

**2022-2023****Report 1**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Taal en Cultuurstudies

destination city & country	FLORENCE, ITALY
how did you travel to your destination?	TRAIN
name university abroad	UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE
start date	19 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	19 / 02 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

**PREPARATION**

## exchange application process

The exchange application process was quite a long one. The UU is very quick in signing all the requested documents, the UNIFI, in contrast, is very slow with processing all the information. In the end everything worked out fine, you just need to have a lot of patience and trust that everything is in process.

## counselling &amp; support at Utrecht University

The UU was really helpful when I had trouble finding contact with the receiving university and responded within 2 workdays (most of the time same day) when I had questions about the grant or exchange in general.

## academic preparation

I had already most of my credits before I left for Florence, therefore it was an easy preparation. I do believe that even in a second/third year the preparation at UU is more than enough to be able to study at UNIFI.

## language preparation

I did the whole Italian course + minor offered by the UU, and had lived in Italy before. Therefore my Italian was at almost a C1 level, which I do advise to have in order to be able to properly follow the lectures because the level of requested Italian is quite high.

## finances

I saved money while working next to my bachelor and of course the grant. I do advise having some sort of financial buffer because studying abroad costed more money than expected.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

## study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme at UNFI was not in line with my studies at the UU. This is because my studies are quite particular, whereas the programmes in Florence are quite general. Therefore I believe that the programmes offer enough subjects for different types of students.

## academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of education activities is a lot lower than at the UU. It is more of a one-way instruction where you listen and the lecturer just talks for 3-5 hours straight. It is something you have to get used to. Also

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

the whole semester only lasts 8 weeks (of lectures), has a long 'break' and then 3 options for taking exams spread over 2 months. So the workload is very high in the beginning and after you are able to plan how and when you want to study.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counselling and support in Florence is not as good as at the UU. There is a meeting (online) every other week, where you can ask questions etc. Besides that, emails are quite often not answered (by professors specifically) and the erasmus office is quite a mess.

transfer of credits

In Florence they work with the same type of credits, which lead to no problems.

**STUDENT LIFE**

welcome & orientation programme

There is a welcome meeting at the university where they explain the ins and outs of your stay abroad. Besides that there is no introduction and making social contacts or getting to know the university is all up to you. There is no support from UNIFI, so that is something you'll have to consider before going to Florence.

accommodation

Finding accommodation is quite difficult, the housing system is very bad. The university doesn't offer housing, so you have to find one yourself. There are a lot of scams, my advice is to not rent or pay for something without seeing the property, or book a house through a website such as Uniplaces or HousingAnywhere.

leisure & culture

Playing sports in Italy is quite a task because you need to be medically approved. Besides that, Florence is a great international city with lots of different people to meet and so much to see and do, the whole city is like an open air museum.

suggestions/tips

Start looking for housing the second you hear you are accepted at UNIFI, even if you don't have your learning agreement approved etc., you do not want to stress about that. Find a room/house within the Santa Croce area, it is the best location. Join a student association like AEGEE or ESN to find friends. Don't stress too much about the university and the lectures. You will pass because Italy is on a whole different level academic and exam wise. Try out an exam in the first round and you will see:)

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

Yes, I 100% would. Florence is a great city with a lot of opportunities. Because the academic level in Italy is not comparable with the level at the UU, there is a lot of time to enjoy the city. There are tons of international students to make friends with and the city is not that big, therefore everything is closeby and you are so central in Italy that you can visit a lot of the country during your stay abroad.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Enjoy your stay as much as you can and don't be too shy to speak Italian:)

**Report 2**

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

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

name study programme	
destination city & country	Florence, Italy
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	Università degli studi di Firenze
start date	12 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	26 / 01 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	I must say I found it a highly complicated process with a lot of steps and documents to send back and forth to UU and to Florence. I found that the university of Florence sometimes took very long to respond or send me vague email responses.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I was very happy with this. I was provided with clear documents with indications and schedules of the deadlines for submitting certain documents or doing certain steps. Also very quick in responding to emails.
academic preparation	-
language preparation	I was already fluent in Italian so this doesn't really apply to me.
finances	Florence is not very expensive to live in. Renting a room however can get very expensive and I definitely recommend you start looking for one early on and try different websites as the prices may be different.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	I do have a couple critical things to say about this. I found the university of Florence to be quite disorganised. First of all, there are way too many websites for all the different things concerning the university. And these websites are very unpractical to use and it's often not clear where to find the information you're looking for. This causes making a studyplan with no overlapping courses a real challenge. Furthermore the course descriptions often don't tell you much and the material you are required to study for the exams can often be unclear. Something else I found quite strange was that some courses just systematically had too small lecture halls for the amount of students attending the course. Because of this if you didn't arrive 20min in advance you would have to stand or sit on the ground during the lecture. And the problem was not fixed after students complained about it. I did enjoy most of my courses and of course the quality of the course depends mostly on the professor.
academic quality of education activities	Very varying depending on the professor. Some were very good, but I also had a professor was quite bad.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	

