

## 2022-2023

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

destination city & country	Poitiers, France
how did you travel to your destination?	by car/train
name university abroad	Université de Poitiers
start date	01 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	09 / 01 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Some things were rather tedious, especially since I had to translate some documents that the French wanted but couldn't read in dutch, and many of the documents that had to be uploaded needed to be requested first, so I had some deadline stress. On the other hand, some things were really easy, like getting a room. They just asked me "you want a room?" I said yes and they sent me an offer within a week. Overall I kinda hated applying because it was rather stressful.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I don't specifically recall any details, so I guess that means it was fine. No problems there.
academic preparation	I didn't really do any academic preparation since there weren't any specific requirements for my courses.
language preparation	All my courses in France were in french, just like my courses in Utrecht, so no extra preparation was needed. They do make you take a short test online as an indication of your level.
finances	Financially it was doable, especially with the Earsmus grant. On top of that I had saved a litle money beforehand. Do take into account that life in France is more expensive than in the Netherlands.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	I took two courses in history and two in musicologie. History was very interesting, with teachers that would give class as though they were telling a story. Music theory was not easy, but a lot of fun because you get to work together with your classmates a lot, great for lonely transfer students. I didn't really have any issues with the organisation or content.
academic quality of education activities	Beside just classes, there weren't really any educational activities (at least for me). Classes were good though. they are at the same time same place each week. They generally take two hours (without break), which wasn't

a problem to me. Teachers were generally easygoing, as long as you take your classes seriously. Pay attention when they give homework, you (generally) won't be able to find it online.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Teachers are really willing to help you, and most of the time reply fast if you mail them. Besides that there is the international communications department that will help you with any questions you have as well. When you don't know who to ask, just mail them and they'll tell you who can help you, if not them.
transfer of credits

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
There were a lot of activities to welcome (international) students in the city. I wasn't feeling too social, still needed to settle and the descriptions of activities were very generic I didn't go to any. Throughout the semester there were multiple activities for international students, to some of which I did go.
accommodation
I had a little studio of maybe 20 square meters for €348 per month, provided by the university. It had a bed, desk, chair and two cupboards, a bathroom and a kitchen. Not really luxurious, but absolutely fine for a semester. Getting the key was no fun, we had to wait for about three hours, so get there on time.
leisure & culture
Poitiers is a beautiful city with lots of historical buildings. It's not too big either and the overall ambience is relaxed. It's nice to just go out and take a walk, sniff around in the stores, see the local heritage or go to the museum. There are also a lot of bars, for those who like to go out.
suggestions/tips
Become a member of (at least) one of the student societies! They regularly host parties and fun activities, which are really useful for bonding with your classmates and getting some more language practice in. Also, I noticed people really appreciate you taking that bit of extra effort to fit in.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
definitely, because I just had so much fun and with every issue you come across they will do their best to help you fix it. The city is not too big, beautiful and the public transport is excellent.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
There were a lot of documents I was told to take with me, like a birth certificate, a list of my vaccinations and some other medical documents that I never had to show to anyone, so that was a bit weird. Also, make sure you fix your necessary administration before the weekend, as no one will respond then.

## 2019-2020

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD

name study programme	French culture and literature
destination city & country	Poitiers, France
how did you travel to your destination?	My parents drove me, returned by train
name university abroad	Université de Poitiers
start date	01 / 09 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	31 / 01 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION
exchange application process
This was fairly easy to accomplish. Every step is written down in the hand book. The application form speaks for itself. Just don't miss deadline.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The International Office is easy to contact and they will help you with all your questions. I recommend speaking to someone that went to your university of choice before you. In my case that someone did not really exist so I wasn't able to do that, but I would have liked to be more prepared on how things work over there and where I should have gone first upon arriving in Poitiers.
academic preparation
I did not really give much thought to the academic preparation. In retrospect maybe I should have given it more thought since the academic side of my exchange was the hardest part in my experience.
language preparation
Since I am studying the language of the country I was visiting the language preparation wasn't a real problem for me. I knew I would be able to understand most people. However I would advise to speak the language more in your daily life as you prepare to go abroad.
finances
To me the process of applying for a grant was not very clear. I was not that aware of the different steps and deadlines, I just knew to start early, which I did. And the International Office will clarify things for you on the way. I would advise to make a document map in Word for all your files, it makes things clearer in my opinion

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
It was much harder than I thought. Very disorganised planning. 50% of the courses must be followed in History, in reality it seemed to mean that every course is to be followed in History because it is impossible to find courses that went along with the planning of the two history courses I was obliged to attend. There wasn't a lot of guidance in this department.
academic quality of education activities
The content was of quality. I followed first year and second year courses and in case of some I really had to try my hardest to keep up!
counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I had no information of where to be or where to go. There was no email, no information. And when I finally decided to just go to the university they were angry with me because I had not shown up at the start ceremony of the academic year. In my experience the coordinator was fine doing the administrative side of my stay abroad but she did not have any knowledge of the courses, plaig etc. so she could not really advise on what to do. I was warned that the courses I chose in advance would likely have been changed upon arrival, which was indeed the case. It was very difficult to organise my courses. no one seemed to know what was possible. However a lot of social gatherings were organised so meeting people was not a problem, really easy even!

transfer of credits

I have experienced some difficulty since the contact is harder to maintain when you're not there anymore.

## STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

They offered a wide range of activities! It was really fun and easy to meet the other Erasmus Students even when not living at the campus.

accommodation

I lived in an Airbnb since I preferred not to live at the campus, but I heard from my friends at the campus that they will make sure every international student is given a room. I heard only of one bad experience.

leisure & culture

Really beautiful town with a lot of history around you. A lot of cultural events are organised, great museum. There is a sports ground accessible for students and they offer sports classes especially for students, great way to meet French students apart from the Erasmus ones. The atmosphere is really nice! It is a smaller town which makes it easy to get to know the city very well in a relatively short amount time.

suggestions/tips

Participate in trips organised by ESn, there are really fun and it is a great way to also see the region around Poitiers.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, I would recommend this destination. It is a beautiful city and the people were nice. I think that the problems that I experienced are just an exemple of a cultural clash which you will encounter at every university I imagine. Just be prepared that the organisation will be very different then the one in Utrecht. They expect you to be very proactive, so ask all your questios! The thing I really missed, was an intro week for all the Erasmus students with an explanation on how the university works.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Always ask first how they are doing and then ask your question.