



University of Cambridge

2019-2020

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The application process was different in our year than the years before. We did not have to do an interview and the motivation letter we wrote was read, but nothing was decided based on it. The idea was that out of the people who wanted to go, names would be drawn to make the process more fair. In the end, maybe because of Brexit, only four people applied and we were all able to go because there were five places. The application process itself was fine. The uu-website is clear, and so were the information-meetings. You do have to make sure that you get all the documents right, which requires some attention to detail and e-mailing (to get the right signatures). We had to do a language test, but this is nothing to worry about. It was a bit annoying that the exam committee decided to afford only 36 ECTS for a whole year in Cambridge in the middle of the application, when our learning agreements had already been signed. We will get 45 ECTS in the end, because they accepted that they could not change this so last minute, but it is still weird that the UU does not follow Cambridge's advice to award 60 ECTS.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The International Office Rebo was very helpful. They quickly responded to emails and took the effort to hold information sessions.
academic preparation	I did no academic preparation and I do not think it is necessary. The common law system is very different, which is why I decided to take some first-year papers in Cambridge, but even my third year course did not pose any problems in this regard. They give you enough material in Cambridge to learn about the common law system as you go. My college (you are assigned to a college in cambridge) did send me a list of material and questions I had to prepare before I got there, so it might be worth it to start in time if you get something like that (but the other people who went to Cambridge did not have to do anything before they got to Cambridge).
language preparation	Apart from the language test we had to take in Utrecht, I did no language preparation. If you understood the textbooks from the few English courses we have in Utrecht, you'll be fine.
finances	You do not have to pay the tuition fee that 'normal' students at Cambridge pay, but the Utrecht tuition fee. Nevertheless, Cambridge is more expensive than Utrecht. I had to pay a college bill of £1700 per term for my room. There are three terms, but the last term I did not have to pay anything because of Corona. I spend a lot more money on food in Cambridge. Most colleges have a buttery where you can eat dinner for about £5. For me that was usually a cheaper option than actually getting groceries. I went to the buttery about once or twice a week and the other days I made dinner for myself or with friends. There is also the option of eating in Hall. That means getting a three course dinner in a more fancy room than the buttery. My college had these dinners every night except for Saturday and I ate there occasionally when it was someone's birthday or someone was visiting. These cost about £12 (with wine). There are generally just a lot of events in Cambridge. I went to two Law balls (about £100) and you have to pay to get into clubs (£5-8). However, there are also a lot of free events. There are free drinks-events organised by law firms every week and an infinite amount of lectures you can go to. My college also had a fund that you could apply to for reimbursement of costs you made in the context of your studies. When my laptop broke down I got £300 pounds this way, which was very nice. I was still able to apply for the Erasmus grant despite Brexit and got €2448 at the start of the year. My parents agreed to pay the tuition fee and my books, and I used the Erasmus grant, my DUO loan (€550 per



month), my savings and the additional money I get from my parents every month (€375) to pay for everything. It's also relevant to remember that Cambridge is three terms with 6-week breaks in between. During the breaks I could stay in my room, but in some Colleges this is either impossible or you have to pay extra.

(interrupted) STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

welcome & orientation programme

study programme (content and organisational issues)

WELCOME & ORIENTATION PROGRAMME (I'm unable to type in the field above): I was allowed to arrive in my room a few days before the official start of the year. With one of the other Dutch girls I took part in the introduction week for Internationals. This was pretty nice, and we got to see the town a bit, but it is not really necessary to take part in this week. Shortly after we had an Erasmus welcome dinner. This was fine and the international office in Cambridge is run by very nice and helpful people. After this I had an introduction week for freshers (which you kind of are if you go to Cambridge as an Erasmus student) from my own College and this was the most valuable, because the people from your college are the ones you are going to see the most of. There are a lot of college societies and university wide societies. I took up college Netball and lacrosse. This was very low key and we only had one match every weekend that lasted about 30-45 min. I am very glad I joined this because it is an opportunity to meet people, and especially also some non-freshers. My director of studies (someone who keeps track of your academic progress) organised a practice supervision for us on Law of Tort because she was also our supervisor for that paper. This gave us a good idea about what to expect.

STUDY PROGRAMME: Every term is 8 weeks long. I had 3 one-hour lectures every week for Criminal Law, 3 one-hour lectures for Law of Tort and 2 one-hour lecture for Intellectual Property. The lectures are quite similar to the lectures in Utrecht. Every two weeks there is a supervision for the papers (courses are called "papers"). For me this meant that on even weeks I had a supervision for Criminal Law and IP and on uneven weeks I had a supervision for Law of Tort. The supervisions require quite some preparation as you are only in a group of 2/3/4 people and the supervisor. There is a lot of reading. I did not always manage to do everything on the list, but you have to make sure you can really talk about the subject studied that week. Often there will be mandatory reading and further reading. I only did further reading if I needed it for one of my essays. I had to write essays for my papers every other supervision (so 2 per term per paper).

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of the education was great. Most lectures were very clear and given by good lecturers. You get a lecture handout for each lecture and I used this to take my notes in (that way you don't have to type over things that are already in the handout). The academic quality mainly shows in the supervisions. What your supervision looks like really depends on the individual supervisor, but the small group-size means that everyone prepares well and contributes to discussions. I had my Tort supervisions with just one other person and we got tea and cookies. I found this a nice setting to discuss the material. In hindsight I think it is really good that we had to write so many essays, because it becomes easier the more you write them. The Law library in Cambridge is great and I usually sat there for some hours during the day to work. Every college also has its own library, so libraries enough.

transfer of credits

I have not gotten my grades back yet so my credits have not been transferred yet. As I mentioned earlier we get 45 ECTS for the year.



CORONAVIRUS CONSEQUENCES

support guidance of host university

At one point I got daily e-mail updates about the consequences of the coronavirus from the University and my College. The second term had just ended and I had planned to go home for two weeks. I ended up catching an earlier flight than I had planned and have not yet been able to return to Cambridge. The student services from my College are really helpful and nice but the fact remains that there is just a lot of uncertainty for everyone. When I went home I only took my laptop and a few clothes and all my other stuff is still in Cambridge. Because of travel restrictions it is not clear when I can collect these, but the college really tries to offer as much support as possible. Me and the other law students from my college have had a virtual meeting with our tutor (someone looking after you well-being at your college) and he even suggested that if you have a chaotic home environment the college can pay for a hotel (I luckily did not need this). The Law faculty also managed to make a lot of books and materials available online. This was great, because while I had taken most of my books home I had left some in Cambridge.

support guidance of home university

I received some emails from my home university, but I don't think there was a lot of additional support. We got an email telling us to come home if at all possible. Most of the problems the coronavirus caused me had to be solved by Cambridge, so support guidance of my home university was not really needed.

online offer and quality of digital courses

While at home I had two more supervisions for each paper. A great advantage of the small supervision groups was that it was relatively easy to hold them virtually. It's a bit harder to have a virtual discussion because you have to make sure you are not talking at the same time and you cannot just add something while someone is talking. All in all, the supervisions still provided me with useful information for my exams. For IP the lecturer also posted online lectures that we could watch in our own time. Our exams were very different from what we had been preparing for all year. We had open book exams for which you had 24 hours. At first I thought this would be great, but I really hated it. Because it's open book you feel like you don't really have to remember everything because you can look it up, but it just meant that the exam took me a lot longer than a real exam would have. I felt like it would be a waste not to use most of the time I was given and I started checking and reading about things I actually kind of knew already.

suggestions/tips on digital exchange

I think a digital exchange will only be useful if the groups in which you follow lectures/supervisions are not too big. That way you can ask all the questions you have and have the feeling you are talking to actual people, which is different where you can see that many people are taking part in the meeting but you only see some of the faces (well). I really think digital exchanges can never come close to physical education and I really missed the social aspects of Cambridge that made working hard worth it. It's great that technology makes it possible to continue education, but an exchange consists of so much more. I met a lot of new people and really lived in another country and for me those were essential parts of the exchange.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I absolutely loved my time in Cambridge and would definitely recommend it. There are so many interesting people, the colleges are beautiful and the papers are interesting. I really liked the college-system. I worked hard and went to the library almost every weekday with the other Dutch girls. However, there is still enough time to do fun stuff and other activities. At one point I went out twice a week (this is a great way to make friends!). In Cambridge they usually go to the club at 10 pm so you'll be in bed by 2/3 am which is ideal. I only did work in



the week-ends a few times. The hard thing about Cambridge is that you really have to keep up with the work for supervisions, because you cannot come there (entirely) unprepared and it would be impossible to catch up with everything at the end of the year. Because every supervision provides a list of further reading, it's easy to feel like there is always more to do and you've never done enough. The trick is to accept that there are always people who will do more than you, but that that does not mean that you should do more. For me meeting new people and having fun while in Cambridge was really important. Before coming to Cambridge I really worried about the workload and it almost made me not go, but that really should not be a reason not to go. Since most people spend their days in the library, it soon feels normal and not that much of a sacrifice. I liked going with the other Dutch girls, because we would have our (sometimes quite lengthy) lunch-breaks together and catch up. Our year ended really weird because of coronavirus and I'm really sad to miss the May week. That is the week after exams when everyone in Cambridge is extremely relaxed and just doing fun stuff and the May balls are that week. I hope I will be able to go to next years May ball.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

My advice is to make the most of your time in Cambridge by trying a sport/ going to interesting lectures/ have fun movie nights with friends/ go to one of the many student plays/ go out to clubs or parties organised by your college etc. There is so much to do in Cambridge! There were a few times during the year that I was really tired of all the work and worried I was behind, but this is normal and should be put in perspective. It is very very rare for anyone in Cambridge to fail a subject. You are really working to get a good grade and as an Erasmus student very little depends on what grade you receive. If you want to go to Cambridge you have to be prepared to put in hard work, but don't let that stop you from actually enjoying your stay there.



PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The application process was long but transparent. It consists of a couple of stages (i) the application to Utrecht (December) (ii) the application to Cambridge (March/April). For the UU application we were required to submit a transcript, CV, proof of english proficiency and motivation letter. In January you discover whether you are nominated by the UU or not. You subsequently enter the University of Cambridge application process which can take a while. This appears to be more a formality, once you are accepted by the UU you have passed the biggest hurdle. The Cambridge application process is lengthy in the sense that most of us received the definite answer from our Colleges in July. Although it is unlikely you will not be assigned a college after passing the UU selection, it takes a while to get certainty.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The International Office is super helpful, you can email them with all your questions and concerns and they always reply in a timely manner.
academic preparation	I did not prepare anything in particular. Everything will become clear once you start your papers. The benefit of Cambridge is that you follow the same paper for the entire academic year, this allows for a lot of time to really dive into the subject matter and do extra readings if you feel unsure about something. If you feel like you do want to do extra readings some papers upload a reading list onto Moodle (the equivalent of Blackboard) don't be intimidated by the size of the list and don't think you are expected to know everything before the start of term. It is uploaded just for your benefit, if you want to prepare in advance.
language preparation	One useful tip I would want to give is try to accommodate yourself with reading English texts. It does not have to be necessarily law-related but being accustomed to reading in English will be a great benefit at the start of term, it will help you digest the assigned readings with less effort. The reading can be dense and reading in a language you are not used to takes a lot of energy and time.
finances	Cambridge is an expensive destination so it is a good idea to make a financial plan. The Erasmus grant alone is not enough to cover all the additional expenses.

(interrupted) STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
welcome & orientation programme	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	You have the possibility to follow three papers which you can choose from a wide range of both first, second and third year options. Some courses are fully focussed on the common law system but some others, especially some second and third year courses have a European dimension which might feel helpful and a bit closer to home (although I never experienced an difficulty with the understanding the functioning of the common law system). Each paper consists of lectures and supervisions. While the lecture are somewhat similar to what you are used to at the UU, the supervisions are teachings in small groups (usually 2-4 students) in which you discuss the material on a deeper level.
academic quality of education activities	In my opinion, the supervisions really testify of the quality of education in Cambridge. These small group teachings allow you to engage with the material, be critical of certain decisions and reach a deeper



understanding of the subject matter. The professors teaching the supervisions are real experts in their field and I felt it was a unique experience to be able to discuss topics with professionals who have so much expertise within their field.

transfer of credits

The UU awards 45 credits for a year in Cambridge which I do not think does justice to the amount of work that is required from students. Especially taking into account that according to the University of Cambridge a year should equal 60 ECTS.

CORONAVIRUS CONSEQUENCES

support guidance of host university

The communication, especially with regard to what form the exams would take and when they would happen took a lot of time. It was only at the beginning of May that we received a finalised timetable which was not always helpful with regard to revision. However, I recognise this is an unprecedented situation for academic institutions which can explain the delays. We did receive weekly updates on the progress and the university has been transparent.

Unclarity remains with regard to the collection of belongings. Most students left Cambridge thinking they would come back at a later stage leaving their belonging on campus. Very little help and guidance has been provided on how to pick up belongings under this new 14-day quarantine rule.

support guidance of home university

The UU International Office gave a timely indication and clear guidance of what was expected from students

online offer and quality of digital courses

Teaching in Cambridge is divided over three terms, the last term (Easter term) is also known as exam term and is dedicated to revision for the exam. The largest part of the programme had already been covered by the time online teaching started. Although online teaching differs from face to face teaching I think the supervisors dealt well with the restrictions. The revisions supervisions were delivered via Microsoft Teams and the supervisors sent regular emails to check in and were always available to answer questions.

suggestions/tips on digital exchange

Three main things really helped me tackle the online teaching. (i) Make sure to have a set schedule dedicated to teaching, it really helps to have a routine and it also makes sure that you are not always 'switched on' but give yourself time to relax. (ii) Be extra well prepared. The dynamics online are different than in a classroom which in my opinion often resulted in less questions being asked. Make sure you read the material and write down questions you might have to make sure they can all be addressed. (iii) Keep in touch with friends who are following the same course or organise (online) study sessions together. It is a great motivator to know you are not alone and it also makes it more fun.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend a year in Cambridge! I learned a lot about myself and my future ambitions and I feel it helped reach a deeper understanding of some areas of law. This year has been quite a challenge and you need to be willing to put in serious effort but all the hard work is rewarded. Even taking into account the sudden and unfortunate ending of the year I would do it all over again.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



Have fun! Cambridge is a magical place and although you will be required to work hard don't be blindsighted and miss out on all the amazing opportunities it has to offer.

PREPARATION

exchange application process

Very thorough and detailed but appearantly needed,

counselling & support at Utrecht University

They were very friendly and always willing to help.

academic preparation

-

language preparation

An English exam which you had to pass. This existed of a test (reading, listening and writing) and an interview by phone.

finances

England is expensive, however, this was known knoweledge in advance.

(interrupted) STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

welcome & orientation programme

-

study programme (content and organisational issues)

Cambridge was very organised and obviously the content of the subjects was of a high level. The supervisions which consisted of small groups made your time worthwile.

academic quality of education activities

-

transfer of credits

We got very little credit in comparison to the work.

CORONAVIRUS CONSEQUENCES

support guidance of host university

The host university kept in touch and supported us throughout.

support guidance of home university

The home university supported us and kept in touch. The advice was to come home early.

online offer and quality of digital courses

This was of the same level as the face to face education. We had online supervisions and lectures. There was a lot of correspondence by email, whereby supervisors were more than willing to answer any questions.

suggestions/tips on digital exchange

-



**Utrecht
University**

CONCLUSIONS

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

Most certainly, I would advise everyone who is willing to put in the work to study in Cambridge. The environment is lovely. The students, supervisors and professors will make your time spent worth.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

-



PREPARATION
exchange application process
The application process was all right. It consisted of handing in a letter of motivation, a signed letter of your Tutor (a letter of recommendation), a CV, list of your marks and a financial plan. I got invited for an interview and a few hours after the interview I already got I call that I was selected to go to Cambridge.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I went to several talks on studying abroad and visited the REBO International Office multiple times. Their help was always really lovely. They gave good advice on what to focus on and gave an overview of all the deadlines and documents that needed filling in and signing. If you have any questions or insecurities, please do not hesitate to send them an email, phone them, or just head over to the International Office in person! They're very happy to help and offer great advice.
academic preparation
I did no academic preparation and I did not find that I missed out on anything during the exchange itself. The common law system is very different from the civil law system, but I felt that I figured out a lot of things during the year itself. If you would really like to do some preparation you could pick up a general book regarding the common law system in general (e.g. how it works with precedent, overruling cases, how the law is structured), but in all honesty I really feel like this is not a necessity at all.
language preparation
I didn't really do any language preparation before I got here. I did have to sit an English exam specifically designed for (European) students coming to Cambridge, and a few days in advance of the exam I just read some articles on the BBC/the Guardian and listened to some British radio. In hindsight this probably wasn't even needed, as the exam isn't too difficult to pass I'd say. When you've passed, I really wouldn't worry about your English level at all, it is going to be good enough and you'll improve rapidly once you get here!
finances
<p>Near the end of my first year in Utrecht I had quite set my mind on going to Cambridge. I had looked into finances and immediately noticed that it is way more expensive than in Utrecht. This is why I massively upped my student loan (thank you DUO!) to put unspent money on the side to get some "savings" for this year. On the Cambridge website and on websites of the Colleges you can generally find an overview of how much a year of studying at Cambridge will cost. Generally it is about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the normal Utrecht tuition fees (so +- 2050 euros, NOT the Cambridge tuition fees fortunately!)- living expenses in general are estimated to be 9000 pounds for a year.<ul style="list-style-type: none">- This includes accommodation. Prices of accommodation differ quite a bit per room and per college as well. You generally get your room for the full term (there's 3 terms, which include 10 weeks of renting your room), and I paid around 1600 pounds for the term.- Meals at college are about 4.50 pound per meal, but can be a little more expensive. It depends on your college (and your friends probably!) how often you eat at your college. If you prefer cooking yourself, you need to take into account that groceries are generally more expensive in the UK than in the Netherlands as well. Sainsbury's is probably the most accessible shop (it's right in the centre of town) and generally one of the more expensive supermarket chains.- On top of that you of course have your normal living costs which include insurance (you can keep your Dutch insurance fortunately and travel insurance is only a few euros a month. Inform about this at your own insurance company!), buying clothes, mobile phone costs, etc. A return ticket to the Netherlands is usually not that bad if you book well in advance and are flexible. You can get to London Stansted and back for as cheap as 30-40 pounds sometimes! Trains from London Stansted to Cam will cost around 10 pounds.