The Erasmus officers were very busy always and so it could take some time to get your student number or an answer on your email sometimes.

transfer of credits

This went smoothly.

## STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

At the UNIFI there is an orientation day in which they explain to you the important things that you need to do for your exchange, like filling in forms and sending them to your university to get their signature. They also explain a bit how the university works and which websites there are for what. I appreciated that they organised this day, however I must say in my opinion there are too many different websites for different purposes and they are very hard to use and chaotic.

For the rest I was a bit sad to find out that there was no welcome programme to get to know the university, the city and the UNIFI students. As far as I know at UNIFI they also don't really have student committees, and if they have them they don't really tell you about them. Since there are also only lectures and no workgroups for the classes, I found it a bit difficult to socialise with the Italian students.

On the other hand it is very easy to socialise with other Erasmus students, because there are a lot of Erasmus groups that you can join. I joined AEGEE. They organise a lot of parties and trips which is very fun.

accommodation

I recommend that you start looking for accommodation well ahead of time since this is quite difficult. A lot of students I met struggled a lot with that. I used the website: Cerco Alloggio, but there are many. Calling often works better than writing them.

leisure & culture

The city is amazingly beautiful and has a lot of very nice museums and churches. Just walking around Florence feels like a dream. And there are a ton of cute cafes where you can get a delicious Italian coffee and croissant, often also for as little as 3 euros. At night there are some fun bars and nightclubs where you can go. The Box is a very cheap bar, where a lot of students go. Here you will always meet some nice people to spend the night with. The clubs are a bit expensive unfortunately. The entry fee varies between 10-20 euros.

suggestions/tips

One of my favourite museums was the Bargello. It's one of the places to see the most beautiful statues in my opinion. Some nice cafes: Bottega di Pasticceria and Ditta Artigianale. Library with view of the Duomo to go study: Biblioteca delle Oblate. Nice restaurants & pizzeria: Hosteria Ganino, Pizzeria Da Zero. Icecream: Gelateria La Carraia and Venchi. Beautiful park to visit: Giardino di Boboli. Place to get a slice of pizza after going out (they are open until 06:00): Fo Caccia La Notte. Cheap bar: THE BOX. Club with a bit more space to dance inside: Space Club.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, it is an amazingly beautiful and fun city to live in. The university is a bit challenging to deal with sometimes, but I still think it is very worth it for the overall experience of living in Florence.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Start looking for housing on time, that will save you a lot of money.

**2018-2019**

**Report 1**

permission to publish contact details**	<i>optional; only if you allow students preparing for study abroad to contact you (directly)</i>
	my e-mail address                      yes: <a href="mailto:clmlangenhuisen@gmail.com">clmlangenhuisen@gmail.com</a>
faculty/college	Humanities
level	<b>bachelor's</b> master's                      PhD
name study programme	Italian language & culture

destination city & country	Firenze, Italy
name university abroad	Università degli studi di Firenze
start date	04 / 09 / 2018      (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	24 / 01 / 2019      (dd/mm/yyyy)

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	
	In the application process I had to make sure all the forms were filled in correctly, not only by me but also my sending institution (Universiteit Utrecht). Fortunately, I started this process on time so I didn't have to stress whether the documents would be signed in time. The receiving institution sent me their documents a bit later than expected, but the process was pretty quick and they responded fairly fast so there was no problem there either.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	In my experience there wasn't a lot of counseling. As preparation we had a Erasmus gathering with students that went abroad the year before, which was informative, but according to me not always an accurate depiction of what it's actually like. I do believe that if I'd asked for counseling during my time abroad I would've gotten it.
academic preparation	
	Even though I knew that the academics would be different in Italy, I did not feel prepared when I got there. The teachers talked and talked every week for 2 hours, 3 times a week and there weren't any group discussions or presentations or anything. There weren't any exams until the end of the semester, so your whole grade depended on 1 oral exam. This gave me serious panic attacks which made me unable to finish my courses.
language preparation	

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

Regarding the fact that I studied Italian language for two year before going and I'm fairly fast in learning languages, I did feel like I was prepared enough to follow the courses in Italian. However, sometimes the teachers forgot there were Erasmus students in the room as well and spoke really fast, which sometimes made it hard to follow.

