



## UU Report form - Erasmus 2019-2020

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| faculty/college      | Education   |
| level                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD |
| name study programme | Education   |

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| destination city & country | Oulu, Finland               |
| name university abroad     | University of Oulu          |
| start date                 | 02 / 09 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| end date                   | 20 / 12 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy) |

### PREPARATION

#### exchange application process

For our application we had to write a motivation and send a lot of official forms with signatures. It was quite some work to assemble all the needed papers and receive the signatures, so make sure you take enough time to prepare. But in the end it wasn't too much effort, I think it is the same amount of effort for any other university.

#### counselling & support at Utrecht University

I sent a lot of emails to the UU with questions and problems to the UU and they always replied very quick and nice. They helped me a lot, thought with me for solutions and told me what to do with all my problems. They knew how to act and I even called one time while I was abroad and it was a very helpful conversation.

#### academic preparation

I can't remember having to do an academic preparation. Some of the required forms had to do with a certain level of achievement and writing, but further than that I did not have to do anything as an academic preparation.

#### language preparation

Before coming to Finland, I had to do an English test to measure my level of competence in English. It took me 45 minutes to complete the test and it turned out that I measure up to the required language level. If I would have to have a lower level, I would have the opportunity in Oulu to take an English course to improve my language skills.

#### finances

I had to fill in forms to receive the erasmus grant and I also applied for the OV-vergoeding. I really recommend to do the latter, because it is 90 euros extra every month. I subletted my room, so that means I don't miss any money while I'm here. The rent of my room is very expensive, though, because I rented it from a private renter.

### STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

#### study programme (content and organisational issues)

The courses in the University of Oulu are very much focused on reflection and self-interpretation. This took some getting used to, but in the end it was a very nice addition to my personal development during this semester abroad. Other than that, I learned a lot about the Nordic and the Finnish education system, about the neoliberal wave that influences global (western) education and about globalization itself. Sometimes my courses overlapped, but if you communicate well with the teachers this never really was a problem. And in return you can choose the courses you find interesting, so it is worth the organizational hassle.



academic quality of education activities

For most of my courses I had to write assignments and evaluations for my final grade. Some of my friends also had to take exams for most of their courses, but that is not the standard for every course available. Coming from the education system in the Netherlands, it was a manageable level at which I had to hand in assignments. Of course it took me time and effort, but nothing extremely intense or hard.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The support coming from the teachers was really good at the university. Whenever you were stressed, ill organized or had something else going on while you were taking the course, you could always talk with your teachers and they would help you. You can talk about altering the deadline or getting extra support and they really cared about the wellbeing of their students.

transfer of credits

In every course you would get a 'pass' or 'no pass' and also a grade. But the grades are just for yourself; they are not automatically transferred into your transcript of records. However, in every course you could talk to the teacher and say you want or need to have a grade for your home university instead of a 'pass'. Then the teachers would make sure your grade would be put on your transcript of records.

**STUDENT LIFE**

welcome & orientation programme

The semester began with a welcoming information lecture for all international students, which was very long but helpful. If you pay attention during this lecture and write all the stuff you still have to organize, it saves you a lot of stress and effort later on in the semester. Our kummi's (mentors) took us on a lot of fun trips and activities during the first week, which helped me making friends very fast and easily. My roommates, however, were studying at a different faculty than I was (I am in education) and their kummi's were sometimes a lot less interactive. So it depends on your mentors.

accommodation

There is a student housing board in Oulu (psoas) and if you sign in as soon as you can, you have a good chance at receiving accommodation from them. I did not manage to receive a room from psoas, so I found a room in a shared apartment with 2 other people in a Facebook group (Oulu flat Sublease point). I wrote a message in the group that I was looking for an apartment and I also reacted to some open messages about subleasing, and in the end I found an apartment. I had to pay 500 euros a month for my room, but my friends who did manage to get a room at psoas paid a lot less. So I would recommend to sign in at psoas as soon as possible.

leisure & culture

The city center of Oulu is fun and has some nice, hidden gems of cafés and shopping centers. The thing I loved to do the most was having a coffee at the Coffee House in the center, going second hand shopping at some amazing and lovely vintage/second hand stores and bouldering at Toppila center. We also walked around the lake a lot near the university campus. There is a bar at the campus, Caio, and we went there a lot in the beginning. But after a while I realized it was far more fun to bike some time to the city center and having a good evening there. Watch out, Finland is expensive so don't be shocked when you have to pay 5 or 6 euros for a beer.

suggestions/tips

My tip would be to bike as much as you can. Go to a second hand store and buy a good working bike, because you can do so much by bike in Finland. Even when it is snowing, accessibility by bike is amazing and you come across nice landscapes. I bought a really good bike for 60 euros and I could go anywhere with it. Further, in the beginning of the semester everyone was mandatory to pay 57 euros for the student union. It comes with student insurance and a lot of benefits for activities and fun moments, but I did not know that this was mandatory for every exchange student. So be prepared and make sure you have 57 euros in your bank account.



## CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes and no. No because the building is not really warm and welcoming (a lot of grey) and because the level of academic skills is lower than I expected. But yes because of the care for students at the university and because of the new set of skills (reflection, ethical thinking etc.) I developed that is not very well offered at university in my home town.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

No.



**UU Report form - Erasmus 2018-2019**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| faculty/college      | Social and Behavioural Sciences   |
| level                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD |
| name study programme | Educational Sciences  |

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| destination city & country | Oulu, Finland               |
| name university abroad     | University of Oulu          |
| start date                 | 03 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| end date                   | 21 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy) |

**PREPARATION**

exchange application process

I really wanted to go to Finland and I looked for what kind of universities Finland had to offer. I really wanted to learn more about the educational system in Finland (or another Scandinavian country if I couldn't go to Finland). The University of Oulu seemed to be the perfect match, because of their Faculty of Education.

For my motivation letter, I wrote about why I wanted to go to Finland and why I really wanted to go to the University of Oulu. I also explained why the courses would be useful for me as an educational scientist.

In OSIRIS you can follow your process easily. You will get notifications when you need to do something in order to make your application for your exchange complete.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

If you have any questions, you can send an email to the International Office. I think people replied to my emails pretty quickly. I never felt like it took them too long to write back a reply.

There are some documents that need to be signed in order to further your process of the exchange application, but this is easy to fix at the office in the Sjoerd Groenman building.

My overall experience with the support I got from Utrecht University was pretty good. I think they have helped me well with some questions I had. I might not have had many questions, but the questions I asked were answered just fine.

academic preparation

Since I would be going abroad during the first semester of my third and final year of my major, I just needed to make sure I would pass all the courses I had during the first semester of my second year. This was important, because if I would be gone during the first semester and I needed to repeat some courses, I would not be able to graduate after my third and final year.

I think preparing for the Finnish school system wasn't that hard. I had some expectations about how they would assess us there, but I don't think I could have prepared myself more academically for the exchange. You should prepare yourself for some cultural differences and different ways of assessments.

language preparation

I knew the Finnish people could speak English pretty well. That was a good thing, because I didn't know any Finnish before. I didn't really prepare myself for speaking in English, because I felt like my English was good enough to survive in Finland.

It might be useful if you follow some courses in English and have some contact with International Students at Utrecht, because you can learn how to switch between languages. Eventually, you might not even realise how easy it is to switch between Dutch and English.



finances

I really had to think about how I could financially manage in Finland, especially because the living costs in the country aren't very cheap. It's good thing I applied for the Erasmus+ program, because it helped me with my living costs there. I knew I would get some money from my family, but I also worked during my summer vacation to save some money for the exchange.

At first, I wasn't sure if I needed to buy some books, so I tried to keep those costs in mind, just like I knew I might have to think about the public transport costs.

In the end, I didn't need to buy books. You could borrow books at the library or find e-books you could read for free.

At first, I wasn't sure how long my semester in Finland would be. I thought I might have to fly back for Christmas and return after Christmas to finish my semester, but that wasn't the case. I think it saved me quite some money, because I only had to book one two-way flight.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I mostly followed courses at the Faculty of Education. Most courses were meant for the International Teacher Education, but nonetheless, they were all pretty interesting if you want to know something more about (Finnish) education in depth. I learnt a lot about the Finnish Educational System and how teachers got a lot of freedom in their teaching because of the Curriculum. I also learnt quite some things about the Nordic Countries, during the course Nordic Education, which is a course I would recommend taking.

Another course I took was Survival Finnish, which teaches you the basics of the Finnish Language. This was a course provided by another faculty that focusses more on learning languages. I could have taken a beginner course after the survival course, but I wasn't too interested in learning more about the language.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of educational activities are quite different. You should prepare yourself for mostly writing papers and being active during lectures and seminars. In most courses you have to write a paper/essay for the course and sometimes they will let you do other activities during the lectures and seminars that will influence your grade as well, like presentations and participating during discussions.

The teachers give you enough freedom to write something you want to focus on as long as it is related to the course.

At one course, we had a test, but this test was basically an essay. You were allowed to work together with your peers and discuss the questions with each other. The only things you needed to do was to make sure you mentioned you collaborated with these other students and everyone had to hand in the paper themselves, even if the answers were exactly the same as your peers.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

If you had any questions, you could email the Faculty of Education or the International Office. They didn't take very long with replying. The information they provided was fine and you knew what you could do with it afterwards.

transfer of credits

I managed to earn 32 ECTS during my semester in Oulu.