- Going out is generally a bit more expensive than in the Netherlands I'd say, as drinks are pretty pricey at times. To offset that, sports clubs (especially the ones affiliated with your college) are free and there's a lot of other free societies you can join for other types of leisure!

- Books are about the same price as in Utrecht, but you will need less of them (as you only take 3 modules anyhow!) If you're lucky your college will refund some or all of the books you've bought over the year. I think I spend about 200 pounds in total on books. You can also read books in the Law Library which saves you from buying them (you unfortunately can't take them home with you though), and the store "Heffers" usually offers second hand books at a reduced price as well.

If Brexit doesn't make things horrible, you might still get an Erasmus grant which is about 2000 euros. This greatly helps reduce the costs of this year, making it much more affordable.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme is really intense, but absolutely great fun and I'd undoubtedly recommend it. The terms are each 8 weeks long, after which you get a 6 week holiday (during which you are expected to do work, especially during the one between Lent and Easter term!). You basically only have 2 terms of actual supervisions and lectures, and the third term is literally just the exams you need to focus on, with little to none lectures or supervisions (just some revision supervisions and 'catch-up' lectures). Each paper you take has a supervision every 2 weeks (so 4 per term), with 2-3 lectures a week. The supervisions are an hour long each and the lectures are generally only 50 minutes (they start at five minutes past the hour and stop five minutes to the hour).

You choose three papers out of a big list. I chose Law of Contract, Tort Law and Intellectual Property.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality is excellent! The lectures are provided by leading experts in the field, usually those who have written your textbooks as well. They are very knowledgeable and are usually very good at lecturing. In Utrecht I always wrote all my notes by hand, but I discovered here that it's much easier to take notes on my laptop. For each lecture you get a "lecture handout" which is a global summary of the lecture (they're alike to the PowerPoints you get in Utrecht, but way more elaborate), and it's easy to add your notes to this lecture handout digitally.

The lectures are quite similar to Utrecht, and I feel it is the supervisions which make the system different than in Utrecht. As you probably know, you have fortnightly supervisions with an academic and 1-2 other students. Everyone comes very well prepared, which means that you can easily have more in-depth discussions about the materials, which I found incredibly interesting. At first I found the supervisions incredibly daunting ('What if I come across as not well-read?!'), but after the first few had passed it started to become something I actually looked forward to! It really sparked my interest and it was so nice to be able to exchange thoughts on certain matters which had kept me thinking over the past few days. Don't be afraid to speak your mind and certainly don't be afraid to ask question. Supervisions are specifically designed for you to learn. Try to make the most of it! Don't see it as a test of your knowledge, but as an opportunity to expand your knowledge massively and engage with the materials critically.

The only thing which slightly bothered me is that the lectures and the supervisions didn't align. We sometimes discussed things in supervisions which had not been covered in lectures yet, and other times the lectures covered things we would be discussing in our supervisions of the following term! This sometimes made it harder to stay on track, and in this sense I do prefer Utrecht's system.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad



The counselling and support at the university is excellent! Each term you get a "start of term" meeting with your Director of Studies (aka. DoS, the person who helps you with the "study" part of your life here) and your tutor (the person who focusses on your welfare during your time at Cambridge), and you also get "end of term" meetings with them.

If something is wrong, you can always contact them about anything and they will try to help you as well as they can, or refer you to other counselling services at the University. However, you generally do need to let them know when something is wrong: the meetings are quite short which means they cannot pick up everything which is going on. If you need help, don't be afraid to ask!

transfer of credits

My credits have not yet been transferred (as I have not received my grades yet!) but generally you do not get as many credits as you'd think. You do a lot of hard work over this year, but this is not reflected in the ECTS you get. You can expect to get 12-15 ECTS per paper (and you only take 3 papers during the entire year).

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome programme is organised by your college mostly! There might be a special event going on for international students, but this is not the standard for each and every college. The freshers' week is really lovely, and I would wholeheartedly recommend you to participate in it. It's a great chance to meet new people and prepare yourself for the things to come. You will probably have some "Freshers' Fair" where you can learn about all sorts of societies in Cam. I'd recommend visiting the fair and to sign up to things which look fun to you! Cambridge has a place for even the most niche interests, so I'm sure there will be something which suits you.

There was also an "Erasmus" dinner in my year where all the Erasmus students at Cambridge got to meet up. Even though it was fun, I can't say I really stayed in touch with other Erasmus students (apart from the ones from Utrecht!) as there's not a lot of other events going on where you can continue meeting up with them. I primarily focussed on meeting people in my College and I can say I met such lovely and kind people there!

accommodation

My accommodation was quite lovely! I shared a house on the side of town (about a 15 minute walk from the city centre) with 6 other students from my college, all graduate students. This was slightly unusual as most of the housing is "in college", but it was nice regardless. I applied for one of the bigger rooms. My room was fully furnished, but I did have to bring my own bedding. My room was cleaned once a week (fully dusted, vacuumed, and my bin was emptied) and the kitchen and bathroom, which I shared with my flatmates, were cleaned Monday to Friday

If there's anything wrong with the accommodation (e.g. a lightbulb broke, the window doesn't open or whatsoever) you can just send a ticket to Housekeeping and they will generally come to fix it in the next few days.

leisure & culture

The British culture is undoubtedly different than the Dutch one. I had some British friends before I came here so I was slightly prepared for the British, but there were still many surprises. The British are very indirect (i.e. when they say your essay was a "good try", "interesting", or something along the lines of that, it means that you wrote quite a bad essay). I once also told my British friend that the film we went to see was "quite good" and he literally thought I didn't like it, as "quite good" apparently meant "not very good". It was quite mind-blowing that "quite good" apparently does not mean it was good.

The British also have a great sense of humour and sarcasm, which I absolutely loved. They are usually quite reserved, but once you get to know them well they're just such lovely, kind and amazing people.



Tips for leisure would be to join a society or a sports club. Meet people, do fun stuff, wherever your interest lies! For most sports there's at least one club run by students which you can join. Every college also has general sports clubs for more popular sports (e.g. football, net ball, rowing) where only people of your college can participate in. This is a great way to meet more people in your college. If you want, most of these sports clubs also play games against other colleges, which adds a lovely element of competitiveness. The sports clubs sometimes also organise "socials" which are just social events -usually drinks- to get to know people even better.

suggestions/tips

Don't "just study" in Cambridge. Even though the work can be hard and it can be a lot of work, please make sure you make free time to do things on the side as well. Cambridge has so much more to offer than just the educational part. Societies are a great way to meet new people and build friendships. Find something which interests you and just join, it's very rewarding and it's really one of the things which makes Cambridge so special!

CONCLUSIONS

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

I'd absolutely recommend Cambridge! I had such an incredible amount of fun here and it was so much better than I could ever have imagined. I learned a lot about myself, discovered what I'd like to do the upcoming years, I made amazing friends and I made memories I'll cherish for a long time.

Do however know that you WILL be working hard here, there's no easy way to do Cambridge, really! It's going to be a lot of hard work, and don't expect to have the weekends completely off. You will only take three papers/modules, but it's still a lot of work. You will have time to do fun things on the side, and please do engage in those activities, but don't expect heaps of free time and to do a lot of partying. I feel incredibly grateful for the whole experience and the grand time I had here. It's hard work, but it's very rewarding.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Work hard, but don't forget to have fun! It's easy to lose yourself in work and deadlines, but do fun stuff and meet new people to keep yourself grounded.



PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process for an exchange to the University of Cambridge is a bit different from the application to other exchange locations. You are asked to send in your academic transcript (your list of grades), your resume and a motivation letter, like the other students, but you are also required to send in a letter of recommendation and you will have to do an interview. Once the International Office in Utrecht has accepted your application, the University of Cambridge has to accept it as well. The only thing you need to do for the application to Cambridge is obtain a certificate that proves your level of English is good enough (e.g. a Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency or the equivalent TOEFL iBT score).

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I found the International Office very helpful. They answered all of my questions concerning my application quickly and kept me up to date with application deadlines etc.

academic preparation

Academic preparation is not necessary, since you're not expected to have previous knowledge about the courses you are going to do. Your College might provide you with a reading list of books. Doing this reading is completely optional and you are not expected to have read any of those books before the start of the academic year (but you can read them out of personal interest of course).

language preparation

As I mentioned before, you will have to send in a language certificate. I chose to do the TOEFL iBT test for which I did quite some preparation, since you will have to get a good score in order for the certificate to be sufficient. Preparation material for this test can be found online. Besides, I took the course 'Legal English for Academic Purposes' at the Babel language course centre in Utrecht, for which I received 7,5 ECTS. I found this course quite helpful but not at all necessary.

finances

Cambridge is an expensive exchange location. You will live in one of the beautiful Cambridge Colleges, but the rent is quite high. Besides, the cost of living in the UK is higher than in the Netherlands (groceries, going out etc). I increased my student loan a couple of months before I went to Cambridge so that I had saved enough to pay for my first College Bill. For this exchange location you will receive an Erasmus grant, which is very helpful.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The Cambridge academic year is divided into three terms of eight weeks with breaks of five or six weeks in between those terms. You are able to choose three papers which you will follow for the full academic year, with exams at the end of the third term. I chose to take Law of Tort (first year paper), Company Law (third year) and Intellectual Property (third year). Because the papers I took are taught to students that are in different years of their degree, some of my lectures clashed. However, the University provided me with recordings of these lectures so that I didn't have to miss anything.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of education at the University of Cambridge is really high. Besides lectures that are given by people highly regarded in their fields, you have supervisions with only two or three other students and a supervisor. These supervisions are similar to our seminars ('werkgroepen'), but involve a lot more interaction between you and the supervisor since there are only a couple of other students present. This requires you to have done thorough preparation on the supervision topic and to actively engage in discussions during the supervisions.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Counselling at Cambridge is very comprehensive. You get appointed a Director of Studies who looks after your academic achievements and whom you can ask any questions relating to your degree. Besides, you will get a Tutor who looks after your wellbeing and whom you can go to with any personal issues. You will have a meeting with both these people at the beginning and end of each term.

transfer of credits

For a full academic year at Cambridge, you will get awarded 45 ECTS.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

At the beginning of the year, there is an introduction week during which you get to know all about your College, the University and the other students. This week is called 'Freshers' Week' and is filled with many fun activities. Most Colleges have a 'family system', which means that you get appointed College parents (second year students) whom you can ask all about life in Cambridge, and College siblings (first years). You will meet them in Freshers' Week as well.

accommodation

Accommodation is very different depending on what College you go to. You won't have to arrange your own accommodation; this is done by your College. At my College, the accommodation was great. My room was very big and modern and had an ensuite bathroom. I shared a kitchen with 7 other students who lived on my floor. The rooms and bathrooms were cleaned by the bedders on a weekly basis and the kitchen daily, which was great.

leisure & culture

The University of Cambridge has many societies you can join, which I highly recommend you do. I would suggest to Google them or check them out at the Freshers' Fair in the beginning of the year. They are a great way to get to know people and have a great time during your stay. The most popular activities in Cambridge are rowing and theatre, both of which you can do easily without having previous experience, but there are many more societies or sports you can join.

suggestions/tips

Cambridge is an academically high-demanding place and you are expected to work really hard. Therefore, make sure you find the right balance between working hard and enjoying your exchange year in the UK.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would absolutely recommend this destination for your year abroad if you like to be challenged academically. You will be studying at one of the best Universities in the world, which is both very intense and very exciting. Your exchange will not be like any other exchange, since it involves a lot more work and less sightseeing. However, Cambridge is a beautiful city to live in, the people are absolutely lovely and you will get immersed in the quirky Cambridge culture, which is a great experience.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Applying to Cambridge for my exchange year was the best decision I have ever made and I wouldn't trade this experience for the world.



PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was transparent and efficient. The application in Utrecht consisted of a motivation letter, CV and transcript of records, followed by an interview. The University of Cambridge required additionally a language test. Both universities communicated clearly and were readily available if any help was needed.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I did not contact Utrecht University for any counselling, because I did not encounter any major problems. All documents and other support I received from Utrecht University was helpful and efficient.

academic preparation

The academic level and types of assignment were remarkably different in Cambridge, and there is no real way to prepare for this, you have to get used to it while studying at Cambridge. However, my three years in Utrecht did provide me with the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to do the work requested in Cambridge.

language preparation

Before going to the UK, I needed to do a language test to get the C1 level. This level is sufficient to do the work in Cambridge and to take part in social life in the UK. I did not do any further language preparation, since my level of English was sufficient.

finances

The application for an Erasmus grant was transparent and clear. This grant was useful, and together with own savings and the monthly state loan this year abroad was easily affordable.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme was a lot different than in the Netherlands, with a lot of essays to write. There was a high variety of subjects in the three papers I chose and the papers took a whole year to complete. This enabled us to study the subjects very thoroughly, and to come to new, interesting conclusions. I therefore liked the study programme and the way in which the studies were organised.

academic quality of education activities

As expected, the academic quality in Cambridge was impressive. The essays required us to study the subjects in real depth. Also, the supervisions (with only two to four students and a professor) really raised the academic quality, with possibilities for substantial discussion with the professors.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

There were a lot of support bodies and welfare organisations in Cambridge. There was extensive attention for student welfare, with each student having a tutor to turn to with any personal problems. I did not need to make use of these possibilities, but it was nice to know that there was support if needed.

transfer of credits

The procedure of transfer of credits is not completed yet. My grades have been published and I expect the faculty in Cambridge to send the results to Utrecht's international office. I expect the procedure to be completed reasonably efficiently. The information about the procedure is clear and readily available.

STUDENT LIFE



welcome & orientation programme

When I arrived, all students took part in a fresher's week. This made me feel welcome immediately and enabled to make friends very quickly. It also let us know the important information for a year in Cambridge. The welcome events were fun and well organised.

accommodation

All accommodation was in college, which was very nice. This way, we lived with fellow students and made me feel at home quickly. My room was large enough. Food was served three times a day in hall, which was also very convenient. So all in all, the accommodation provided was of a high level.

leisure & culture

There were lots of fun activities to do in college and in Cambridge in general. There were lots of parties, academic activities and sporting activities. For example, I often went to debates at the Cambridge Union and I played in my college's football team. There was enough room for leisure in addition to the studying. Also, Cambridge is a place with lots of history and culture to experience.

suggestions/tips

I would recommend to anyone going to Cambridge to not get caught up in too much studying due to academic pressure. Cambridge is a unique and interesting place, with lots of fun activities and societies to take part in. It is important to also take enough time for this.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes. Cambridge is a nice place to spend a year abroad. While the academic side of the exchange will help you advance your academic qualities and also your ability to think creatively, the huge number of cultures and interesting people will bring you a lot of nice memories.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

No.



PREPARATION
exchange application process
I took quite a lot of time to write a good letter in order to get an invitation for an interview. I would recommend you to do the same. The interview was much shorter than expected. I prepared for the interview by going through my letter and CV and to imagine not only the standard interview questions that they would ask, but also the questions they would probably ask for after having read my letter of motivation. So for example if you discuss that you read papers of a certain professor from Cambridge then they will very likely ask you to elaborate on that paper or if something is mentioned in your CV but you did not discuss it in your letter then they will ask you for it, i.e. the interview is there to fill in the blank and to tell something new, not merely to reiterate what they already read in your documents.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I always felt supported by Utrecht University. I could always send emails and get an answer within a few working days.
academic preparation
Maybe buy a book to prep for legal english, but that is also not very necessary.
language preparation
I took the TOEFL test and I bought a book to learn more Legal English vocab.
finances
I had two jobs before I started my year abroad so I saved enough money. But do take into account that it is pretty expensive, so you might need to take out a loan.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I took contract law, Intellectual property and company law. Contract law was definitely the most difficult one, as it was a common law paper, meaning you have no or hardly no statutes and you need to learn all the case law by heart. You are not allowed to take case law to the exam and you cannot write the names of cases in your statutes. Hence, the system is very different from Utrecht and it asks you to memorize way more than at your home university.
academic quality of education activities
The quality of both the lectures and supervisions is really high. Compared with the UU you don't have a lot of supervisions (once every two weeks per paper), however you have these supervisions in a very private setting with only 3/2 or 1 fellow student, so you have to prepare it diligently. The lectures are a bit smaller compared with Utrecht but still all students are attending.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
There is a lot of support. You have your DoS which is your academic advisor and your tutor who is there for personal issues if you need it.
transfer of credits
Every full paper gives you 15 credits. 3 papers were definitely doable.



STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

A dinner was organised by Cambridge with all the Erasmus students attending. I befriended some of them that evening, but my close friends were the ones I met in college during the introduction week and during my first term. The introduction week is with the first year students of your college. I think the first few days were a bit of a struggle as I found the freshers a bit young and therefore hard to connect with. But during my college's Fresher's Fair I joined one of the student societies and that's where I met a group of third years which I got really close to.

accommodation

The accommodation was fine. Every college is really different. My college sent me the accommodation options just before moving to Cam and I could choose between value rooms, standard rooms and standard plus rooms. I chose the value room and that was fine.

leisure & culture

I enjoyed rowing a lot. I also enjoyed going to theatre and dance shows. There are so many societies and I would recommend you to make use of it as much as you can.

suggestions/tips

There is also a Dutch society that you can join. I went to formals with them and got to spend Kingsday in London with some of them which I really enjoyed.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, definitely it was an experience of a lifetime.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The last term (exam term) is definitely a tough one. In term 1 and 2 there are many social activities in term 3 everyone is studying quite a lot. You have at least 6 weeks before exams start without classes, plus you have two months off before every terms starts and it is expected of you to work hard as the year comes closer to your exams.



PREPARATION	
exchange application process	<p>During my second year, I never felt the urge to study abroad. Utrecht University is a very good university and, from what I heard, most exchanges abroad were at universities that had less academic quality and included a lot of partying. Of course, like most other students, I like partying, but that never constituted a reason to study abroad for me. In that respect, I differ from most other students. I wanted my exchange to be principally about increasing academic quality and learning to work harder, rather than having a great social life; I already have the latter in Utrecht. During the summer after my second year at Utrecht however, I spoke to a few students who went on an exchange to the University of Cambridge. They were very enthusiastic when they spoke about the academic quality and also told me how much discipline and academic skills they learned. Discipline and self-control have always fascinated me and this was why I decided I wanted to go to Cambridge. To apply to Cambridge, I had to submit my study plan, motivation letter, recommendation letter, financial plan, CV and an academic transcript. Because Cambridge is a very popular destination with an extremely high academic quality, the application process also included an interview. Although my grades were not exceptionally high, I was nevertheless selected because my CV, motivation and interview could compensate for that. Afterwards, I applied for a TOEFL test and a Cambridge CAE test (I applied for two to increase the chances I would meet the expected level), because Cambridge requires a C2 level of all its applicants. A few months later, Cambridge emailed me I was accepted. Not much later, Selwyn College informed me (every student at Cambridge is divided into a college) I was to study at their college for the academic year of 2017-2018.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	<p>I very much liked the fact that the International Office REBO truly seems to care about your exchange and shares the enthusiasm students possess when they apply for prospective universities. They were very clear when communicating important deadlines. In addition, I want to thank my former tutor for his great letter of recommendation, which increased the chances of my acceptance to Cambridge. A point of feedback to Utrecht University is that it wasn't always clear which exact documents were required. Maybe it's possible to create one site on which all the documents that are required are listed and uploaded, including the different names, since it was sometimes very difficult to figure out which document was referred to by which name.</p>
academic preparation	<p>I had already studied law for three years when I went to Cambridge. Nonetheless, the English legal system is very different from the European system. I read a general book about English law to increase my basic knowledge of their system. Further, I did an internship at a large Dutch law firm which increased my abilities to write academically. However, other than that, I didn't do much academic preparation.</p>
language preparation	<p>As mentioned before, I (successfully) applied for both a TOEFL and a Cambridge CAE test. The only language preparation I did was practicing for these tests.</p>
Finances	<p>The Erasmus exchange grant and the maximum amount I borrowed at DUO covered most of my expenses. The residual amount was covered by my savings and my parents. I think that Cambridge is relatively expensive, but it also depends on the number of activities (e.g. May Balls, Varsity Ski Trip, etc (see below)) you are involved in.</p>

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	



I followed three courses in Cambridge for the entire academic year: Tort Law, Company Law and Competition Law. The year is divided into three periods, existing in total of 9 supervision weeks, each supervision week consisting of two weeks. Most courses had 4 lectures and 1 supervision, which consist of two students with a professor, per supervision week. Supervision 1-4 took place in the first term, supervision 5-8 took place in the second term. The last term consisted of the last supervision week, included some revision lectures, and also an extended revision supervision, which was a very efficient way to practice for the exams. The rest of the last term was reserved for purely revising, since exams only took place at the end of May/beginning of June. The workload consisted mostly of reading a lot and writing essays. As just mentioned, exams take place at the end of the academic year. This means that you must memorise everything over the entire year for these final exams. These final exams consist of writing essays and problem questions on topics you have discussed during lectures and supervisions. I have never worked so hard during my life as during these final exams weeks. Some people really suffer during those weeks, but other people, including me, thrived. I felt in superior control of my own life and weaknesses (I didn't check whatsapp for 7 weeks just as a test of discipline), rather than my phone, friends or other people controlling me.

academic quality of education activities

Excellent. I never experienced such a challenging academic level (or anything close to it). Lectures and supervisions were much better than in Utrecht for 2 main reasons. Firstly, the professors who taught the courses were also the same people who wrote (a big part of) the books and further reading of the course. Secondly, supervisions (with just a professor and two other students) weren't focused on getting a basic understanding of the subject (that was already expected), but rather asking deeper questions about the rationale and justification of the system. This in-depth thinking, including arguing in favour or against certain legal rules or concepts, was what distinguishes the Cambridge system most profoundly from the system in Utrecht. I extremely increased my abilities to write academically, think critically, and differ main from side issues. Utrecht University is a very good university, and I would never have performed so well in Cambridge without the things I learned at Utrecht, but Cambridge is just a better university.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Very good. The exchange officers of Cambridge always responded very quickly. In addition, I very much valued the meetings with both a DOS (Director of Studies) and a Tutor at the start and end of every term. The meetings with my DOS always enabled me to get a good grasp of the term that lay ahead, but especially to reflect well on the previous term. Moreover, my DOS was always able to give my superb advice with regard to my study methods. It's a pity this doesn't exist to the same extent in Utrecht. There is also a vast amount of mental and academic support available. Further, in Cambridge, each student is divided into a family, consisting of another student of your year and college, and two people in their second year from the same college, who also provide advice.

transfer of credits

I only received 42.5 ECTS for my entire year at Cambridge. This doesn't matter too much since I already have enough ECTS to complete my bachelor this year. However, this transfer is wrong. I did at least twice as much in Cambridge as I would have done in Utrecht, so I genuinely think 120 ECTS is a much more appropriate amount. This is a feature which is very specific to Cambridge: I imagine there is not a single other university (to which Utrecht offers exchanges) where students have to work so hard.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There were quite a few nice events organised for Erasmus Exchange Students. In addition, my college organised a number of activities specifically for all its international students. Moreover, Cambridge has a freshers' week:



an entire week designed for its new students. This also included a freshers' fair where it was possible to be introduced to all the different student societies and organisations that Cambridge features. The social events made me feel very welcome, and the freshers' fair was great for orientating.

accommodation

I had a large room, a separate private bathroom and a kitchen which I shared with 7 other persons. The kitchen was cleaned every weekday and my own bathroom was cleaned once a week. Moreover, there were (what else could one expect from Cambridge?!) plenty of modern facilities for studying, a separate law library at 5 minutes walking distance and very extensive library opening times. Finally, Selwyn College, like any other college, has a hall, where you can eat 3 times a day. This saved me a lot of time since I never had to cook for supper.

leisure & culture

Cambridge is a place which sometimes seems to be in another world. The combination of century-old beautiful old buildings, a very academic and special environment, and the fact that Cambridge is entirely designed for students (the only thing that students have to do themselves is studying and doing their washes; everything else is taken care of) made me feel like I was in a semi-fantasy world. There are so many societies, debating clubs and organisations that a few interesting lectures or debates take place every day. Moreover, each college has 'formals'. These are smart dinners in suit and gown at your college: I tried to go to as many as possible! The clubs were fine and going with some friends always made it much better. Each college also has its own sport clubs and I think 90% of the students take part in some kind of sporting team.