## finances

Finding an affordable decent room in Firenze was pretty hard. I had to pay 450 euros a month for a room really far from the city center. But besides that living in Italy is a bit cheaper or maybe in Firenze quite the same price as in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, it wasn't really easy to get by without financial support of my parents.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

## study programme (content and organisational issues)

Even though I had prepared my Learning Agreement way beforehand, upon arrival it turned out that lots of courses were in another city or department and not available for Erasmus students to attend. It therefore is important to have some back-up courses prepared in case the courses in your Learning Agreement turn out to be impossible to follow.

## academic quality of education activities

The academic quality in Italy was lower than I'm used to in the Netherlands. Nevertheless regarding the fact that everything is given in Italian and they talk pretty fast it sometimes is hard to follow the courses. The lack of having to write essays or give presentations struck me as a shame, because I always find those skills important to develop.

## counselling &amp; support at receiving university abroad

The support at the receiving university was very good, the ladies responsible for Erasmus students were very kind and responded very quickly when I'd write them an email. It was really easy to get things done with them (signatures, documents, etc.).

## transfer of credits

Regarding the fact that I did not manage to successfully get grades in the courses I followed at the Università degli studi di Firenze, I'm not in a position to talk about the transfer of credits. Though I do believe that this would be a quick and honest process.

**STUDENT LIFE**

## welcome &amp; orientation programme

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

The welcoming program was quite short and small. We only had one day where some people responsible for the Erasmus Program would give short speeches (in Italian even though lots of students there did not speak the language yet) and they showed us around in the city centre to show us where our classes would/could be. There was a buddy system implemented with Italian students who were available to help us with our Learning Agreements and that were eager to do fun things together.

**accommodation**

I lived with two working people that were around 40. Even though I did not mind at all, I'd have preferred to live with people my own age, but it was very hard to find decent rooms in the center, let alone with people I actually liked. The people I lived with were very nice Italians, but I didn't see them very often, so I didn't really have the feeling I lived with other people.

**leisure & culture**

The Italian culture is amazing. I got myself a museum card for Uffizi and Palazzo Pitti and often went on days where there weren't many tourists lining up to enter the museums. A "negative" point about Firenze is that the city center is really small so the concentration of tourists is really really high, which made me quite anxious every now and then. However I did enjoy the city and all of its beauty a lot.

**suggestions/tips**

If you're going to Firenze, make sure you find yourself a room a bit closer to the center. I often found myself unable to go out with friends because I lived so far away from the center and didn't want to go all the way home alone late at night.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

I would only recommend this university to people that are ready to work really hard for there grades. Though I hear a lot of stories from Erasmus students that their exams were really easy and teachers didn't really care, in Firenze they are very serious and will not let you off easily!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Just say yes to every invitation and new experiences! It will bring you a lot of new friends and good times you'll cherish forever. It really is a once in a lifetime experience and you should really make the most of it, academic-wise but also in a personal sense.

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze****2017-2018****Report 1**

e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> e.a.ruijgrok@students.uu.nl
faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Language and culture studies

destination city & country	Florence, Italy
name university abroad	Università degli studi di firenze
start date	15 / 09 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 01 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	
	For the application you have to prepare some documents, everything you have to do you can find very clearly on the website. My advice is don't hesitate if you have questions or if you cannot find something, and when you made your choice for a university abroad start the process as fast as possible. Find a way for yourself to organise all the documents.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	The Utrecht University organises a very nice pre departure meeting and they will always help you with your questions if you email them. But you have to ask them yourself, it is a very individual process, and they will not do everything for you, self-dependence is a very big part of studying abroad.
academic preparation	
	I choose the courses abroad within my field of study so academically I was prepared. But keep in mind the university system in Florence is very different from the one in the Netherlands.
language preparation	
	I took Italian 1 & 2 at the Utrecht University and I did a A2 and B1 course at Babel and in Italy. They say you need B1 for your studies in Florence, but I advise you to have B2/C1. Studying in another language is way more difficult than you think, it is not like an everyday conversation. You need to read and write the same things as the Italian students. Of course you learn a lot whilst being there, but I wished I had a better preparation. You can also do a language course at the language institute of the university (CLA).
finances	
	I can advise you to make a financial plan, keep in mind the especially the beginning costs a lot, and it will cost more than you think because you will do a lot of fun stuff. Prices are more or less the same as in The Netherlands. A student room can cost you about 400 euro. And avoid the tourist places.

