



Universidade Catolica Portuguesa – Lissabon

2017-2018

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The application process seems a lot of work at first and could cause some stress amongst students. It is not too much, just prepare yourself and really think about the courses you want to do and the city you want to live in. If need be, speak with either international office or you student counsellor because they can help you with making you choice.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
This is mostly needed in getting all the forms right and could be a good help when you are not sure if or where you want to study abroad. In my experience they are quick to respond and give good guidance.
academic preparation
The academic preparation is mostly choosing your courses and reading the manuals. Read them carefully because changing is not always a possibility. You can find courses on the website of you host university.
language preparation
Language preparation should be focused on the English language for Lisbon and Católica University. You could also do a Portugese course to have broader choice of courses but I did not do so and it is definitely not a necessity to do so as the Portugese people are mainly quite good in English.
finances
Finance is always something you have to think about carefully. As you are going abroad to a country where you probably don't speak the language and will only live for 5 months, work is hard to find. And for me the Erasmus grand was by far not sufficient to cover my expenses as my rent was already more than the grand. In Lisbon, rent is around the same as in Utrecht maybe a little bit more expensive. Living costs are lower. I would strongly advice new students to save money in advance and to think about using the Dutch Studentloan system.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The study programme in Lisbon is mostly focused on International Relations and Political Science. The courses are mostly masterscourses. This because at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa most English courses are in the masters. The student council is very nice and happy to help with any issue you have with the study programme.
academic quality of education activities
The quality is quite high and comperative to Utrecht University. The fact that the courses are mastercourses does not ask that you need a higher quality standard than you are used to right now.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Support is high and both students and teacher are ready to help you during your stay at UCP. No need to worry about this.
transfer of credits
Credits are transferred both online and on papers that are in the common room of the university. It takes a while before you will get your credits so get used to the Portugese way and wait for a few months! But the transfer itself is clear and done by the support staff of the University.



STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The University itself does not have a big welcome programme. There are two big student organizations in Lisbon that can help you further with orientation into the student life. These are Erasmus Life Lisboa (ELL) and Erasmus Student Network (ESN). Both these organizations work together with universities and can tell you all about the student life in Lisbon. I strongly recommend that you go to one or both to get access to a variety of activities to meet new people from both your own and other universities in Lisbon.
accommodation
I was staying in downtown Lisbon and paid 400 euros a month for my room. I got it through my own network back in the Netherlands. I recommend to do this or go to uni places. If you have a hard time finding a room you can also contact ELL or ESN to help you with your room search. There are sufficient student residences. You have full Erasmus houses and with a combination of Erasmus and Portuguese students.
leisure & culture
The Portuguese culture is wonderful. Try and take your time as the Portuguese like to do. Don't hurry and most of all do not stress out when it all takes a little bit longer than you are used to. Everything happens outside, so go on the streets, drink a beer in Bairro Alto and see the sunset from amazing miradouros (viewing points). Go to small restaurants or the 'illegal' Chinese at night and fall in love with the cheap food. And do not forget to go to the beaches near Lisbon to surf and enjoy the ocean. The sun never seems to leave the city and you never get bored of just sitting in the sun with a nice espresso.
suggestions/tips
Again the biggest suggestion is to just walk around town and enjoy the culture and the sun. Sit outside one of the kiosks with a book and a coffee or a beer and don't move for the next few hours. Go to PARK rooftop bar or miradouro Santa Catherina for the sunset and the busy nights in Bairro Alto. Do not forget to take a lot of trips to Porto, Coimbra, The Algarve and the Azores (!!!). And do not forget to study despite the beautiful weather and long nights.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, I cannot stress this enough. Lisbon is amazing and the University is really nice. The people you meet, the courses you do it is all such an experience. You will fall in love with the city and the Portuguese people. The university has a high quality.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Go to Lisbon and enjoy half a year of amazing weather and a lot of new experiences. And even if you do not go to Lisbon, do an Erasmus it gives you an experience you will never forget and hold dear for the rest of your life.

