

**2016 – 2017**

**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	Bochum, Germany
name university abroad	Ruhruniversität Bochum
start date	18 / 04 / 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	In 2015, I started a double bachelor in Dutch and German. This turned out to be a temporary leap into the unknown. In february of 2016, I attended the Masterevening at the UU, where I learned, that the only logical master for Dutch would be either the educative master, or the research master. As soon as I heard about the research master, I decided to quit my studie of the Dutch language. However, the application deadline for the Erasmus semester had passed in december. I then started my application proces, which finished in december of 2016.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I cannot for second complain about the support I received at Utrecht University. The people who were envolved in the fulfillment of all the general and specific requirements connected to my Erasmus programme were all quite skilled and very willing to help me, even though I haven't been compliant to all my deadlines.
academic preparation	As far as the academic preparation is concerned, I can say that the exchange programme was mandatory for students of the German language. There were several meetings to prepare the exchange students, that concerned all the exchange students.
language preparation	Before starting my exchange programme, I had to take a language test. This was simply to determine my skill level for the German language before I would go and live in Germany for over three months. In this test, your language skills are tested on knowledge of expressions, certain dialects, common conversations, difficult words, referencing words (to test your ability to comprehend complex sentences and to extrapolate their meaning).
finances	As before mentioned, the preparation of my semester in Germany had one major flaw: the preparations started a few months later than what would have been ideal. This caused the application for my Erasmus grant to be delayed, etc. In the end it all turned out perfectly, mainly because of the help I received from the beforementioned bureaus and persons.

## STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

### study programme (content and organisational issues)

It took quite some time for me to get used to the organisation at the receiving university. First of all, the scoring system was different. What really took some time to get my head around, was the fact that it was possible to enroll in courses on the day of the first class, whereas in Utrecht you have to enroll several months in advance. I struggled for quite some time before I finally had my study programme filled in to my satisfaction.

In my case, it were ten courses, each had one class every week. Because of the scoring system I had to harvest my points piece by piece.

A strong piece of advice: get to know the scoring system and organisational system of your receiving university well in advance. You really have to be well informed. If it is difficult, however, I found that each and every person I asked my questions to, was very helpful and friendly.

### academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of my courses was very difficult to judge. Because I was enrolled in the university as an exchange student, I was in no way bound to rules as how I was to fill in my programme. The only rules I had to follow, were a minimum of 22.5 ECTS and the fact that the majority of those points had to be acquired from the language you were studying. This left quite some choices open, which has a positive effect on planning your schedule, but not so much at keeping a logical order. This caused me to have courses at all levels of education: first, second and third year of the bachelor. Furthermore, it weren't equally graded courses: some courses offered 2 ECTS, some 4, some 5.5, some 6: you get the point. It was so incredibly different from the courses in Utrecht, that I found it difficult to judge the academic quality to great extents. The overall impression I got, however, was very good!

### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

As I have stated before, every single one of the persons I have asked for help, was very willing to assist or advise me as to what I had to do. This is, I think, one heavy strong point at the Ruhruniversität in Bochum.

### transfer of credits

The transfer of credits has been somewhat chaotic: this was totally due to unforeseen complexity. It simply is uncomparable to the credit transfer in Utrecht. I received my transcript of records, so I can hopefully transfer my credits to my list in Utrecht.

## STUDENT LIFE

### welcome & orientation programme

I did not take part in these programmes, for I didn't have the time. I still had some deadlines to attend to in Utrecht. However, my roommates made very sure that I would be properly introduced to the student life in Bochum.

### accommodation

My accomodation was the absolute top of my stay in Bochum! I'm convinced, that my roommates and I had the very best example of student accommodation in Bochum at our disposal. It was a beautiful apartment for three boys, on the top floor with a south facing balcony, at a few hundred meters from the university. I simply couldn't have wished for more!

### leisure & culture

Bochum isn't the prettiest of cities, but it is a very pleasant place to be. It is very commonly believed, that the Ruhrgebiet is a dreary, bland, grey and drab place to be. It certainly has that side to it, but once you dig a bit deeper, you can see that it is much greener than you think: it has some lovely woods and fields in close proximity, a brilliant lake with many outdoor activities. There is a huge nightlife in Bochum, I sometimes got the

impression that the entire city seemed to only exist because of the (student) nightlife. There have been some very good festivals and other events, all in all I have changed my view and opinion of the Ruhrgebiet drastically.

suggestions/tips

Enjoy!

## CONCLUSIONS

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

The Ruhruniversität in Bochum is a very pleasant university to be enrolled in. It may not be aesthetically pleasing, but the staff and students working there are quite willing to open up and socialise. The academic atmosphere is represented very well. All in all I felt perfectly at home there for the time I was able to stay there.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I was very skeptical from the day I learned I had to go to a German university onwards, right up until the moment I first travelled to Bochum, but after two weeks of getting to know my fellow students, the teachers, the classes, my roommates, the city, the university (etc.) I began to feel very much at home. In the end, I very much resented the fact I had to leave. I guess I can call that a new motto: if you have a somewhat skeptical approach to life, it can only get better. That is not the best thing to end on. Let me put it differently: do you want to go to a foreign university, but you have some doubts? My advice would be: hang on to those doubts, but keep an open mind and be curious! Enjoy the opportunity!

