



UU Report form - Erasmus 2016-2017

faculty/college	Utrecht University
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Educational Sciences

destination city & country	Mannheim, Germany
name university abroad	Universität Mannheim
start date	05 / 09 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 12 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application went pretty smoothly. It takes some time to get all the signatures but in hindsight this wasn't so bad at all!

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The International Office will answer pretty quickly (via e-mail). Any question will be answered.

academic preparation

I didn't have any educational sciences courses, but courses that were additional to it. At home I took a good look at the courses the university offers. Many are in English, so no worries if your German is not that great.

language preparation

In high school I had five years of German and I had been to Germany many times during my vacations. So my German was good enough to be able to live here for four months. I did not do any language courses. However, I think it could have helped me to get used to the language again, since I forgot some basic words and grammar. But the German students in Mannheim are very welcoming to internationals, so they are willing to speak English to you. And if you try to speak German, they really appreciate it and will help you when needed.

finances

Life in Germany is not that expensive; it is comparable to the Netherlands. With the Erasmus scholarship (on top of the student grant) many costs will be covered. The most expensive part is activities and travelling - if you plan on doing so of course.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I had two courses on linguistics, the others were history, political science and sociology. All were very interesting and the teachers are very good. Their English was outstanding and they were friendly. The only negative thing to say is the register procedure for courses. This was a bit confusing and caused some stress. Still I got admitted to courses I liked. Tip: make sure there are more courses you are interested in, since you can't choose all courses you want (if two courses are part of one module, it is not allowed to take both).

academic quality of education activities

The teachers were very nice and passionate about their field. Classes were always well prepared.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad



The International Office was easy to reach if there were any questions. You can also send e-mails to the head of the department.

transfer of credits

Have not received this yet, but this will be sent automatically by e-mail.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

During the welcome week I met my best friends, so definitely go to all the gatherings and the first party!

accommodation

Studierendenwerk Mannheim is an organization that offers rooms. I applied for a few houses, but it seemed like almost everything was already booked, even though I was pretty on time. For a long time I didn't get a reply so I started looking for other websites. I came across a website of the International Office (Mannheim) where students offered accommodation. There I found a nice shared flat that was only 10 minutes from the university (even though it was in Ludwigshafen, the city next to Mannheim). After two e-mails and a Skype call I got the room. There are also quite many nice rooms to find in the Quadraten (centre of Mannheim). Keep an eye on websites like wggesucht.de.

leisure & culture

There are many many international students in Mannheim! This makes it easy to make friends, because everyone is there alone. Most of them are business students and they come from all over the world. My best friends are business students from Canada, New-Zealand, Austria and Italy. The city of Mannheim itself is not so special, but you will love it because it is so small so you get anywhere within 10 minutes by bike.

Also, many sports classes are offered for free! A good way to bond with friends ;)

suggestions/tips

If you are studying in Mannheim in the first semester, definitely go to the Wurstmarkt (biggest wine festival in the world, located in Bad Dürkheim, 50 minutes by tram) and/or Oktoberfest/Wasen!

The highlight of my study abroad was the road trip to Switzerland. If you go with four or five people, renting a car is the cheapest way to travel and so much fun.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I loved my experience abroad! This was mainly because of the great friends I had; Mannheim is really international student friendly. Although the city itself might not be that exciting, it is a great place to live for four months and make international friends!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Almost all Mannheim students have studied abroad or will do it, so they know what it is like and are very open to interact with you.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2015-2016

faculty/college	Social Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Sociology

destination city & country	Mannheim, Germany
name university abroad	Mannheim University
start date	01 / 09 / 2015 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 12 / 2015 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process	Application went very smoothly through the website of Mannheim University
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I had a few meetings with the Utrecht international office.
academic preparation	I followed courses that suited with my courses in Mannheim
language preparation	Practising German by reading German books
finances	Making an overview on expected spendings

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)	Sociology and International Politics
academic quality of education activities	Good
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	Good
transfer of credits	Not yet recieved

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme	Visum provided an excellent welcome programn. Through them I have met many other internationals that have helped to make my experience in Mannheim highly valuable
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accommodation
Via the StudentNetwork I had a spacious room in a shared apartment.
leisure & culture
With the free sport program of the University, there were many opportunities to participate with both German as international students in numerous sport activities.
suggestions/tips
Student life was excellent. I felt very welcome

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, especially for students who study business for they had excellent teachers. I would mainly recommend it for the great international experience that Mannheim offered. I lived with people from Canada, Bulgaria, China, and Germany. My best friends were Colombian, American and Moroccan. In combination with the courses I followed in international politics, Mannheim has been able to contribute a lot to my international world view.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
For sociology, Mannheim only offers few courses in English. However, I can very much recommend to participate in the Summer School language program to be able to take German classes as well. The German language is, especially for a Dutch student, easy to quickly pick up and it is certainly doable to follow courses in German. The teachers are often flexible so you are often able to write large papers in English even for German classes.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2014-2015

faculty/college	Sociale Wetenschappen
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Algemene Sociale Wetenschappen
destination city & country	Mannheim, Germany
name university abroad	Universität Mannheim
start date	25 / 08 / 2014 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	19 / 12 / 2014 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process for my semester abroad went pretty smooth. In advance, I was "warned" that it would take a lot of paper work and time, but it wasn't too much, or very difficult. When you decide you would like to go abroad, it is just some homework you have to do. You get some forms, sign them, send them to different people (including the receiving university, so you already get in contact with your future contact person), and do it maybe again, and it's all done! When you can read well what you need to do, it is only a bit of homework to take care of.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The counselling and support was very fine. It all started with introductory small lectures about what the options are. When I was struggling to find a university in Germany who had the same academic calendar, I could easily go to a contact person at the international office and they've helped me with making a choice and giving me tips. When they needed to sign a form, it was no problem as well.

