shy that might be quite hard, because you will have to talk to other people in more academic settings when you get to know them.
accommodation	
	Finding accommodation can be quite easy if you do it correctly. The university namely has student dormitories that are designed especially for international students, but you will have to apply immediately as you get the

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link to apply for housing, because in my case almost all rooms were taken within three days. These accommodations can end up being a house full of international students, but sometimes some German people live in these houses as well, so for getting to know the German culture that's ideal! If you didn't get a room via the university, a site that can help you find a room is [www-wg-gesucht.de](http://www-wg-gesucht.de)

**leisure & culture**

Because you won't have that many seminars during the week, you will have quite some free time during your stay. Things that I found out is that the Nationaltheater offers student discounts up to 75% and the theaterpieces are sometimes in German, English or even Latin. Also, the university offers some free sport programmes for which you only have to bring your studentcard and then you're free to go! Some classes you can take are zumba, yoga, soccer etc. Furthermore, most museums and other things to sight-see in Germany almost all have studentdiscounts as well, so if you want to get to know more about the German culture this is quite useful! Mannheim itself isn't that known for its culture or things to see. You ofcourse have the Schloss, some museums and a few very pretty parks, but that is about it. For really enjoying culture you should buy the semesterticket, with which you can travel about 50 km around Mannheim as much as you want. Cities like Stuttgart, Saarbrücken, Heidelberg and Würzburg are quite big and there is a lot of culture to see and to experience, so traveling during your stay will probably be a must. And with that, in general the German culture isn't that different from the Dutch culture. Some things that I found out which are quite different is that people standing in queue will stand quite close to eachother, beer is acceptable almost everytime of the day, you can buy currywurst or fries at almost every corner and biking is more free than in the Netherlands.

**suggestions/tips**

My biggest suggestion would be to buy the semesterticket, because it can almost take you anywhere. Besides that, it might be usefull to come to Mannheim exactly at the start of the semester. There is namely a student association for international students that organises a lot of stuff, but at the first few meetings all people are out to make new friends. So if you come to Mannheim a bit later, you will miss the part where everyone is making friends and you will first join when people have already formed groups of friends, which can be hard to integrate into.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

I would definetly recommend this university. The university itself had super interesting courses and all the people I met were really friendly. By staying in Mannheim you're quite central in the south of Germany, since you can get to Switzerland, France and Luxemburg in two hours and multiple beautiful cities are quite close and even the train to Berlin or München leaves from the Mannheim station. The city itself has some interesting bars, theaters and museums and ofcourse the rivers surrounding it.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

No.

**2016-2017**

**Report 1**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	Bachelor's
name study programme	German language and culture

destination city & country	Mannheim, Germany
name university abroad	Mannheim University
start date	01 / 02 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	31 / 07 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)

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

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	The only advice i would have at this point, is to start in time. Other than that, the exchange application process for studying at Mannheim University went very well.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	Utrecht University gave almost all the needed information. The only thing that was missing for me, was information about the courses that i could or could not follow at Mannheim University. These questions were answered before i left.
academic preparation	If you want to follow any special courses (that are not officially part of your study programm) i would suggest to take a similar course at your home university. By doing this, it was easier for me to follow such a course at another university and in German.
language preparation	I didnt take extra language preparation before leaving to Germany. The Mannheim University however offers language courses (international summer/winter academy) for incoming before the semester starts.
finances	Living in Germany won't be much more expensive than living in the Netherlands. Due to some extra excursions a semester abroad could still be more expensive. With the Erasmus support finances were manageable.

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	Mannheim University offered many great courses in the Humanities faculty during my stay abroad. The University will put great effort in getting the exchange students accepted for the courses they would like to take.
academic quality of education activities	The academic quality of education activities was about the same as it is in Utrecht. Some courses were a bit difficult for me, but this was because they were not a part of the Germam studies.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	The international office of Mannheim University answered all the questions i had. Only at the end of the semester, there were some things that were not 100% clear (about re-sit exams). But this was not a huge problem and was cleared soon.
transfer of credits	Mannheim University and Utrecht University will both give information about this. However, there could be some things that are not clear. In my case i was not sure if i need an official course description from Mannheim University or if i could write one myself (in case Mannheim University doesn't provide one).

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<b>STUDENT LIFE</b>	
welcome & orientation programme	In the first week of the semester abroad, Mannheim University organised various information and welcome sessions. Those sessions gave all the information needed. There was a tour around the campus as well and a session in which we got more information about fun activities and international student organisations.
accommodation	For me it was very difficult to find an accommodation. A week before i had to go to Mannheim, i still hadn't found any room. So i would advice any students to start looking for an accommodation very early!
leisure & culture	Going to Germany was not much of a culture shock. Coming from the Netherlands, i mostly noticed many small differences between Dutch and German culture.
suggestions/tips	Start looking for a room early on and if you are in Mannheim, join some of the international student activities or excursions the university organises. They are very good to discover the city, get to know new people and feel at home fast!

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain	Certainly! Mannheim University offers many great courses in the field of Humanities and most of the things are organised very well for incoming exchange students. Mannheim is a city that will have everything you need and is close to many other beautiful German cities.
do you have any additional advice or comments?	During my semester in Mannheim a lived with a German family. This was really great, because i could improve my German much faster this way. I lived in Heidelberg, which is close to Mannheim. Heidelberg is a very lovely city, but i would still advise everyone to find a room in the city where you will study. This will make it easier to take part in activities and meeting new people.