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>
study programme (content and organisational issues)



**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

At the university you can choose your own courses within the faculty, this can be a little bit tricky with credits and timetable. Every professor organises the course differently. But you only have lectures for about 3 X 2 hours. The courses are 6 or 12 credits. Keep in mind that a lot of courses you choose you have to change.

## academic quality of education activities

The academic quality is bad, so don't expect too much. The system in Florence is very different, it is more about memorizing facts and not about participation. You only have lectures, and the professor can easily be an hour late. It changes very much every course, also how interesting it is. My advice is always to introduce yourself to the professor and ask what you have to do (they have visiting hours). Keep in mind that there is a big hierarchy in the education system and they expect you to be really formal. Also all exams are oral, this is very different and difficult.

## counselling &amp; support at receiving university abroad

They respond very fast to your email but you will never meet a person in real life, so when you have a problem I wouldn't know where to go. The office is not opened that often, keep this in mind.

## transfer of credits

I think it is not a problem to transfer the credits but I didn't get them yet.

**STUDENT LIFE**

## welcome &amp; orientation programme

There was a welcome day was more about practical information. But there are also a lot of organisations in Florence to meet people.

## accommodation

It can be quite difficult to find accommodation because you have to organise it yourself. Do this as soon as possible. It is good to find something on Facebook or other websites. Maybe you can get in contact with a person you know. I stayed some days in an Airbnb to find a room, which was a little stressful.

## leisure &amp; culture

The city is amazing and you will for sure meet a lot of nice people from other countries. There is something to do or see every day. The Italian culture can be a little bit different, especially when it comes to organisation, but you will get really patient. I advise you to see as much as possible of Italy, it is really easy to travel around. Eat as much as you can!

## suggestions/tips

Don't expect too much from the university of Florence. But you will for sure enjoy your time in the city and the country. It is an experience, especially when you study history of art. It is nice to contact a person who has been there before for some tips. Enjoy your time, it goes by so fast.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

The city yes! The university no...

## do you have any additional advice or comments?

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze****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	Italian language and culture

destination city & country	Florence, Italy
name university abroad	Università degli Studi Firenze
start date	19 / 09 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 02 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
It is very important to keep in mind the exact deadlines of the applications. At first it seems quite a lot. Therefore I would recommend asking a fellow student how already went abroad for some advice.	
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
If you honor the deadlines the counselling and support at our University is very supporting. I lost a document and the international office made it possible for me to take care of the documents by way of email. Very helpful.	
academic preparation	
I chose to follow courses at the university of Florence that fell within my specialisation (the one at Utrecht). Though the subjects didn't overlap, I was in possession of some prior knowledge.	
language preparation	
Since I study the Italian language I decided not to follow a language course before departure. During my stay though, I attended a language course that was offered by the university. Since the quality of the lessons is quite good and the course is for free I would recommend this opportunity.	
finances	
Italy is not a very economic country to live, especially as regards rent. Also it is difficult, whether or not impossible to find a job. Therefore I would recommend students to save some money before departure.	

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
From fellow students I understood that it very often happens in Italy that the courses change and that you have to change your language agreement upon arrival. Luckily all the courses I chose were taught.	
academic quality of education activities	
The quality of the education activities, in my view, varies. The role of the professor is even more important than it is at Utrecht. I have had professors who were very capable and provided a structured learning environment. I have also had professors who were less capable which made the courses hard to follow and the structure difficult to understand. However there are some professors that into consideration the difference between natives and Erasmus students. I recommend new students to approach professors at the beginning of the semester so that unnecessary work needn't be done.	

