

## **University College Dublin**

**2023-2024**

<b>PREPARATION</b>
exchange application process
The exchange application process requires a lot of documents that need to be signed. I suggest to start as soon as possible with signing and handing in those documents. Otherwise it can be quite stressful in the last weeks before the exchange starts.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Support from the Utrecht University was excellent, if I had any problems they would respond quickly and help you out.
academic preparation
For my exchange program it didn't really need academic preparation.
language preparation
I went to an English speaking country, so no language preparation necessary.
finances
Make sure you save up quite some money, Ireland is expensive.

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The courses on offer were mostly the same as back here. So this was quite unfortunate. I would have liked to follow some courses which are not available here in the Netherlands.
academic quality of education activities
Good quality of education, nice campus and good teachers with good knowledge.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Same as in Utrecht, they are really helpful and respond quickly.
transfer of credits
As they work with the same level system as in the Netherlands, there are no problems regarding transfer of credits.

<b>STUDENT LIFE</b>
welcome & orientation programme
There were a lot of orientation activities organised. I would highly suggest to participate in all of them. Because some friends early on and you will find other small groups with who you can become friends with. In that way you can get a big friend group
accommodation



I was staying on campus. Although it is really expensive it is highly recommended. I felt like most of the things where happening on campus (like parties). It is really convinient to live on campus.

leisure & culture

Dublin is a really nice city, with lots of nice pubs and clubs to go out to. Furthermore it is really cool city with a lot of nice old buildings, and fun things to do.

suggestions/tips

Don't let money play a role in your stay. Try to do as much as possible: make trips through Ireland, go out, explore as much of Ireland of possible.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

I would highly recommend it, I had the time of my life there.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

**2019 - 2020**

<b>PREPARATION</b>
exchange application process
The application for the University does not take any time, it goes very fast and it is easy.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The university helped me understand which courses were required for my bachelor (e.g. how many level 3 courses did I still need to complete). The student advisor helped me with this.
academic preparation
All the courses I have taken abroad were electives, thus not economic related. Hence, I needed to make sure that they were no prerequisites. I advise to check the prerequisites of the courses that you intend to follow.
language preparation
As the language of instruction is in english, I did not encounter any difficulties language wise.
finances
Prior to my exchange I have worked for six months to save up. Moreover, I had the chance to receive a scholarship from my home country (namely France) as well as the Erasmus scholarship. These shcolarships enabled me to go on exchange to Dublin as accomodations in the city are very expensive.

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I followed courses within the social sciences faculty. This gave me the freedom to take courses in various subjects. As I am studying economics and business economics in Utrecht, I was glad of being able to follow courses that differ from my usual courses.
academic quality of education activities
The quality of the courses were good.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
transfer of credits

<b>STUDENT LIFE</b>
welcome & orientation programme
The welcome and orientation programme are really well organised. The first week is full of activities which enable you to get to know other people but more importantly to get to know the different societies. In my first week I have met a lot of people thanks to these events.
accommodation
Accomodation is really expensive. I was paying around 800 euros a month, and unless you book a room in a guest family, it will be hard to find cheaper.
leisure & culture



The universities possesses many different sport societies which enabled me to try many different sports. Moreover, the campus has a gym which is free for students. Regarding culture, the city has many museums, as well as restaurants and bars. Around the city there is a nice natural reserve which is accessible.

suggestions/tips

I strongly recommend to visit the Wicklow mountains which are close to Dublin city. Furthermore, there are villages on the coast like Howth or Bray which are easy to access and very nice to visit.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

I had a lot of fun during my exchange thanks to people I have met but also due to the courses I chose which were very interesting. I recommend this destination as I believe the Irish are very welcoming and whereby you feel directly at home. Moreover, the university possesses a wide variety of courses to pick from.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

## 2018-2019

## PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process for the exchange consists of a number of steps to be completed before a given deadline. While none of these tasks are particularly complex individually, they require students to invest a lot of time and consideration into their decision process. By requiring students to complete things such as a financial plan, the application process ensures that students contemplate the realities of going abroad. Further, having to draft documents such as a motivation letter ensures that the process is kept selective, in terms of the students' motivation for the exchange.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

During the application process and over the whole course of the preparation period for the exchange University staff is readily available for students, to provide further information, support in decision making or even to provide help with more technical difficulties you may face. Personally, the study advisor was of much help to me in choosing the modules which would best fit into my study plan. In doing so, he was especially helpful in bringing my attention to factors like overlap with past modules/courses, the level of difficulty, and the work load.

academic preparation

I believe that the level of preparation will vary strongly depending on the course selection. Generally, I would recommend choosing a selection of modules of different levels. The study advisors of UU were very helpful at this stage. By reading the course descriptions provided by UCD, they will be able to give you sound advice on the matter. However, I personally found that the academic skills taught to me at UU during the first and second year of my Bachelor were about at the same level as those of UCD students.

language preparation

As English is my first language and I spent my exchange period in Dublin, Ireland, I was not faced with the need for any such preparation. If you have difficulties with the English language however, I would recommend to work on this before your departure as it will make your studies abroad much simpler.

finances

During the preparation process, finances are a reoccurring topic. Firstly, by being required to submit a financial plan for the application students are put in a position where they must deepen the level of research into their preferred destinations. This helps filter out options which may not be viable to one specifically and also helps

prepare for what one will face when going abroad, such as particularly high accommodation or transport costs. The university also provides a lot of information of grants and subsidies available to specific students, and how one may go about applying for such resources, such as the Erasmus+ Grant.

## STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

### study programme (content and organisational issues)

At UCD you will have the opportunity to select any modules provided by the faculty in which you are enrolled in. Personally, this meant that I was able to select any courses within the School of Social Sciences. While some restrictions applied, as my module selection had to fit within my general study programme at UU, this allowed me to choose courses which I would not otherwise have had the chance to take. Further, this also allowed me to experience new teaching and learning methods, for example, by being required to do a lot more essay based work. While this may be slightly challenging in the beginning, I think it will have a strongly positive influence on my academic career as a whole.

### academic quality of education activities

The academic staff of UCD with which I interacted were all very professional. They were all readily available for individual support and all fascinated with their field, making the learning experience both more pleasant and simple. Further, all staff had very good language skills and followed the course syllabus and manual closely, allowing students to proceed through the material in a structured and clear way.

### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

While I personally did not face any special needs for counselling or support during my time at UCD, I know that the university does provide such services. Teams such as the international office, which will play a very big part in your orientation and welcome week, will gladly answer any questions and point you in the direction of help needed. They remain readily available throughout the semester, despite the University have so many students.

### transfer of credits

The credit transfer process only occurs much later on, most likely after you have returned home. If you have had your study plan and any consequent changes to it approved or at least reviewed by the UU study advisors as well as passed all courses while abroad, this process should go smoothly. The provision of your UCD transcript to the UU Board of Examiners will however be your own responsibility and is a step which should not be forgotten about once returning home.

## STUDENT LIFE

### welcome & orientation programme

The University College Dublin provides many activities at the beginning of the semester, during what is known as the "introduction week". These include events like campus and city tours, welcome parties, or trips to Ikea. Attendance to as many of these events as possible is thoroughly recommended, as they will allow you to simultaneously become involved in the local culture and lifestyle and also meet many potential new friends.

### accommodation

Finding accommodation in Dublin is very difficult, even in relation to Utrecht. Campus Accommodation is available but very limited and very expensive. The selection process for the on-campus residences is random, meaning that slots are allocated not on a first-come, first-served basis but rather through a lucky draw. Independent accommodation in or near the city center may then be preferred, but this will be very challenging to find. I thoroughly recommend choosing an independent student accommodation in the city, such as LIV Student or Ardcairn, though these are also quite costly. There is also a trade-off between living in the city center, the social heart of Dublin, and on campus, which is located about 40 minutes by bus south of the center.

### leisure & culture

Irish people are renowned for being some of the most friendly and welcoming people in Europe. In my opinion, this may well be the case. The Irish culture, while certainly different and very interesting, is not so far apart from the Dutch that one is likely to undergo a serious culture shock. Not only are there innumerable activities to



do in Dublin itself, there are also a lot of very accessible day trips to other parts of the country for Dublin. Further, being a capital city, Dublin is known for its great nightlife.

#### suggestions/tips

There are really a lot of fascinating traditions and stories in Irish culture and the city of Dublin itself has many different parts to explore. I would therefore recommend to really be proactive in visiting the country and meeting people, especially since your time abroad is likely to go by a lot faster than you can imagine. I would also recommend to constantly keep time management of your studies in mind, as doing so will effectively allow you to have a more productive and pleasant time while abroad

## CONCLUSIONS

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

I would strongly recommend this university and destination to others. Firstly, coming from Utrecht and specifically USE, I was pleasantly surprised by the atmosphere of living in a very large city and attending a relatively huge university for the first time, the thought of which I initially found rather daunting. Particularly, I believe, based on the experiences of many of the friends which I made in Dublin, that this city and university are an ideal choice for anyone hoping to also improve their language skills while abroad.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

More generally, I would encourage anyone to apply for an exchange period as I strongly believe that this experience will be beneficial to anybody's academic career but also be one of the most fun and exciting parts of it. I personally had an amazing experience in Dublin and would recommend UCD to anyone who finds themselves attracted to what I have described above.

## 2017-2018

### preparation

exchange/placement application process

There were no problems during the application process, no extra's (like TOEFL) was required.

counselling/support at home university

Utrecht University keeps you up to date about the application process.

academic preparation

No need

language preparation

In Ireland they have a different accent, however during the lectures and tutorials they are very clear and put all information on blackboard.

finances

Ireland is very expensive, be prepared!

### study/placement abroad period

study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)

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academic quality of education/placement activities
There is a big difference in the quality of education between University College Dublin, the courses are 'easier', but do not underestimate them, you still need to study hard!
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
You have a lot of support from the UCD, they help you in emergency, also when you did not find a room/home.
transfer of credits
They send a letter to your home university with your credits, the university will give the letter to you after the transfer is completed.
<b>student life</b>
welcome/orientation programme
There was an orientation programme, unfortunately it was in the summer, so I was not able to go.
accommodation
It is very difficult to find a home/room. They have a campus, but it is expensive AND a little chance to get a room.
leisure/culture
Different culture, they drink a lot of beer in pubs (almost everyday). They are very helpful, kind and friendly.
suggestions/tips
It is a very expensive city, do not pay anything before seeing the room (facebook etc), you do not have to pay for books, be careful on the bike.
<b>conclusions</b>
would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain
Definitely, it was an amazing experience. There are difficulties in the beginning, you need to adapt to the culture, new people but beautiful nature, amazing city, amazing university and it was absolutely worth it!
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Be prepared on the extra costs, very very very expensive city! Good luck!