



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	Universiteit Utrecht
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Sociale Geografie & Planologie

destination city & country	Newcastle upon Tyne, Engeland
name university abroad	Newcastle University
start date	28 / 09 / 2015 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	29 / 01 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)

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

PREPARATION
exchange application process
<p>You have to fill in some paperwork and go to the international office to get signatures, make a financial plan etc. but if you really want to go abroad this shouldn't stop you. The instructions on how to apply are very clear and lots of information on the different universities, grants etc. can be found online. If you still have any questions, you can send an email to the international office and they are very willing to help. Overall, I found the whole applicationprocess relatively easy.</p> <p>tip: I did not need an official language test certificate such as the IELTS or cambridge certificate. The international office wrote a letter for me so if you don't have an official certificate, ask the international office if they can help you first before you spend a lot of money on an official test.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University
<p>the staff at the international office and the two information sessions they organised were very helpful. The international office answered all my emails within a couple of days and you can also always step by the office and they will help you out!</p>



academic preparation
<p>If you want to go on exchange and finish your studies on time you have to plan ahead and make sure that you can take all compulsory courses in other semesters.</p> <p>I also did some courses in English at Utrecht University before going on exchange and I would recommend this but it's a personal choice.</p>
language preparation
<p>If possible you can do some courses at Utrecht University in English to help you prepare.</p> <p>I did not complete an official language test, this was not necessary eventhough some university said i needed one. the international office wrote a letter for me so ask the international office first if they can write a letter for you.</p> <p>At Newcastle University all international students have to do a language test in the first week and if you don't pass the test you can take extra languageclasses for free. These extra classes are not compulsory but if you need help its nice that they offer these free extra classes.</p>
finances
<p>If you are a Dutch student you can get 'uitwonende stufi' 'OVvergoeding' and an erasmus grant so you will receive quite some money from the government and EU (for me the total was around 650euros a month). depending on the country you go to this should cover a large part of your spendings, so don't worry to much about the financial aspect.</p> <p>I don't think anyone will need more than 3000euros extra alongside all the grants.</p>

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
<p>I can now say that the level 3 courses in England are not more difficult than in Utrecht so if you plan on going to England you can definitely do more advanced courses. At Newcastle University you are also allowed to take courses from other faculties which is definitely something to consider.</p>
academic quality of education activities
<p>all the courses I took where very well organised and were a lot like courses in Utrecht: you have to write essays, participate in tutorials, they organize fieldtrips and at the end you write an exam. One difference I noticed is,however, that at Newcastle University the questions are more aimed at your opinion and argumentation than in the Netherlands. overall, all the teachers were great and had great knowledge, the topics were interesting and Newcastle University is very well organised. I received all information on time and everything was very clear and I really enjoyed studying at Newcastle University.</p>
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
<p>If you need help with anything whether it is your mentalhealth, financial support etc. Newcastle University has an office or adviser you can go to for help.</p> <p>Another great asset of Newcastle University is that all teachers have office hours at least twice a week. These hours you can always step by their office and ask all the questions you have and they are all very willing to help.</p>
transfer of credits



the gradingsystem in England is different. You get a great from 0-100% and you pass the course at 40%. 60% is around a 7,5. I found the gradingsystem fair and the level of the courses is quite similar to the Netherlands.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Newcastle University has a very extensive welcome programme in which you can get information about financial support, practical information such as how to register, how the library works, how they grade assignments etc.

You will also have a meeting with your international officer and the other exchange students at your faculty which is a very good way to make new friends and in this meeting will also be explained how and when you can apply for courses and which courses you can choose. Afterwards you can go online and look at the available courses. You have to check if the timetables don't clash but if they don't you can basically choose all courses which is great!

If you arrive in September you are also allowed to join freshersweek. This week is organised by the studentsunion and it's a week filled with lots of fun activities such as paintball, canoeing, climbing, pub crawl, parties, free goodies etc. I really recommend buying a wristband so you can join in on all the fun! it is also a really nice way to meet new people and make friends.

accommodation

Newcastle University only guarantees an offer of accommodation if you stay for the whole year. I only studied in Newcastle for one semester. I did apply for university accommodation and they did offer me a place in the end but I had already found my own place to stay at that time. They made me an offer in the beginning of September (which is normal if you only stay for one semester) and I had to move in by the end of September so I did not want to risk it. My friends who did stay at University accommodation were all satisfied though and the average rent is about 80-100pounds a week for University accommodation.

The website easyroommate.co.uk and erasmusliving are very helpful if you want to find a place yourself like I did. It is relatively easy to find a house in Newcastle and the average rent is about 300pounds a month.

A public transport dayticket is 3,90 and you can buy a special uniderticket for around 36pounds a month. You can also, however, bring your bicycle to Newcastle if you take the ferry from IJmuiden to Newcastle. A cabin for 2 persons on the ferry is about 140euros and you can bring as many luggages as you like and if you want to bring your bicycle it's only 5euros extra. I would therefore really recommend taking the ferry and bringing your bicycle to save money. If you want to buy a bike in Newcastle it will cost you around 70pounds.

leisure & culture

In Newcastle everything is close to the citycentre so once you are in the citycentre you can walk from the football stadium to Chinatown to the river to the main shopping streets, restaurants etc. which is great!

suggestions/tips

I recommend the Botanist, Luigikhans and the Fat Hippo as great and affordable restaurants.

I also really recommend going to a football match at the stadium: it's an awesome experience!

The Great British Bakery and Waterstones are great places to try some great British cupcakes & the Red House has delicious pie. The Quilliam Brothers is a really nice teahouse on campus & you can try the Great English



breakfast for only 4pounds at the goose.

if you want a nice view of the city visit the baltic museum for free or explore newcastle castle for around 5pounds and see the city from the rooftop of the castle.

durham, tynemouth, alnwick castle and york are all really nice places to visit within one hour by public transport from newcastle. If you want to go somewhere for a weekend: Edinburgh and lake district are also pretty easy to go to and both beautiful & Glasgow is the place to be for extensive shopping!

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, I would definitely recommend Newcastle University because the university is well organised, offers lots of services to help you out and offers interesting courses with great academic content. There are lots of other international students studying at Newcastle University and they organize lots of fun activities for students. I recommend newcastle because the citycentre is very compact, with lots of nice restaurants and places you can visit. Its affordable, it's a very vibrant studentcity and its also close to other interesting places to visit such as scotland, lake district, york, durham etc..

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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!