The English culture is very different. There are two major differences. Firstly, the English people are very polite. They are always kind, helpful, open doors, etc. Secondly, the English people are much more indirect than the Dutch. They don't open up as quickly as other people do and tend to say different things from what they mean (e.g. not bad = very good, and a fair try = very bad). Consequently, it's hard to guess what they truly think most of the time. However, I think it's great to learn from two extremes (the very direct Dutch culture and the much more indirect English culture). Furthermore, the fact that the English people are so different also greatly enhanced my skills to interact with different kinds of people. Such social skills are of paramount importance in an increasingly globalising world.

suggestions/tips

If you go to Cambridge, definitely join a sport team. It's a great way to meet people. I think rowing is probably the best sport to participate in, but it can take up quite a lot of time, restricting you with regard to miscellaneous activities. Secondly, join some societies or organisations. You can always drop out of those things, but again, it's an excellent way to meet people. Another added advantage is that you probably share an interest with people from such organisations, increasing your chances to become good friends.

A more general tip is that I would try out many different things as soon as possible. You can only go to an exchange to Cambridge for an entire year, so you will be there for quite a while. Figure out where your interests lay. Also note that every student gets divided into a college. Your college (where you eat, sport, sleep, etc) provides a big part of your social life.

I went out clubbing a lot in the first term to meet as much people as possible. If you want to make many friends, that is a good way! Good clubs are Lola's, Life and Cindies.

As mentioned before, go to as many formals as possible. You can 'swap' formals with friends from other colleges, meaning you will meet different people and see different colleges. Another very fun thing to do is punting. This means you will go through the river Cam on a boat. Punting looks quite hard, but it's not too difficult to learn and it's quite enjoyable if you have some drinks (e.g. Pimm's) and the sun is shining.

Cambridge is also renowned for the Cambridge Union. This is a debating society which organises many lectures and debates with the most famous people of the world. They invite famous politicians (like the president of Ghana), actors (Ian McKellen from Lord of the Rings) and other, extremely interesting people. I would advise joining the Union and go to as many mind-blowing events as possible. Some events really changed how I think about things, and also influenced certain choices I have made and will make in my life.



Cambridge is (together with Oxford) famous for three other, social things. The Varsity Ski Trip takes place every year, right after the first term. It's an annual ski trip with about 3,000 students (both from Cambridge and Oxford). Again, this is a great way to make friends. The other big social happening each year is the Boat Race. It's after the second term and means that Cambridge and Oxford will race against each other on the River Thames. Finally, after exam term (6 weeks of working very hard), there are May Balls, to celebrate the end of the academic year. Make sure you go to at least one: it's unique and the parties are far superior to most other parties I have ever experienced.

Cambridge also has many excellent restaurants and pubs. Some include: Varsity, Midsummer House, Trinity, Navadhanya, Fitzbillies, The Eagle and The Anchor.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I genuinely believe Cambridge was the best possible choice for me. I learned so much about myself, a different culture, and I love the fact that my discipline so vastly improved. However, as mentioned before, Cambridge differs from many other exchange destinations. If you just want to explore the culture and countryside of another country or just want a (half) year off, I would not advise going to Cambridge. Further, some people seem to handle stress quite badly or don't like working hard. For those, Cambridge is not your fit. However, if you want to (learn to) work very hard or want a better discipline and self-control (and for me, this was the primary reason why I applied to Cambridge), I would urge you to go to Cambridge. Cambridge is a wonderful place, full of extremely fascinating and very kind people, and I also really enjoyed all the traditions (like wearing a gown).

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Decide for yourself why you want to go abroad. What do you want to achieve? Cambridge doesn't allow for much time off and since there are always essay deadlines and supervisions looming around, you won't have too much time for yourself. Of course, you can easily go to London a few times, and I often went to many nice events each week (like formals, interesting debates, nights of pres and clubbing), but certainly don't expect as much spare time as you have in Utrecht.



PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process consisted of an interview about my motivation. After the interview, I had to do the Cambridge Language test. The test is at C1 level, but definitely not very difficult. Some exchange students do an alternative test, like the TOEFL or IELTS. Those tests can help you spread the risk (as you can still do the Cambridge test, even though you fail the IELTS or TOEFL), however it is perfectly fine to just focus on the official Cambridge test.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The help and support at Utrecht was adequate and very helpful. Do not hesitate to ask anything, as most of the time they can help you!

academic preparation

I didn't do any academic preparation, and I would not recommend to do so before you leave to the UK. You do not know what to prepare before you leave, so most preparation is very unhelpful.

language preparation

I did not do any language preparation.

finances

Living in the UK is costly, so keep in mind that it will be an expensive year. My room for example was 1500 pounds per term (approx. 8 weeks). I would say that you need 3000-3500 euros per term. I could afford it with help of my parents and using my own savings.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I studied: Law of Contract, Criminal law and Intellectual Property Law. The level of difficulty of each course (either part of the 1st, 2nd or 3rd year) is the same, so do not worry about that. It can be hard to find out what a subject entails --> I would recommend to listen to the 10 minute lecture about the content of the 'paper' - <https://www.law.cam.ac.uk/coursescurrent-studentsba-tripos/tripos-parts-ib-and-ii-subject-forum>

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality is extremely high. You will have supervisions for each course (most of the time you are in a supervision with 1/2 other student(s)), and lectures. Your supervisor is likely to be one of the top researchers/practitioners in that specific area. From the start, your supervisors expect you to have a clear argument about both descriptive and normative aspects of the material you have studied. Keep in mind that the amount of work is in no way comparable to the amount of work in Utrecht. A 7-day work week is certainly not an exception.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

When you arrive, you will be appointed a DoS (Director of Studies) and a Tutor. The Tutor takes care of all the personal stuff, while your DoS will be your 'academic mentor', who monitors your academic progress etc. In college, a wide variety of support is available (nurses, counsellors etc).

transfer of credits

The academic recognition of the courses taken in Cambridge is highly unsatisfactory. The UU only awards 15 ECTS per course, while the amount of work corresponds with 20+ ECTS. Even the University of Cambridge was surprised by this, and confirmed that the approach of the UU is out of line with other European Universities.



STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Whether there is an international programme in place depends upon which college you are in. You will receive a 'fresher's pack' (fresher means first year) which contains all important information. I did not have a specific international introduction, however, every college has a 'freshers week' - a general introduction week for all the first years / new students.

accommodation

Again, this really depends upon which college you are in. I had a medium ensuite room (so with a bathroom).

leisure & culture

Each college has its own sport clubs you can join. You can join whenever you want, so do not feel pressured to join a sport club at the start of the year. I joined the tennis club in the middle of first term.

suggestions/tips

Focus on the first years in your college, even though you are probably a bit older. The second/third year students already have their friends, so (from experience) it is quite hard to become friends with them.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would, without a doubt, recommend the University of Cambridge. However, it is vital that you keep in mind that it is a considerably different sort of 'Erasmus Exchange'. You have to work really hard, but it is extremely rewarding.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



PREPARATION
exchange application process
The exchange application process takes a lot of time. Start gathering your information soon. Also, if you need signatures on a certain file, start sending it to the right persons soon, as you might need signatures from various persons on one file and one of them might not approve with the information you wrote down. You will then need extra time to do it again.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The International Office is very helpful. If you need any advice you can always contact them.
academic preparation
There is no need to prepare yourself academically. I also recommend you don't, because you will have to work hard enough during the year abroad.
language preparation
Language preparation is a must. The Erasmus Language Assessment is a hard exam. If you want to play safe, make sure you already have an English Language Certificate, for example the TOEFL.
finances
You will need some savings or parents who can give you extra money. Cambridge is as expensive as you choose it to be, but the college bill (which is around 1800 pounds every term) is due at the beginning of term and is not something you can just pay with your student loan. The Erasmus+ Grant is a big help, but it is not enough to satisfy you throughout the whole year!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
As an exchange student, you have to choose three papers. Each paper has 2/3 lectures and 4 supervisions per term (= 2 months). One year entails 3 terms.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality of the University of Cambridge is extremely high. Students are very smart and hard-working. Supervisors will take into account the fact that you are an exchange student, but they will give you feedback on the same level as 'normal students'.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Everyone at the University of Cambridge is aware of the huge pressure on students. If there is anything bothering you, they will always help you and everyone is very sympathetic. There are a lot of 'Mental Health' counselling groups, which may sound a bit overdone, but proves to be very helpful.
transfer of credits
I have always paid with my Dutch debit card. There is no need to get an English debit card. Although, I would recommend to get a Dutch credit card, as some things in the UK can only be paid with a credit card.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The first weekend is only for international students. These days are very nice, because you get to meet people from many different countries (who are in the same difficult linguistic situation as you probably are). After that,



there is a Fresher's week which is also great fun. However, these days can be quite overwhelming. You have to adopt to a new language and get to know many people, which can be very tiring. Don't ask to much of yourself in that period.

accommodation

Your accommodation depends on which college you get in. Generally, you will stay in college, which is very nice because you get to know a lot of people in your hallway.

leisure & culture

There are a lot of nice things you can do in Cambridge. Leisure activities such as the cinema and a swimming pool are a bit far from the city centre, but with a 20 minute walk you will get there anyway.

suggestions/tips

-

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend this university. It offers you the possibility to study in the most motivated and highest academic environment in the world.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Really consider the fact that an exchange year can be very hard, especially in Cambridge. The workload at the University of Cambridge is huge, and you have to be able to cope under a lot of stress. It will definitely not always be a fun year. When you want to apply to Cambridge, I highly recommend you to contact students who have studied at the University of Cambridge, and seek their advice.