2017-2018

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The application process was clear and the information about it on the website was sufficient. Nothing was too hard to find and overall I'm satisfied with the process.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I didn't use the option of asking for support, so I can't really say anything about this. From my own faculty, the support was sufficient.
academic preparation



My academic level was absolutely fine in comparison to the courses I took. I knew enough to participate and all the assignments were doable.
language preparation
My courses were in English, so I didn't prepare for it. My English level was sufficient.
finances
I had my salary, Erasmus grant and my student loan to pay for the exchange. Every month I think I spent about €1000 including rent. I didn't know a lot about the finances on beforehand.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)
The study programme at UCP was okay. I wanted to go for 30 ECTS which meant that I had to take 9 courses, which was quite a lot. The courses could be found on the internet, but after arrival a lot of my Learning Agreement choices had to change because of conflicting times, courses in the weekend and courses I wasn't allowed to take.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality was a bit lower than what I was used to in Utrecht. The biggest part of the teachers were good in what they were doing and the tests were at a good level in comparison to the courses.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Miguel was always there to help, but it mostly took a long time before something really was being looked at.
transfer of credits
Up until this day I do not have my grades.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
Participating in activities of ESN Lisboa and ELL was a great way to get to know the city and the student life of Lisbon. The buddy program of ESN was great and this all together made me feel home in Lisbon very quick.
accommodation
My house was in a very good neighbourhood and public transport was just around the corner. My rent (€420) was pretty high for Lisbon, but I was kind of late with searching an accommodation, so I took that for granted.
leisure & culture
In my free time I walked around the city a lot, visited other parts of Portugal and spend time with people I've met along the way during my Erasmus.
suggestions/tips
Go look at the waves at Nazaré! And visit Hillsong Church Lisbon in Lisbon.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes! Portugal and Lisbon are absolutely great, Portuguese people are very kind and the weather is lovely. You don't have to work too hard and you have a lot of free time to explore the city, yourself and the country.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Don't say yes to all your friends who want to visit you, and keep enough time for yourself and new adventures!



2017-2018

PREPARATION
exchange application process
In my opinion, the application was very easy. All the deadlines are very clear. The only thing that took a little while was the confirmation of the receiving institution.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The counselling and support were not that much but for me that was not necessary. I was doubting about Lisbon because a lot of people wanted to go there. Someone at the university said that I had to consider another destination because of that. I am glad I didn't follow that advice and at the end all the students that had signed up for Lisbon could go, so that was not the best advice.
academic preparation
I didn't undertake an academic preparation.
language preparation
Before I went, I looked at English grammar but that is actually not necessary. You will learn everything once you are there.
finances
I would recommend that you start to save a little because I spend a lot of money to go on trips.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
There only was a problem with my timetable because I couldn't do all the classes because they took place at the same time as another class. So I recommend that you're a little flexible about the classes you want to take. Almost all my classes were late at night (from 18.30 till 22.00 or something).
academic quality of education activities
I followed a lot of Master's classes even though I'm still in my Bachelor. But the content wasn't that hard.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
They helped me with all my questions.
transfer of credits
The credits you get are mostly higher than you are used to at Utrecht University.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The Erasmus programmes in Lisbon are really nice to meet a lot of people.
accommodation
I had an accomodation in the city and not nearby the university. For me, that was perfect because I wanted to live in Lisbon and enjoy the city instead of living nearby the univeristy, where I had to travel 45 min to get to the centre.
leisure & culture
The portuguese culture is amazing! You have to get used to the fact that everything does not go as fast as it goes in the Netherlands. But that was actually nice for a change. The people are really nice. Because I didn't



have a lot of classes, I had a lot of leisure time. This was weird for me because you don't have that as much in the Netherlands. Because of that you can enjoy the culture even more.
suggestions/tips
Start looking for an accomodation in time because the nice appartments are gone really fast.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, the university had a different view on things. In the Netherlands, my classes focus mostly on just the Netherlands. Here, you are more focussing on international relations and I learned more about that. I would also recommend the destination, especially in the summer.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
No.

