



ERASMUS+ STUDIES UU Report 2015-2016

Every student receiving an Erasmus+ STUDIES grant has to submit a UU report as well. Writing the UU report is one of the university's conditions to receive and keep the grant. Only after submitting this report your Erasmus+ grant will be awarded definitively.

Your report will be made available (anonymously) to UU students preparing an exchange or research period abroad. Not all of them are Dutch-speaking, therefore we prefer to receive reports **written in English**.

Please use Tab to go to the next (text) box.

family name	
first name	
student number	
e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> @
faculty/college	Faculty of Geosciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Bsc Earth Sciences

destination city & country	Lisbon, Portugal
name university abroad	Universidade de Lisboa
start date	07 / 09 / 2015 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	06 / 02 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The application went quite smooth and fast. The receiving university and the international office at Utrecht were both very fast in answering e-mails and sending signed documents. I thought I had to organise a lot, but the international office of geosciences were all the time very clear about what they need and very helpful. Also, the website already provides a lot of information. The courses at the receiving university were very well described on their website in the course catalogue, which made it easier to make up the study plan.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	As how I said above, the counselling and support was very good. The staff at the international office of geosciences is friendly and very accurate in answering their e-mails. If you have a question you do not have to hesitate to ask them. They send quickly the documents they have to sign too.
academic preparation	I went at the start of my 3 rd year of my bachelor, so I had a solid background of Earth Sciences and the required Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics. I choose courses for which not too much previous knowledge was required, or courses from which I already knew the previous knowledge. So, I did not do any further academic preparation then being a third year student already.



language preparation

This was the biggest struggle for me. The teaching language of all courses at Faculdade de Ciências is Portuguese, and I did not know any Portuguese during the time of application. I did have some Spanish knowledge, of which I think it helped me a lot. I tried to teach some Portuguese at home before the semester started, but what you learn in one month at home, you learn it in one day at the language course in the country where they speak that certain language. I took an intensive language course, 4 hours per day, 5 days per week, 4 weeks long at the start of the semester. It was in the same time as my normal courses. After this course finished, I took a semester course which was 2 times 2 hours per week. At the start it was hard to understand the lectures, but during the semester I understood more and more. Also, all the professors helped me where needed in English.

finances

The normal "prestatiebeurs", public transport reward and Erasmus grant were enough to live from in Lisbon (around 600 euros per month). I needed some savings to take trips and do touristic stuff.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I followed courses at Geology at Faculdade de Ciências: Biologia (1st year), Cartografia e teledeccão (2nd year), Petrologia Sedimentar (2nd year) and Processos Costeiros (3rd year). The problem I had in the start is that I did not know that the intensive language course of 4 weeks was going to overlap the schedule of my normal courses so much, I was not warned about this before. Finally I changed just one course, missed a few practicals from the other courses, but I could easily catch up working at home. For the rest everything went well. Teachers were very willing to help me with the things I missed.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of Geology at Universidade de Lisboa is different then from Earth Sciences from Utrecht. At Geology in Lisboa I learned to be very more precise in details then in Utrecht. Students and professors are taking the study a lot more serious then in Utrecht. When there is a voluntary fieldtrip for a day, almost all students go, even though it is not mandatory, which I would not expect to see happening in Utrecht, or The Netherlands in general. Every student is trying to be as serious and precise as how the professor want you to be. But, in all my courses, I found it that the students lack a bit a academic attitude. They rarely question why things are as they are, and also, professors do not stimulate an academic attitude too much. They are the ones who explain the things and the students take this knowledge over, without questions. So in being precise and knowing more details it was more difficult, but to understand everything was quite easy.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counselling and support from the receiving university was quite good at Faculdade de Ciências. They organised informational meetings in the start and talked English. They were very accurate in answering e-mails and signing documents. The faculty where I did the language course (Faculdade de Letras), was on the other hand not allways so friendly. They do answers their e-mails well, but their office is opened very few hours, and they are not so willing to help you. Also, they promised the students from the language course to send the certifications to your house, but they did not. You had to send an e-mail to them to ask about when you would get your certificate, and they told you to pick it up, or proposed to send it to your place (which they already did before).

transfer of credits



STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The faculty organised some activities with Portuguese students and other Erasmus students which was nice. There are also several Erasmus organisations, such as ELL or ESN, that organise a lot of activities.
accommodation
I started late with looking for it, and had some troubles finding something. But in the end I found something, not exactly as how I wanted, but at least a place to sleep, not too far from the university.
leisure & culture
In my leisure I traveled a lot around Portugal. It is an amazing country to explore nature, geology and good waves (to surf). Besides Lisbon is a nice city with a lot of things to do.
suggestions/tips
Start on time with looking for a place, go some time in advance before the start of your semester to Lisbon. Also when you have to pay a deposit for your room, it is better to sign a contract. Try to find Erasmus facebook groups of the year you are going and you find students with the same problems as you.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would recommend people from Geology to go to this University. They learn you to be a lot more precise, which they do not always do in Utrecht, and they have different courses than in Utrecht that might be interesting for you. Also most professors at Geology are willing to help you in English. Students from other studies I do not know if I should recommend this University, since I heard different stories from other Erasmus students about unfriendly and arrogant teachers, not helpful staff, faculties where they do not like Erasmus students (since it requires more organisation). As I said before, at Faculdade de Letras they were not so friendly and helpful.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Be prepared for a more relaxed environment. It is nice, but very different from the Netherlands, and sometimes not so useful. For example, a friend of mine got picked up by an ambulance and brought to the first aid, where he had to wait afterwards 18 hours before they helped him. Things go slower and are less organised, you can easily wait 20-30 minutes in the line of the supermarket, teachers do not show up for lectures sometimes, without letting you know. But I do think Lisbon is one of the most awesome places to do your Erasmus. It is full with Erasmus students, you are close to the coast, the weather is pleasant, living there is not too expensive and it has great nightlife.

Save this UU report for your own records and send it as attachment to verslagen.internationaloffice@uu.nl within 30 days after finishing your study abroad period and in ANY case before the final deadline!