academic preparation

The courses I took in Mannheim were on sociology, which is a part of my studies here in Utrecht.

language preparation

For my stay in Germany, I was determined to learn to talk German very well. Since it was a while ago since I went to high school and learned German there, I took a few courses in my free space in my bachelor at the faculty of German language and culture, at the university Utrecht. This helped me a lot to immediately start talking German to everyone I saw, and helped me to learn so much more of the language in Mannheim.

finances

I made sure I checked the amount of Erasmus Grant and worked and saved a bit. When my family knew I would go abroad, I got for my birthday also money from a lot of them. I also made sure I would get money for my temporarily stopped students-OV.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme looked quite like Utrecht, in content and in organisation. The main thing that was hard for me, were the three different portals one had to use to sign up for courses, sign up for exams, check your schedule and check your exam outcomes. But when I asked some fellow students and one time a professor, they could help me find out where to go to.

academic quality of education activities



The academic quality is very equal to the university Utrecht, I think. The focus on statistical background for essays, reports and the main thing what you get taught is very high. A difference was, that at the university of Mannheim, there is no need to buy books (at least not in the courses I took). All the literature were articles and could be found on one of the learning student portals. I found this very convenient, since in Utrecht you sometimes are asked to buy books, but only use 1 or 2 chapters of them.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I had a very good contact with the International Officer at Mannheim. When I needed to have form signed, I could walk in her office and have a chat and get my forms signed. Everything went very smooth.

transfer of credits

The transfer of credits are no problem. Since it is both EU, we use the same type of credits.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome programme was a bit different than I expected. Here in Utrecht you get one whole week every day full of activities. I expected it to be the same in Mannheim (and they had said in the email that the welcome week would last from Monday till Friday), but it was not that much. Only on Thursday there was a small lecture for every incoming international student and on Friday there luckily was a full day programme. It was at that time a bit sad, because I was there on Sunday, but couldn't meet anyone until Thursday.

accommodation

My house was wonderful. I wasn't able to sign up for the university dormitories, because they were very quickly "sold out". So I had to find on a German Kamernet a home. I had two Skype sessions to get to know the roommates and they could decide whether or not I could get the room. The second Skype session was successful for me. I lived with one German girl very near the centre, so I could walk practically everything, the university included. That was wonderful for going out at night, not to have to worry about the latest tram or bus. The biggest dormitory from the university (Ulmenweg) was quite far from the city centre, so I wouldn't recommend living there.

leisure & culture

The culture of Mannheim was a bit different than what I was used to. Utrecht is a high educated city with a lot of students. Mannheim of course also has a lot of students, but it is mainly a big industrial and dock work city, so a lot of blue collar workers live there. In my opinion, that does something with the atmosphere of a city. The city of Mannheim has been bombed in the second world war, and is not really old. The inner city, however, is really amazingly built in a chess board way. All the roads are straight lines and the blocks of houses are named after a chess board (E3, G7 etc.) Just knowing where you are, would help you find your way to wherever you want to go. The university is a fantastic old baroque palace, and is full of interesting people. The mensa, where you can eat as a student a big lunch for 4 euro's, is a great crowded and fun place and you can eat real German dishes every school day. When the sun is out, I can recommend going to the Luisenpark or Herzogenriedpark or Waldpark, to chill, walk around, and even barbecue. Mannheim lies in between the Rhine and the Neckar, so there is a lot of water and park around the waters to go to!

suggestions/tips

I already recommended Mensa, Luisenpark, Herzogenriedpark and Waldpark. There is also no way you can live in Mannheim without going to the beautiful castle of Schwetzingen, with an amazing garden, going to Heidelberg (with its old town, castle up the hill, old monastery ruins and amphitheatre built by the Nazis up the other hill. The Christmas markets in Mannheim (at the water tower) and Heidelberg are not to miss. Mannheim lies in the most warm spot of Germany, so when you are there in summer, you can get crazy :) And let me not forget VISUM (the ESN of Mannheim) and INSIGHT! These organisations organise a lot for international students, events and INSIGHT has small group discussions and games, and are so much fun. You can meet the most diverse people in one time and all very open to friendships!



CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend this university to other people. I was there for sociology, but it is a superb school for business studies. The activities VISUM organizes are fantastic. The city is fun, Heidelberg is fun and there is a lot of great nature to go to in a split second.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I recommend doing sports or music, while you are there. I sang in the University choir and made my stay a lot more diverse! Also, there is a man who organizes hikes around Mannheim, so you can easily meet German and international people, and check out the fantastic nature around your study place.