2017-2018

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The application process was very clearly described. The application included a study plan, motivation letter, financial plan and Curriculum Vitae. I would recommend putting a lot of effort in writing the motivation letter. Besides, be aware that your study plan will probably change during your stay abroad.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The UU support was quick and efficient.
academic preparation
I was well prepared. The universities education level is comparable to that of Utrecht University, which is why I felt that my academic preparation suited the level of Universidade Católica Portuguesa.
language preparation
Before going to Lisbon, I did not take any Portuguese language courses. This was not necessary. The courses at the university were taught in English and almost everyone in Portugal speaks English very well.
finances
I saved some money before departure, but financial preparation was not really needed because living cost in Portugal are cheap.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I followed six courses at the university. I chose some political and international relations oriented courses. It is a private university and everything is well organised and the courses are well taught. Because I had chosen some international relations oriented courses it was a little bit challenging and provided me with a lot of new knowledge.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality was good. The professors were experts in their fields. For example, the course 'international security' was thaught by an army general. However, the courses were very short (often only 9-18 hours in total) and because of this it was sometimes a little bit shallow.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Very good. There is one office manager (Miguel) who is a sort of mentor for all the international students. He responds immediately on emails and is always available for questions.
transfer of credits
I followed courses for 22,5 ECTS. My grades are good and will be transferred to Osiris at my home university.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The orientation programme at UCP university was nothing special. They organized one day for all the erasmus students of my faculty. However, Lisbon has two big erasmus organisations; ESN and ERASMUS LISBOA, which organise a lot of activities that enable students to get to know a lot of other erasmus students in the city.
accommodation
I found my room with the help of uniplaces. This was ok and helped me to find an accomodation before arriving in Lisbon.
leisure & culture
Lisbon is a wonderful city, you never get bored of it. Besides, the Erasmus programme is well developed, with activities almost everyday.
suggestions/tips
Sintra, every viewpoint when the sun is going down, Panoramico de Monsanto, Bairro Alto, erasmus corner, TOPO rooftopbar, Surf in Costa da Caparica, Porto, The Asores, Park Rooftop Bar, Alfama, Bèlem.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend this city and university. Lisbon is a fantastic city full of life. Besides, Catholica University is a very good University with great courses and professors. Moreover, Lisbon is a city with a lot of students where you will be able to find great friends and have the time of your life.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Do not hesitate about studying abroad, just do it!

2017 -2018

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The process to apply for a host university was pretty clear. The website of the UU gave a lot of information about different host universities. When I didn't get the information at the website I was informed through my study advisor which helped me a lot.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The University Utrecht supported me a lot with the preperation about the exchange. The only thing that didn't worked that well was that I had to go many times to the international office to sign my learning agreement. They were serveral times closed while they should be open. As well, not everyone at the international office couldn't helped me with my learning agreement. As a result, I went around 10 times to the international office and two days before I left to Portugal it was finally fixed. The people who helped me did a good job, but it took a lot of time and affort to fix it. Besides this, everything else was fixed well.
academic preparation



I was informed about the courses through my host university. They gave me a lot information about the courses in advance and this made that I knew what I could expect. I didn't had to do a lot of academic preparation before I was leaving.
language preparation
I didn't did any language preparation at the University Utrecht itself. I readed an English book before I went to Portugal and the language test from which every Erasmus student has to do.
finances
I made an overview of my finances with the apply of my Erasmus. I spoke with some people who also did there Erasmus in Lisbon and the finances agreed pretty well with the real expenses.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The study programme at the Universidade Catolica Portuguesa was very interesting. The courses where on a good level and the teachers prepared the lessons very well. I learned a lot about international relations and this was a good addition to my bachelor programme. I switched some courses because the timetable didn't fit with all of the courses that I choose. The coordinator of the faculty fixed this very good to make this possible.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality was good. I did some master courses (while it was my bachelor) and this was an extra challenge for me. This worked very well.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The receiving university gave me my timetable when I visited the university for the first time. I preffer to have had my timetable a few weeks before I was going to the university so I could have known how intensive my timetable would have been. As well, the schedule of the tests came pretty late: sometimes three weeks before the test. This annoyed me a little bit but I think that this is also a part of the Portugees cultures. Besides that, everything was well fixed and when I had a question I could always send my coordinator an email and he responed very quick.
transfer of credits
The transfer of credits still has to be fixed. Again: This is a little bit late but I think that this is due the Portugees culture were they are not so quick as the universities in the Netherlands.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
I missed the welcome week of the Universidade Catolica Portuguesa. I heard that this was a week before I arrived and nobody of my faculty at the UCP didn't know about it. I heard that the UCP had some problems witht there emails so it was caused by that that nobody knew. Besides that, we had a welcome dinner at the first week and this was a nice way to meet the other students of the faculty. As well, Lisbon has two Erasmus student associations: Erasmus Life Lisboa (ELL) and Erasmus Student Network (ESN). I signed in for both of them and they had a lot activities to join at the first weeks. This made my welcome in Lisbon very nice.
accommodation
I fixed my accomodation through tips of people who did there Erasmus in Lisbon as well. The accomodation was part of a organisation who offers a lot of houses for Erasmus students. I lived in a very nice accomodation and this made my time in Lisbon very great.
leisure & culture
I did a lot of Portugees typicall things such as going to a Fado (typical portugees music) nights and soms concerts. I did it as well with ESN and ELL and this made me feel like I really got the Portugees experience.