PREPARATION
exchange application process
Applying for an exchange to the University of Cambridge is rather special, as the procedure consists of two rounds instead of one. The selection at Utrecht University consists of drafting a motivational letter, sending in a CV and attending an interview. After you have made it through this round, you will have to pass a language assessment and your credentials will be sent to all the Cambridge Colleges, one of which will have to select you before you can actually go abroad. The latter round seems to be a formality rather than a real selection. The UU selection will be the biggest hurdle.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The International Office at Utrecht University provides excellent and timely support. You can mail the office with all the questions you might have, and they are very quick and proactive when it comes to signing required documents.
academic preparation
I did not prepare anything in particular. I just went with the flow.
language preparation
I did not do any specific language preparation, except for a little practice for the mandatory language assessment which I had to pass in order to be able to be admitted to the University of Cambridge.
finances
Cambridge is an expensive place. It is very convenient that (practically all) colleges are able to provide accomodation, so that you do not have to find anything yourself. The downside is that you will be staying in old, high-maintenance buidlings, something which inevitably comes at a rather high price. I prepared well in advance by saving up 'studiefinanciering' and by working at a law firm.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The study programme at the University of Cambridge is very intensive. This is not something you should underestimate. I would recommend asking yourself the question whether you would be able to spend every single day of your time abroad in the library, because that is a commitment you will inevitably have to make. I would estimate the workload to be approximately four times as high as the workload in Utrecht. The interesting part of the so called 'Examination in Law for European Students' (as they call the Erasmus+ exchange programme in Cambridge) is that you get to choose three subjects out of the entire undergraduate 'tripos' programme. This way you can really pick the topics you think are interesting. I would recommend asking students who went abroad in previous years about the papers they took and why they liked them, as such 'on the ground'-knowledge can be really useful. The University of Cambridge is really well organized when it comes to facilitating and supporting exchange students.
academic quality of education activities
Obviously, education at the University of Cambridge is of a very high standard. Your educational activities will consist of attending approximately 2 lectures per day, writing one essay (approximately 1500 words) per week and attending 3 supervisions ('werkgroepen') per two weeks. Lectures are comparable to the lectures you follow at Utrecht University. Supervisions will be a completely new experience. You will take these sessions with approximately three persons and you will have the opportunity to



ask questions and to discuss the readings. In that respect, supervisions are less structured and less based on preparing questions beforehand. Instead, it is paramount that you have done your reading and that you formulate questions, so that you can come across as well-read.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The University of Cambridge is very proactive and helpful when it comes to supporting exchange students. This goes for the university in general, but also for the colleges in specific. You should not hesitate to e-mail the person or department you think suitable to answer the questions you might have, as everyone is very willing to help you out.

transfer of credits

I am currently in the process of transferring my credits. For the three subjects you take at Cambridge, you will be awarded 45 ECTS in total (15 ECTS per paper), provided that the papers you followed do not have any overlap with the courses you have passed at Utrecht. Unfortunately the Exam Committee at Utrecht University is not willing to award more credits. The 15 ECTS you will be awarded per paper do not reflect the workload, as you will do more work than you have ever done before and will ever do at Utrecht University in the future. 30 ECTS per paper would be more suitable. The Exam Committee is however not willing to listen and does not seem to realize how intense a year at the University of Cambridge is in comparison with a year of studying in Utrecht.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The orientation programme differs per college. In my case, my college organised a special freshers' week for international students, before the regular freshers's week for all students in general (including UK students) began. This is a week consisting of fun activities, designed to getting to know each other and getting to know the environment. I really enjoyed both international and regular freshers' week and was able to meet all the first year's students of my college.

accommodation

In principle the colleges provide accommodation. The facilities are generally quite decent, however they can be quite expensive (approximately 1000 pounds per month).

leisure & culture

Cambridge is a very pretty and old city with plenty of things to do. The major hurdle is time, as you will spend most part of your day studying. Sports such as rowing, rugby, tennis and football are really big and I would highly recommend taking up one of these activities, as they are great means of getting to know other people and to clear the mind. Do not hesitate to subscribe to one of these activities, as they are usually (nearly) free and have room for every level of experience.

suggestions/tips

Speak to as many people who took part in the Erasmus+ Exchange programme to Cambridge University as possible and really ask yourself the question whether you are prepared to study harder and more than you have ever done before.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Studying at the University of Cambridge has been an immensely intensive experience which asked a lot of my dedication, discipline and patience. I have worked harder than I have done before. Even though this might



**Utrecht
University**

sound like a very serious and a not very enjoyable experience in itself, I can recommend attending if you value education at the highest level possible and getting the most out of yourself in academic terms. It is, however, a clear sacrifice you will have to make and will come at the cost of a lot of your 'free time'. Keep in mind that this is not a party destination like some Erasmus+ destinations can be and set your priorities right and you will be fine.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was clear. The UU application process for students who want to go to Cambridge is not entirely the same as for other exchange destinations. Besides submitting the usual documents, students are invited to come to Utrecht for an interview (partly in Dutch, partly in English). Once all applicants have been interviewed, they will receive a phone call: you've been admitted (or not...)! The next step is taking a language assessment. One can do the normal language test (some time in March), taken in Utrecht and organised (I believe) by the UU and Cambridge University. With two other applicants however, I decided to take the IELTS (we picked an assessment date in February). This way we had two opportunities: if we failed the IELTS we would still have the 'normal' language test. Downside: the IELTS is quite expensive... After passing the language assessment stage a separate, second application process starts, Cambridge University's own application process. This requires applicants to submit largely the same documents as submitted during the UU application. We had to submit one additional document: a letter of recommendation from a UU teacher/lecturer/tutor etc. So start thinking about whom to ask for that! Usually, Cambridge University simply admits all students that passed the UU application, so don't worry. Finally, (formally) the Faculty of Law will accept you and send your documents around to the colleges. One of the colleges will then pick you as one of their students. About a month before the academic year starts, you will hear which college picked you. You'll finally know where you will eat, sleep, study and... well that's about it.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

In general, the UU supports you well throughout the application process(es). You should however be aware of the fact that, understandably, the applicant is responsible for everything. In my experience the UU does not take you by the hand. As long as you take the initiative, the International Office is very willing to help. Just make sure you know their opening hours. And if you need a signature, ask for it as quickly as possible. You might have to wait for a few days, scans might end up blurry or illegible, etc.

academic preparation

To be honest, I did not do any academic preparation (apart from a bit of googling about the structure of the English legal system, which can hardly be called academic preparation). And I don't see why one should. You will do more than enough academic work in Cambridge.

language preparation

The only language preparation I did, was preparation for the language assessment. Before taking the IELTS you'll gain access to an online tool with preparation exercises, just to freshen up your (perhaps rusty) English.

finances

Part of the UU application process is to make a budget. This makes you aware of what your Cambridge year will cost you, roughly. I am not a big spender, but believe me: the whole experience will cost around 10.000 euros.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

In Cambridge, an ERASMUS students takes 3 papers (whereas 'real' first-years take 4 and second- and third-years even take 5 papers!). Throughout the year you will study these 3 subjects. The academic year is divided into three trimesters (of approximately 8 weeks), three 'terms'. The first two terms (Michaelmas term and Lent term) each consist of 4 supervisions (werkgroepen) for each paper. So you'll have a supervision for each paper every two weeks (so you have about 4-5 days to prepare for every supervision). The final term (Easter term) is exam term in which you might have one last supervision. Apart from that you simply have 8 weeks to prepare



for the exams.