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Although the counselling and support at Florence are satisfactory it is important to know that due the language barrier it is wise to be well prepared and speak some Italian. Also, many offices are only open on mornings, so a thoughtful planning is needed.
transfer of credits
Until today it is quite unclear to me how the transfer of credits between Italy and Utrecht works. Since both countries work with different grading systems, and Utrecht subtracts points due to a supposed difference of academic level, it might be useful to know the exact terms.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The university of Florence does not provide an introduction. However, there are about three Erasmus organisations which do provide activities during the year.
accommodation
Also accommodation is not provided by the university. It is useful to ask for a membership of the facebookpages of the Erasmus societies. There are also some sites similar to kamernet.nl as for example easystanza.it.
leisure & culture
Most of the Erasmus societies provide also leisure and cultural trips. I was a member of Erasmusland with whom I made several lovely trips. By train, flixbus and blablacar you can easily organise some trips yourselves.
suggestions/tips
Something very nice about Italy in general: the second Wednesday of the month all films in the movie theaters are only 2,-. A tip for Florence: every first Sunday of the month the civic museums are for free.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I very much recommend Florence as destination to study abroad. For the city is not only beautiful it has a bright history that never bores. It is not too big and not too small. There are plenty possibilities for (Erasmus) students to enjoy the studentlife, though it is never an obligation. Although I had some difficulties with one course and its professors I do recommend the University of Florence. The level of instruction really depends on the professors, but if you choose wisely, this should not be a problem.
do you have any additional advice or comments?

**Report 2**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Art History
destination city & country	Florence, Italy

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

name university abroad	Università degli studi di Firenze
start date	01 / 03 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	31 / 07 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	
The process for the exchange application will take a lot of time. There are a lot of forms to fill in and it is not always easy to get all the right information from your university abroad. The best way to go if you have problems is if to pass by the erasmus office or contact your university abroad.	
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
Utrecht University is really helpful when it comes to support and counselling. Of course you have to fill in all the forms yourself and make sure you will meet the deadlines, but if you have any problems the international office will give you advice. They also organized a meeting about studying abroad before we left.	
academic preparation	
My academic preparation as bachelor student art history was sufficient.	
language preparation	
The university in Florence required the level B1 for Italian. I followed two courses before going. One at Babel and one with Luca Avanzi. I have to be honest that the level of B1 is not really sufficient to follow the courses and especially to take oral exams. The university in Florence has an excellent language institute (CLA) where you can follow courses during your stay. This is highly recommended. The first course is free, the second one will cost 50 euros. I followed two courses, one B1/B2 language course focussing on art history and one B1 listening and writing course.	
finances	
I ended up spending way more money than I expected on going out/restaurants/drinks. Although life in Florence in general turned out to be cheaper than I expected.	

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
I was a little bit disappointed by the amount of art history courses they had to offer in the second semester. Due to schedule overlap I couldn't follow all the courses that I wanted to. You can choose your courses before you leave but you will change almost everything when you arrive. It turned out to be some courses were already held in the first semester etc.	
academic quality of education activities	
The academic quality is okay. What was new for me was that you have 3 x 2 hours of lecture for every course. Here they have never heard of working groups or participation. So it turned out for me that I was going to 24 hours a week of lecture. This is not really my way of studying and it was sometimes hard to focus or not to lose attention or interest, especially when the groups were big or the professor was hard to follow due to language accents.	
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	
The erasmus office at this university is extremely kind and helpful.	
transfer of credits	

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**STUDENT LIFE**

welcome &amp; orientation programme

There are several Erasmus groups in Florence like, AEG, ESN, ISF and Erasmusland. They will organize loads of activities so you will definitely make a lot of friends. I really liked going on the trips they organize (AEG) and the aperitivo's.

accommodation

I found accommodation via via. I stayed at a top location (Piazza Santa Maria Novella) in a shared apartment with a Finish girl I found on facebook for 450 euros a month.

leisure &amp; culture

The Italian culture is amazing! There are a lot of things to do in Florence especially as art history student. However if you don't have anything with culture whatsoever maybe this is not your city to go.

suggestions/tips

Attend the language courses at CLA. Make sure to attend some Erasmus groups so you will make friends easily and quick. Take advantage of your stay here and visit a lot of museums/cities etc.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

Yes, If you are going for a cultural Erasmus and want to learn Italian I would recommend this university. I think however if you really go for the level of education (especially if you are for instance a law student) there will be better universities. Studying in Florence is however a real pleasure and there are a lot of things to do! I had so much fun!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

No

**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	Art History

**PREPARATION**

exchange application process

The process of application was, looking back, relatively easy. I went to a meeting where everything was explained quite clearly. The webadres on which we could check the information was also very clear. All I needed to do was follow the steps in time. In the beginning you feel like it is a lot of work but all in all I don't think it was more than two days of work.