suggestions/tips

My tip for other students who will go to Lisbon is to get involved at ESN and ELL. This helped me to make a lot of friends and this made my time better. I also can recommend the UCP as a host university because they really put effort in you to feel home and have a good time.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes I would definitely recommend the UCP as a host university. The teachers are good, the courses are on a good level and there are a lot of people who would help you to feel home. As well, Lisbon is a 'Erasmus city' and there are a lot of activities organized for Erasmus students so you are never alone and never bored!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I think I explained everything above.

2017-2018

preparation

exchange/placement application process

I talked a lot with students that already did their exchange in Lisbon. It was very useful to hear about their experiences.

counselling/support at home university

Sometimes the reaction time was very slow. They also did not have a lot of knowledge. In my experience it was easy to find out the most information by yourself.

academic preparation

I did not do any academic preparation

language preparation

At my university, Católica, the teachers spoke very good English. There was no need to learn the language and I did not feel the need to prepare this.

finances

I saved a lot of money. However, it was not my intention to spend all of it. It was good to have a lot of money because of the fact that you want to explore the country and go on different trips.

study/placement abroad period

study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)

The classes were mostly in the evening and there was not much choice between subjects. To get all the needed ECTS you had to choose almost every subject.

academic quality of education/placement activities



The quality was ok, the location of the university is quite far out of the city center.
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
There was one person who had the responsibility to arrange everything for the international students. You could ask him everything and he was always present.
transfer of credits
I do not have information about this yet.
student life
welcome/orientation programme
The university did not have a lot of introduction for the students of the institute of politics. However, there are a lot of Erasmus organizations that organize a lot of activities. Join these events!
accommodation
I lived in the neighbourhood of Sao bento. Not directly in the city centre, but very close. It was a very good neighbourhood. I paid 350 euros for a apartment shared with four persons. We had a nice backyard where we could invite a lot of friends.
leisure/culture
Portuguese people very kind. They help you with all your questions. However, I had to get used to the fact that everything is going very slowly.
suggestions/tips
If you have time: fly to the Azores! This is a group of islands that are part of Portugal and are located in the middle of the Atlantic ocean. There is a very beautiful nature and the flights are very cheap.
conclusions
would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain
Yes I do.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
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2016-2017

PREPARATION
exchange application process
After a lot of information and presentations I decided that I wanted to study abroad. The application included a study plan, motivation letter, financial plan and Curriculum Vitae. I would advise to put a lot of effort in the motivation letter, this seems to be very decisive. Don't worry too much about the financial plan, this is just a general estimation of the living costs while studying abroad. Your study plan will probably change during your stay abroad. However, it is helpful to prepare yourself for your academic experience.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
My study advisor was of great help. She helped me to structure the process, to write down the deadlines and to hand in the right documents. Thanks to her, it was quite easy to apply. The UU support was fast and efficient.
academic preparation
My perspective broadened because I was able to study in two different study areas than my regular bachelor programme. I followed courses in political science and business administration. It was quite an adventure to work in a different way academically. However, it gave me new insights to bring home to my courses at my home university.
language preparation
Everything is taught in English and roughly everybody speaks English fluently. Consequently, there was no need for preparation.
finances
In my preparation I didn't have to save up a lot of money. Portugal is cheap. The grants of Erasmus and the Dutch Government together, are higher than the minimum wage in Portugal. My parents also wanted to support me, so my financial preparation was basically zero.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
As mentioned before, I followed courses in political science and business administration. The UCP (Universidade Catolica Portuguesa Lisboa) is a private university. It is very well organised and the courses are well taught. Because of the different academic roots, the new study areas are challenging and provide a lot of new knowledge. I followed 8 courses. The courses are often 3-5.5 ECTS. The study load is often divided between (50 percent homework, 50 percent courses). However, this depends heavily on the subject you are studying.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality was good. In my opinion, the professors were well-informed and experts on their field of expertise. The courses were very short (often 9-18 hours), because of this it was sometimes hard to dive deep into one subject. In conclusion, what we've learned was well-taught but still a little bit shallow.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Good. We had an office manager (Miguel) who responded immediately. He uploaded grades, signed learning agreements, gave information on university activities. Because of this, there was little room for mistakes or uncertainties. Besides, the professors themselves were often very responsive.
transfer of credits
I followed 27,5 ECTS. My grades are good and will be transferred to Osiris at my home university. However, the workload was often not equal to the ECTS. Some courses were 18 hours and stood for 6 ECTS. However, I also followed a course of 42 hours for 5,5 ECTS. The partner university UCPL should maybe revisit this distribution.



STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
UCP Lisboa had a great welcome and orientation programme. They provided me a helpful welcome package, including a portugese simcard, a map and discounts. Besides they organised an introduction with all the Erasmus students of my faculty and the porefessors of the department. All of this was well-organised with tasty food and nice drinks. Besides, UCP Lisboa organised a day for all exchange students of all faculties across Portugal in Porto. This was an amazing day, we had a boat tour, did a port wine tastery and had a lot of fun.
accommodation
The class rooms are good. They have enough fresh air, a lot of light and are big enough. The facilities are not always as digital and modern as in Utrecht. However, it did not constrain me at all. It was'nt great, but good enough!
leisure & culture
Lisbon is a wonderful city. It is full of great viewing points, acient buildings, a fruitful culture and adventurous activities. You can surf, explore the city, go and drink a beer etc. The Erasmus programme is well developed, with activities for around 5000 students per semester. You will have no chance to be bored, because there are so many things to do and so many people to share expiernces with.
suggestions/tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sintra - Panoramico de Monsanto - Artis bar - Damas bar - Bairro Alto -Surf in Costa da Caparica -Peniche -Porto - The Asores - Madeira - Football match Benfica - Park Rooftop Bar - Sentido Proibido 2 - Alfama, fado and food - Bèlem - Cheap coffee

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Definitely! Lisbon is MADE for studying abroad. The city is full of life. The climate is outstanding and there is so much to do. However, it is not too big and you can find your way. Because of the rich student culture, youw ill meet a lot of people and get to know different cultures and traditions. Portugal is not extremely expensive, so this enables you to travel and explore a different country. Above all, Lisbon provides the perfect conditions to develop yourself and it gives you enough time to relax and reflect on life. This all, in combination with a good univerisity and academic growth, makes the Lisbon exchange experience absolutely fantastic!
do you have any additional advice or comments?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Always go south (I would recommend a sunnier exchange than for example Norway or Sweden) 2. Just do it!



2016-2017

PREPARATION
exchange application process
We had to make a top 3 list of places you would like to go to. I only had a first and second preference, which were Lisbon and Porto. It changes per Faculty which changes you have on specific locations. When you're not selected for any of your preferences there will be other options you have to choose from. Make sure you motivate your preference in your motivation letter!
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The main support you get from the University is from the International Office of your faculty. You can go there with question or struggles.
academic preparation
For me the courses I took on the exchange were mostly extra curricular. I needed only 15 ECTS to finish my bachelor.
language preparation
I didn't take any Portuguese or English class in order to improve my skills. I knew on beforehand that my classes will be in English, so there was no urgency for learning Portuguese. Make sure you know, mostly via other students, if the classes will for sure be in English! I know several students who thought there classes would be in English which turned out different. Learning Portuguese on an academic level is not that easy! Preparing your English skills might be useful if you think your level is insufficient. In general you don't need a high level of English to start with, since you will learn a lot from having to speak English the whole time.
finances
Before I left I made an overview of the incoming and outgoing money for the semester abroad. For me it was enough to loan some extra money from the government, so I didn't have to save a lot of money on beforehand. In the end, even though living in Portugal is not that expensive, you will probably spend more money than you're used to do at home. So keep this in mind! And don't forget that if you won't gain 22,5 credits, you will not get the last amount of Erasmusfunding (around 300 euros)!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
Except for one portuguese culture course I took only courses in political studies, which I do back home as well. Make sure the courses you choose are approved by Utrecht University otherwise you might have troubles in the end because of overlapping content. It is also possible to take courses at other faculties like economics or law. You have to keep in mind that the time schedule avoids overlap especially with the exams. When it comes to organization Portuguese people are less strict than Dutch. This results in somewhat chaotic or unclear information about the time schedules. I changed several courses when I was there, which was luckily not that complicated (don't forget to change the learning agreement).
academic quality of education activities
The quality of Catolica University is higher than many other Universities. The teachers are on time and they expect you to participate to a certain level. The courses I took were mastercourses which I didn't know before. This led to a classroom with half erasmusstudents and half Portuguese master/phd students. The part that makes it easier than back home is because you mainly had to write one essay per course which was the only grade to finish the course.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad



As I said Portugueses can be a little bit chaotic. My coordinator from the University was a little bit unclear. Make sure you make an appoinment before you to go University, since they used to have very long lunch breaks!
transfer of credits
The system with credits works different than at Utrecht University. I used to have two courses of 7,5 ECTS and in Portugal the credits per course varied from 3 to 6. So, you need to do more courses at the same time than in Utrecht. Also the grading system works different ranging from 1 to 20. Make sure you ask the international office of Utrecht for an explanation of the grading system to the Dutch one.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
Our welcome programme was not that extensive as the one of the Economics faculty of Catolica. We had a welcome ceremony with some snack and drinks. Also in the first month we went on a trip to Porto to meet the students of Catolica Porto. Besides a University related welcome, there was a busy schedule of welcoming activities by Erasmus Life Lisboa.
accommodation
I booked my room via placetostay.pt. I wanted to live together with Erasmusstudents and there are a lot of students places where this is possible. Check your location on the map, and pay attention to the location of the University. Catolica is out of the centre of Lisbon so you have to choose to live close to University or in the centre of the city. I chose to live in the centre of Lisbon, which was great, and further away from University. I took me 50 minutes to get to University, but luckily I only had to be there three evenings a week.
leisure & culture
Since you're on an erasmus you will have a lot of free time to spend. Lisbon is an amazing city and Portugal has a lot to offer so you won't be bored. I recommend to go to Porto, Nazare for the big waves and the Azores.
suggestions/tips
The neighborhoods Baixa-Chiado, Santos and around Avenida are really nice for students to live.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend Catolica University to others! The quality of the classes is not too easy and the atmospehere of the city is amazing. Especially the climate will make your stay feel like one big and instructive holiday!
do you have any additional advice or comments?



2016 - 2017

Preparation
exchange/placement application process
<p>The application process looked like a lot of work beforehand, but was not so hard in the end. You can easily be overwhelmed by the number of possible host universities, but once you have chosen a top three, it will all feel a little more structured. My top three was composed of Lisbon, Malta and South-Africa. I applied to Lisbon, and luckily I got in. The application process was quite clear, the main documents that you have to hand in consist of a letter of motivation, a financial plan, a proof of language skills and a learning agreement. I was afraid of a lot of bureaucracy between the home and host universities before my departure, but this was not the case.</p>
counselling/support at home university
<p>We had access to very good counselling and support at Utrecht University. This started with 'orientation days' for students who wanted to go abroad, and a meeting once you applied to, and was accepted by, a foreign host university. Throughout my stay in Lisbon, I could always contact my study advisor for help – for example with signing Erasmus documents. Fortunately, I did not need a lot of counselling or support.</p>
academic preparation
<p>My academic preparation consisted of looking through all the subjects available and the study points that you could achieve by following them (the ECTS). From the subjects that I liked, I made a learning agreement and had it signed by my study advisor. Even though my initial learning agreement was approved, in the end two of these subjects changed. This happens more often, so be prepared for possible changes regarding your subjects.</p>
language preparation
<p>Since my classes would be in English and my English was already at a sufficient level, I did not need any language preparation. Furthermore, I already had an advanced Cambridge (CAE) certificate, so I did not need further proof of English.</p>
Finances
<p>I made a financial plan prior to my stay abroad, which was one of the requested Erasmus documents. This was very necessary in my case, since I earn money in the Netherlands but I did not have a job in Portugal. I saw in my financial plan that I needed some savings, which was not a problem. I saved some extra money myself, and got some money from my family. In total, I needed about 1000 euros of savings, due to a more expensive room and less income of money.</p>