The papers I did were Criminal Law, Company Law and Jurisprudence (philosophy of law/legal theory). Especially the latter paper was a bit of a guess. I love philosophy (of law), but former exchange students said it was a difficult paper and did not recommend taking it. In my view they were wrong. Yes, studying philosophy is completely different from studying a legal subject, and it is difficult at first. You will not be studying case law, you'll be studying (for example) Hart's The Concept of Law and Dworkin's Law's Empire. You'll read books like these completely (or almost completely). But if you know you like legal philosophy (for example, you liked Grondslagen van Recht and Perspectieven op Recht), pick Jurisprudence. It is worth it. Cambridge and Oxford are leading universities in this field, so you'll be lectured (and maybe even supervised) by the leading authors (people like Nigel Simmonds and Matthew Kramer) in the subject.

In general I can recommend all papers I took. But there is such a wide range of papers to choose from, that I'm sure you'll find three that suit your interests.

academic quality of education activities

Usually, the number one reason to study in Cambridge is the quality of education. Education is completely different from Dutch academic education. Supervisions are very personal. It is you, your supervisor and one or two (maybe three) other students in your supervisor's office, at your supervisor's college. Your input in the supervision and the essays you write are taken seriously. Your supervisor will criticise (and hopefully sometimes praise) you as a fellow academic. In Cambridge you are not just a number, you are basically an academic!

Lectures are much more the same as lectures in The Netherlands. You'll have about 6 lectures (of one hour) a week (only in Michaelmas and Lent term). The quality of the lectures is great, as you'll be lectured by leading academics in the field.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Cambridge University's support system is perfect. You will have a tutor (for personal matters) and a Director of Studies (DoS) for academic matters. Your college will have an International Office that's (almost) always open if you need advise or a signature.

The University will provide support if you need it. The good thing is that if you don't need advise, the University simply won't bother you. Their support is at your disposal. For example, I've only seen my tutor twice during my year. You'll have much more contact with your DoS. He/she stays in touch with your supervisors about how you've been doing in supervisions.

transfer of credits

At the time of writing this, I have not yet received my credits. But I should receive 45 ECTS for my year in Cambridge. This is a very poor reflection of the amount of work I did. At the very least, Cambridge students should receive 60 ECTS (exchange students from different universities do in fact receive 60 ECTS). The University of Cambridge concedes that students will receive 60 ECTS on their website. But the UU is very unwilling to change 'the 45 ECTS rule'. Not a reason not to go to Cambridge, but it's a thing to be aware of.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

During the first two weeks students of the JCR (basically the student body every college has) will be running around to help you (for example to find your room on day 1...). In general, the college will treat you as a first-year, a fresher. This is not always great (as you'll be two or three years older than the freshers), but I am



convinced it is the only way to let you settle in the city and the college. The second- and third-years know their way around Cambridge and they have a settled group of friends.

The welcome programme is spread out over the first two weeks (before lectures start). It might be difficult at first, but try to participate in as many activities as possible (picknicks, sports events, city tours, library tours, etc.). I'm definitely not the most outgoing person, but I am sure Cambridge can be a very lonely and depressing place if you don't manage to have a nice group of friends around you. Luckily, exchange students have many social events organised for them, especially in the first few weeks. Apart from your college, there is a network of ERASMUS students that organises a thing or two. And there's always the group of other UU law students (in my year there were 5 others) to hang out with and to discuss the problems you all face.

Before you know it, lectures and supervisions will start and you'll be occupied with the busy Cambridge life. The welcome and orientation programme allows you to get settled first and gain some confidence in your new lifestyle. Use it!

accommodation

Exchange students, unlike other students, do not get to pick their room. I got allocated a lovely room with a view on the Old Court of my college (Corpus Christi College). The room was old, but big enough (bigger than the average Dutch student room). The UU law students all got quite different rooms. Where you'll end up is up to your college. The college can put you in a more modern room (perhaps with your own bathroom), usually outside the college itself (most colleges have an actual, old college, and separate, newer buildings throughout the city. I got lucky to be put in the Old Court, but it had its own downsides (shared, rather old showers, some hot water issues, etc.). You will probably love your room anyway. The colleges make sure that every student has everything he needs (fair, given the amount of money one pays). Your room is usually cleaned fortnightly by the bedder, who also empties your bin, cleans the toilet and the kitchen once every couple of days. My room cost a bit over 1,200 pounds per term.

leisure & culture

To be honest, there is not a great lot to do in Cambridge. For students however, there is a wide range of different societies and sports clubs. You can also do a great variety of sports in your college teams. Usually you become a member of all this during the first two weeks. At that point I was not sure how much free time I would have during the year, so I did not subscribe to a lot. I did become a volunteer for an organisation that provides schools in Cambridge with tutors for their students. I ended up tutoring English as a Second Language to school kids with a non-English background at two schools in Cambridge. Nice and rewarding work, through which I got to know a different side of Cambridge. I saw the relatively poor suburbs (where the schools were) and the kids that go there, kids for whom studying at Cambridge University will probably stay illusory. For me tutoring and the occasional run were enough beside my studies.

Student life really just exists of working hard and drinking a beer in the pub in the evening. When the weather is good students enjoy punting on the river Cam (which I would definitely recommend because it's great fun) and barbecuing/drinking on Jesus Green (a park along the river).

suggestions/tips

Just make sure you try to relax a bit when you can. Your academic life will become tough, and you need to find a group of friends to talk to and have fun with, or do things on your own to clear your mind (music, sports, a simple walk). Because you will be studying full time.

CONCLUSIONS



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

I would recommend this university 10 out of 10. Studying in Cambridge is an experience that a very select group of people in the world will understand. Whether it is going to formal dinners in your gown, having a supervision from a leading academic, partying at your college's bop/slack or enjoying the May Balls in May Week after your exams (in June...), only a Cambridge student will really understand what you mean when you talk about it. You will find out a lot about yourself when 'suffering' under the Cambridge pressure. But I guarantee it'll all be worth it.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The other Dutch students and I all had an amazing time in Cambridge. And as said, I fully recommend going there on ERASMUS. However, we all felt that the information that was given to us about studying in Cambridge did not cover well enough how tough studying in Cambridge is. So my final comment must be this. Cambridge will be stressful. We all spent our days in the library, at least from 9 - 5 and often after dinner as well. If you work efficiently, you might be able to give yourself one day off in the week. But that will be it. A lot will be expected from you. There is a reason why the University does not allow students to have a student job on the side. There is a reason why there is a great offer of mental health support (don't worry, you'll get the e-mails...). All of this shouldn't discourage you, but you have to be aware of it. If you're not mentally up for the challenge, don't go. But you probably are, and then you will have the best year of your life!



PREPARATION

exchange application process

First, you choose the preferred destination. Then, you must collect information on the specific admission process. The University of Cambridge requires you to pass a language assessment and to write a motivation letter, along with a letter of recommendation.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The International Office will help you with several questions you have, or will tell you who to contact for a specific problem or question.

academic preparation

Make sure you are prepared. This means that you know how the academic system works and what papers you want to do.

language preparation

You are required to pass a language test. This test is free of charge, unless you choose to do an IELTS test on your own initiative. Upside is that, in case of failure, you have a second opportunity to pass the 'normal' language assessment.

finances

England is very expensive, and so are the college bills. Make sure you saved enough money to complete the whole academic year. The Erasmus grant helps but is far from sufficient.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

You take three papers. You are free to choose between first year, second year and third year papers. It motivates you to work hard if you choose papers you are really interested in.

academic quality of education activities

Besides the lectures and the supervisions, there is a variety of talks about subject related topics, and even topics that are not related to the course at all. I recommend to go to at least one or two of them, since they could be a useful supplement to your academic experience at Cambridge.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

You have a Director of Studies (DoS), who sets you up with your supervisors. Furthermore, you also have a tutor, who looks after your personal wellbeing, and you have two 'college parents', who are second or third year students.

transfer of credits

Although you are in Cambridge for the full academic year, you only get 45 ECTS.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

After your arrival, students from your college will make sure you get to know Cambridge. There are several activities in the first week, called Fresher's week. The Fresher's Fair is a useful market where all college and university societies introduce themselves.



accommodation

You will be living on site. Each college will provide accommodation for its students. Keep in mind that you will be charged for the rent of your room (could be around 800 pounds a month).

leisure & culture

There are a lot of activities hosted by colleges, but there are non-university activities as well. Stand up comedy, dance, theatre, politics, speaking clubs, Cambridge has it all! Ask your college parents or others from the Induction committee to introduce you to some clubs.

suggestions/tips

I recommend you to participate in a college or university sport. You will meet new people of different colleges and have a lot of fun.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, I would definitely recommend it to everyone who is prepared to work hard at one of the best universities in the world, and who wants to make most of his or her time in Cambridge. You will spend a lot of time reading in several libraries, but this is a once in a lifetime experience. I am grateful I had the opportunity to study one full academic year at the University of Cambridge.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

-