**STUDENT LIFE**

welcome & orientation programme

Every exchange student is put into a Kummi group. A Kummi is a local student who will guide you through the first weeks and help you out with any question you have. In your Kummi group are other exchange students, so you will have the opportunity to meet students who are also exchange students of the same faculty.



The first day, we had to go to a lecture of the Housing Organisation PSOAS. They informed us about what we had to do in the beginning of our stay and at the end out of stay. Of course, people who didn't get an apartment of PSOAS didn't have to attend this lecture.

The same day, we also got information of the Faculty of Education. The first two weeks were filled with activities, like a city run and parties. We also had to follow a training about how things work in the library of the University (this is mandatory).

accommodation

Most people who went to study in Oulu got their apartment via PSOAS. This is the cheapest way to get an apartment. So, if you are going to study in Oulu and need an apartment, you should apply for it as soon as the housing application start.

There was a limit of how much you could write in your housing application, but I still stated my preference of where I wanted to live in Oulu. I said I wanted to live in Yliopistokatu and would like to live in a four person apartment. I chose to do this, because Yliopistokatu is the closest to the Univeristy. This way, you don't have to go with the bus every time you have to go the Univeristy. I lived in building 16 and it was a five minute walk to the University.

The room I got in the shared apartment was all right. I lived on the top floor (the 8th) and I had a beautiful view from there. I could see the lake and I even could see the Northern Lights from my room.

leisure & culture

Oulu has a nice city centre with a mall, other stores and lots of cafés and restaurants. It's quite nice to walk around there.

There is also the Nalikari Beach. You could go there by bus. I also heard some students have walked towards the beach, but it probably takes a while to get there by foot.

Student organisations organise a lot of parties and other activities you can attend to. There is also a bar close to the campus. They also organise a lot of parties.

Finland is also known for their saunas. If you live in a building of PSOAS, you can order to use a sauna nearby.

suggestions/tips

Remember, when you go to Finland, you have to be aware of the long and dark days during the winter months. People suggest to take vitamine D pills during the winter months, because of the lack of sunlight.

It might be a shock at first when the sun rises at 10 in the morning and it gets dark again five hours later.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

Definitely. Oulu might not be a very big city, but the University is quite nice. It is a lot smaller than Utrecht, but that makes it somewhat charming to be there. The people at the University are very kind and helpful. I also have learnt a lot about the Finnish Educational System, something I really wanted to know more about. Also, if you love nature, Oulu is the place to be. Even though you live nearby the Univeristy and a few supermarkets, it always feels like you live right in the middle of the forest. You are surrounded by trees and there are also lakes you can go to. I thought Oulu was quite calm and quiet at some times, which was pretty relaxing.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

If you are going to the Faculty of Education, I would advice to apply for a room on the campus. It took like five mintes to get to the University from my appartement there. Also, you don't have to travel back and forth from the campus to the city centre with the bus if you lived nearby the campus. This also convenient, because if you needed to get something from your appartement quickly, you could easily do that between classes.

It might be interesting to know the grading system is different in Finland. Teachers mostly grade assignments with a pass or a fail. They have grades, but you will have to ask your teacher to fill in a grade into their system (1-5 = pass, 0 = fail).



## UU Report form - Erasmus 2017-2018

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| faculty/college            | Social science  |
| level                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD |
| name study programme       | Cultural Anthropology   |
| destination city & country | Oulu, Finland   |
| name university abroad     | Oulun Yliopisto (University of Oulu)  |
| start date                 | 4 / 01 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)  |
| end date                   | 31 / 05 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)   |

### PREPARATION

#### exchange application process

For my application I had to submit a couple of forms. For my home university I had to submit a form for the public transport, a learning agreement. Also some forms for the Erasmus grant application. That's called the grant agreement. You had to fill in information about the time period, where you were going to study. Every step of the Erasmus grant application is on the UU site, which is really clear and detailed. But before getting accepted to study abroad, I had to send a motivation letter, financial plan and my top 3 places where I wanted to study abroad. I did not get accepted at first, so I had to choose between places that were leftover.

#### counselling & support at Utrecht University

For me it was really clear what to do, because it was all written on the UU site. If I needed anything for my application, I just emailed the international office and they helped me. Also, the presentation at the very beginning about studying abroad was very helpful.

#### academic preparation

I didn't do that much academic preparation.

#### language preparation

I tried to improve my English before studying abroad by following a English course. This helped me to get used to English courses.

#### finances

I got 270 euro per month, because of my Erasmus grant. I also received money from my parents every month, in Finland. The trips I did, I paid them out of my own savings.

### STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

#### study programme (content and organisational issues)

I was a exchange student at the Faculty of Humanities. There were not that much English courses so I could not choose. I had to follow every English course, because I needed the ECTS. Therefore, I had only 1 anthropological course unfortunately. But the nice thing is, because of the fact that the Faculty of Humanities is really small (in Oulu) you get to know every international Humanities student and you really become friends. I also followed 2 Finnish courses.

The courses I followed were:

Anthropology of Finland



|  |
|--|
| <p>Baltic sea</p> <p>Beginners Finnish course 1</p> <p>Language in Society</p> <p>Multicultural and indigenous communities</p> <p>Northern Memory and Identity</p> <p>Survival Finnish Course 1</p>  |
| academic quality of education activities   |
| It's a bit the same as the Netherlands, maybe a bit easier. The teachers accept a lot. It's no problem to submit your essay a few days later. I think that is bad for the professionalism.   |
| counselling & support at receiving university abroad   |
| I had my own buddy, he was a local student and helped me if I needed help. Also, you also could go to the international office if you needed help. They were really helpful. Finnish people in general are really helpful. So every professor and teacher always wanted to help with everything. |
| transfer of credits  |
| 20 ECTS  |

| <b>STUDENT LIFE</b>             |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| welcome & orientation programme | There was a big orientation programme. During the first 2 days in Oulu the university organized a orientation fair. Every faculty had their own 'Kummi', which was sort of a buddy. Your Kummi was there to help you and show you the university.  |
| accommodation                   | I lived in a big student flat, full of international students. I had 2 roommates, but on my floor lived 12 people. every floor has a big living /common room and there were a lot of parties. On the ground floor is the clubroom. And in the basement is a little gym, 2 saunas and a laundry room. There are always a lot of parties in the clubroom. There is a pool table in the clubroom. The bedrooms are pretty big and pretty cheap (compared to Utrecht). The accomodation company is called PSOAS, and they keep the apartment really clean and in good condition. |
| leisure & culture               | In your free time ESN organises a lot of parties and trips and activities. Also, you can do a lot of own trips. The citycenter of Oulu is not that big, but the nature is beautiful.   |
| suggestions/tips                |  |

| <b>CONCLUSIONS</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain | Yes. Oulu is a pretty small town, but ESN is a very active organization. They organize a lot of parties and other activities for the exchange students. Also, during the second semester there is Vappu. That is a 2 week festival with a lot of parties and drunk Finnish people. The University is a very good uni. The professors are always there to help you. There are only a few lecture halls, so you normally have your classes in smaller classrooms. The interaction between teachers and students is pretty big. Also, all the university faculties are located in 1 big building. There are places where you can sleep, and places where you can study in complete silence. |



do you have any additional advice or comments?

Make sure you buy a buscard. 45 euro per month for unlimited travels.



**UU Report form - Erasmus 2017-2018**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| faculty/college      | Faculty of Social and Behavioural sciences  |
| level                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD |
| name study programme | Educational Sciences  |

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| destination city & country | Oulu, Finland               |
| name university abroad     | University of Oulu          |
| start date                 | 30 / 08 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| end date                   | 26 / 12 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy) |

**PREPARATION**

exchange application process

I have had a good experience with the process. Although there were a lot of actions to be performed I found the support of as well as my receiving university in Oulu as my sending university from Utrecht amazing. An advise what I want to give is to safe all your steps you are making but also order them in a way so you know when you did what step.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I was very happy with the counselling and support that was given by the university of Utrecht. Quick responses helped a lot keep on performing concerning my application and completion of my time abroad

academic preparation

I was well prepared for going abroad. My English level was good enough for following everything + the level of education abroad was easy to handle

language preparation

I think that my English level was good enough

finances

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I did not find the programm so challanging. Very easily I managed to pass all the exams. Everything was fine and everything was well organised, but I was not so challenged during my stay abroad. Which was on the other side also good, since I got a lot of time to enjoy my staying in Finland.

academic quality of education activities

As I was saying, the level of education was not challanging. Also not that many educational activities were given

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The organisation of Finland was amazing, just as in Utrecht they were really quick with answerin and helping out where they could

transfer of credits



22,5

### STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

welcome and orientation programme were nice, I would have liked to have more contact with international students but in general it was nice

accommodation

I had a private apartment with 4 other exchange students which was amazing. from Italy, Spain, Vietnam and e from The Netherlands it was amazing of what great time we had together. I had this apartment since PSOAS was not able to find me an apartment

leisure & culture

Prepare for a culture shock with the Finish culture. They are really good in avoiding social contact. On the other hand they are very friendly in helping and supporting you and give all the freedom you want.

suggestions/tips

Join as many things as possible, and stay in contact with the people you have met.

### CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommen the University but make sure that this is what you want

do you have any additional advice or comments?

-