study/placement abroad period
study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)
<p>The study programme consisted of more subjects than I was used to and I encountered some important changes in my study programme once I arrived in Lisbon. First of all, as already quickly stated, I could not follow all of the courses I wanted, because two of them did not start that year. For me, this was not a big problem. I got two subjects in return, which were very interesting in the end. Both of them were philosophy classes.</p> <p>Second and most importantly, one class I could not follow because of a fallacy of the study advisor. This was a Portuguese Language course. Even though this was in my learning agreement and agreed upon by both universities, I did not hear when the course started, even after two weeks of asking for clarification. The brand new study advisor who was still coping himself with making sense of everything, told me that the course did not start yet. When he said it finally did, I went to my 'first class', only to find out that it already was the fourth class out of six classes. Because of this, I could not follow the course anymore and I also lost 1,5 ECTS. Fortunately, I calculated some margin beforehand, so I could still get my needed 30 ECTS.</p>
academic quality of education/placement activities
<p>In my respect, the quality of education is slightly lower than the quality in the Netherlands. I followed some bachelor subjects, but also some master subjects and even one master/PhD course. The master courses in Portugal can be considered of being the same level as the end of the bachelor in the Netherlands/at Utrecht University.</p>
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
<p>At the beginning of my stay, the counselling was very bad. The host university Universidade Catolica Portuguesa just changed the contact person for international students, which resulted in having a counsellor who knew nothing about the previous arranged learning agreements and about any other contact, or about how arranging everything worked. Because of this, as already stated, I did not get the information I needed on my subjects, because of which I could not follow my Portuguese language course.</p>
transfer of credits
<p>I have not received a transcript of records, yet. However, I got a list from Utrecht University about how the Portuguese grades will probably be transferred to Dutch grades, and this looks lenient.</p>



student life
welcome/orientation programme
<p>Catolica did not have an extensive welcome and orientation programme, aside from a welcome-evening for international students. This was not a problem however, since there were enough possibilities to get to know other international students, for example in class. Furthermore, we arranged an evening to get to know each other by ourselves.</p>
Accommodation
<p>I searched and booked my accommodation myself, without help from the university. I found it by searching on the internet and booked it by having e-mail and telephone contact. The apartment in which I stayed was not very close to the city centre, but only a 15-minute walk from the university. I was very pleased with my apartment, I had a big room with a rooftop terrace and the condition of the apartment was still quite good. Despite this, I am not sure if I would rent it again. It costed a fair amount of money: I paid 460 euros a month. Furthermore, I did not get back my deposit of 200 euros, only because I did not write down my visitors correctly on an obligatory guest list. My room was not rented by a public but private 'organization', and I think that a lot of the financial burdens, conditions and the 'contract' were illegal.</p>
leisure/culture
<p>In my respect, I could not have chosen for a better city to do my Erasmus than Lisbon. There is a lot to do in the city, without it being overcrowded or too big. Furthermore, it is very pretty and close to the beach. There is always something fun to do, it does not matter if you like to go out to a (fado) restaurant, listen to music at a lookout-point, go to a club, museum, festival or have a walk around the city. If you want to take on a new hobby or like outdoor-sports, you can easily do that in Lisbon, too. I enjoy running very much and I ran around the city a lot. There are some nice parks where you can easily have a work-out, besides the bigger national park. I also took some salsa classes in Lisbon. I really recommend learning something new, since it is something extra that you can take home with your experience abroad. A lot of students learned a new language, mostly Portuguese of course.</p>
suggestions/tips
<p>The best tips I can give to students who want to go to Lisbon are the following. First, get a little used to the Portuguese way of living. It is more laid back and relaxed than the Dutch culture. At first, you will probably be irritated, because of the bureaucracy and the pace in which things are handled. But in the end, you will probably enjoy this way of life. Secondly and connected to my first point, is that it is good to be prepared for some setbacks during your stay abroad. For example there can be some problems with your accommodation or study plan, which not only I but a lot of my friends encountered. Take a deep breath and know that usually, everything will work out.</p>



Conclusions
would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain
Yes, I would recommend Universidade Catolica Portuguesa to students who will go to Lisbon. It is one of the best universities in Lisbon and because of that, the difference in level between Lisbon and the Netherlands was, however present, not so big. They have a lot of interesting courses to offer. However, the contact with the international officer from Catolica was very poor. I hope that in the upcoming years this will improve for foreign students.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
The only advice I have to students is: do go abroad! Whether you decide to go to Lisbon or not. Because despite some difficulties that you likely will encounter, it will be one of the best experiences in your life.