counselling &amp; support at Utrecht University

**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

Excellent. The meeting was really helpful and when I had a question my e-mails were answered quickly.
academic preparation
Before I started my Erasmus period I had already completed all the required courses in Utrecht and finished my thesis so everything I did abroad was extra and I didn't really worry about the academic level. I knew I was going to do a course on Roman history and archeology so I did an extra course in Utrecht which was mildly relevant but I probably would have done that course anyway.
language preparation
I did the minor Italian Language and Culture in my second year in order to prepare myself, which is a good enough level to start with. Then, between my second year and until I moved here, in order to keep my level, I started with private lessons every week.
finances
Other than the extra amount of money you get from Erasmus and the government for not using public transport and living by yourself, I didn't have a special grant. It is wise to have some savings in your bank account for the first two months of rent and the guarantee but you can definitely live off the grants.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
All I had to do when inscribing myself for courses at the university of Florence was their website. Unfortunately they do not say in which semester a course is given. To my surprise they approved all three of the courses for which I inscribed myself. But when I looked at the program of this semester and found my courses it of course said: already given in the first semester. So I had to change everything. Luckily this was quite easy, but it was still annoying. The classes themselves are two hours long. Most of the teachers come fifteen to late. The class starts with half an hour of reading up the names of all the students. After that the real lesson starts. The teachers are good, both in teaching and in the material. I would have liked a powerpoint presentation as well to understand the subject better but this was not the case. There are a lot of students who attend the classes so it can get quite loud, sometimes I thought I was back in middle school.
academic quality of education activities
I think the quality of the university is average. The staff is good but old-fashioned and Italian. So they come in the classroom, say what they have to say and take off again. Lessons are only activities, only later on in the study program will the students go on excursions or will extra lectures be organised. What surprised me the most is that we did not need to write anything. You are not required to write a paper and the exam is oral. My presentation skills have improved by this I think but for my writing skills I am happy I am studying in Utrecht.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Sufficient. When I had a question they answered me and when I needed something signed I could come back within a week. I did not really have a lot to do with them. Except that when I needed a studentcard they could not type in my birthplace, an engineer had to come and install the place in computer. Which meant I did not have a card for a while.
transfer of credits
I don't know yet. The credits will probably be equal to each other. At both the universities you get 60 credits a year but in Utrecht it is equal to the complete time you spend on a course, here you only get credits for the hours you are in class. The grade will probably be divided by 3 since they work with a system from 0 to 30.

STUDENT LIFE
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**Italy – Università degli Studi di Firenze**

welcome & orientation programme
Upon my arrival in Florence I went to the Erasmus office of the university, as I was told to do in an pdf the was send to me in an email. They gave me my study program, a little book with some information about the university and they told me what to do next to get a student card, where to find the university buildings, etc. Unfortunatly there wasn't something like and orientation day on which you could meet other students.
accommodation
I found a room an apartment via the website easystanza.it. I had the luck that there is a Dutch Institute in the city in which I could sleep for the first two weeks untill I had found a place. Two weeks is enough to find something since in Florence there are not a lot of students who don't live with their parents. So don't regard the first week as a vacation, like I did, because than you will have to pay more than you want. You can find something good for around 300 euros if you don't mind sharing the apartment. If you need something fast you'll have to pay a hundred a month more, and still share. Wifi is more important than you think it is. There are a lot of apartments in the city which do not have Wifi, so keep looking in that case.
leisure & culture
I choose to study at the university of Florence mainly for the city of Florence. Florence is culture. Which also means there are a lot of tourists. The city itself is comparable to Utrecht in numbere of inhabitants, but you will have to dubble that number because of the tourists. This has it's pro's and con's. There's always something open, most people speak at least a bit of english, and the weather is good most of the times.
suggestions/tips
<p>Everything will take more time than you think it will, there are no deadlines in Italy.</p> <p>If you want Italian friends then everything will be up to you.</p> <p>I enrolled in an language course at the CLA (first month is for free) where I got to know some other Erasmus students.</p> <p>Buy a bicycle.</p> <p>Go to the visiting hours of the teachers, even if you don't really have questions. Just ask about some extracurricular activity. It helps if they know your face at the exam.</p> <p>The best icecream is solled by Badiani and the best coffee you can get at Chiaroscuro.</p> <p>I like to visit the smaller cities that surround Florence like Prato and Pistoia.</p>

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would recommend this destination to anyone. Especially if they study art history. The university itself is not worth the trouble, but the people and the city made it worth my times.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
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