**2014 – 2015**

**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 Studies

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	<p>The exchange application process started very soon: More than a year before the actual date of departure. Immediately after I had decided on which University I wanted to apply for, I had to fill in a learning agreement (which includes the classes you want to take abroad). I found this strange, because the available classes for 2015 weren't even online yet, so I had to pick classes from 2014 to be able to fill out my learning agreement. None of these classes were scheduled for 2015, so I had to change everything later. This procedure could be improved in my opinion.</p> <p>The rest of the application process went pretty smoothly. Even when I almost missed the application deadline, the employees were very helpful, and made sure that I still could apply for the grant.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	<p>All the counseling I received took place in the year prior to my departure. There was one general meeting for all humanities students that would go abroad. The warnings of culture shock and reverse culture shock they gave us sounded a little exaggerated to me at the time, but in hindsight I think it was good that the downsides of studying abroad were mentioned.</p> <p>I also attended an information session for students of the German language. There, I was given more specific information about studying abroad in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.</p> <p>After that, there were no more information meetings, and it was up to you to ask for additional support.</p>
academic preparation	<p>The academic preparation I received during German Studies was sufficient to be able to attend the classes here at the Ruhr-Universität.</p>
language preparation	<p>Seeing as learning the German language is one of the focal points of German studies, I would say I was sufficiently prepared for a stay in Germany. However, even then I did not feel able to actively participate in certain German studies classes, so I enrolled in additional advanced German language courses during my term abroad.</p>
finances	<p>The Erasmus grant alone is not enough to finance a stay abroad. However, I was able to make ends meet with my monthly student grant (StuFi) and savings.</p>

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	<p>The system for registering for classes (VSPL) is not accessible for students who aren't yet officially enrolled at the university. So I had to write all the professors an email to ask if I could attend their classes. Though it all worked out in the end, it was pretty stressful.</p> <p>Other than that amount of classes to choose from was huge in comparison to Utrecht, so I was very satisfied</p>

about this aspect.
academic quality of education activities
The classes were of varying quality. Some courses were very good and interesting, while others were just a chaotic mess without a clear course schedule. Some classes were too overcrowded and you had to get there early in order to have a place to sit. On the whole, it was okay though.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
If you didn't ask for help, no one would ask you how things were going. But if you approached other students and staff members with questions, they generally were very helpful.
transfer of credits
Seeing as I'm still abroad while I am writing this, I do not have anything to share about this yet. I hope it will go smoothly though.

<b>STUDENT LIFE</b>	
welcome & orientation programme	
There was an orientation week at the end of March that I was not able to attend, because I still had classes in Utrecht at the time, which I thought was a shame, because that would have been the ideal window of opportunity to meet new people. I did go to the international welcome, which took place in early April. At this event, various services for international students were presented.	
accommodation	
I was able to obtain a place in one of the university-owned dormitories near the campus. The room was decently sized for Utrecht standards and minimally furnished.	
leisure & culture	
The RUB offers a lot of extracurricular activities for a small fee (sometimes even free of charge): sport courses, cultural workshops and language courses. If you like to be outside, you can relax in the botanical garden which is next to the university. Near the university is also the Kemnader See where lots of people go for running, biking and the sort. Other than that, the Erasmus network organises a lot activities, and if you are the partying type, there are A LOT of parties in and around campus, and also in the Bermuda Dreieck (the bar district). You can also visit a lot of cities (Cologne, Bonn, Münster etc) in Nordrhein-Westfalen by train for free with the semester ticket.	
suggestions/tips	
If it is possible, go early. The orientation week in March is a good way to meet new people. You will also get shown around by German students. Without this orientation, you'll have to find everything out by yourself (as was the case with me) The university's sports course get full quickly. Before registration opens, there is a special appointment for international students where they get the first pick. This appointment was at the end of March. So..another reason to go early.	

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain	

Yes, because it is a really big but compact university where you can take a lot of different subjects. There is plenty of fun stuff to keep you busy in your spare time, and you get to meet a lot of international students (seeing as Bochum is a very international oriented university).

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Apply for a university-owned dormitory on the day that you receive an email about the possibility to do so. The waiting list is long, and the search for a place to live could be an unwanted source of stress.

Although Bochum is close to the Dutch border, there are hardly any Dutch students here. This can be a pro or con, depending on what you prefer.

**Report 2**

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

**PREPARATION**

exchange application process

I think that the application process went relatively well. The documents needed were all important, although it sometimes was a little hard to see how important everything on the forms really is. It was clearly communicated what needed to be done and when.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The support was okay. The help of the International Office was fine, but what irritated is the way in which the grades are transferred. First it was not clear what German grade would become what Dutch grade. Now that is known, but the Utrecht system differs very much from for instance that one in Nijmegen (I would have had 1 full point higher in Nijmegen)

academic preparation

Was pretty good. But my study German in the Netherlands is (of course) orientated on the study in Germany. So we did in most cases know what every type of assessment meant.

language preparation

There were no problems, because the teaching and writing in the Netherlands is in German as well.

finances

It was very clear how much money I would get, so I could really easily make a financial plan for myself.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

study programme (content and organisational issues)

Very nice and diverse study program with a lot of interesting and different courses. I really wish I could have followed more courses there :).

academic quality of education activities

Good. The teachers had their own ways of teaching, but they all managed to inspire and teach me new things.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I had no problems with them. They were allways willing to help and very to the point.
transfer of credits
We will have to find out! But The ECTS will be no problem I think, but the grades are transferred a little strange in my opinion. So I am curious how this all will go exactly.

<b>STUDENT LIFE</b>
welcome & orientation programme
I did not take part in any of this, because I wasn't there (they did offer some things in the summer course-free time, but then I was in the Netherlands)
accommodation
I had a very nice and clean room in a relatively new building with a beautiful view :). And the connection with the university or inner city was good!
leisure & culture
I did do a hockey course, and met new people through it. It was always a pleasure to be with them. Besides that, I learned more about the Ruhrgebiet itself and its history, which was fascination.
suggestions/tips
Do something like a sport or cultural course!

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, it is a university with interesting courses and nice and helpful people (both in the International Office as well as the teaching staff). Besides that, there is a lot to see and learn in the Ruhrgebiet!
do you have any additional advice or comments?
No.
