

2019-2020

Report 1

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	French culture and literature

destination city & country	Poitiers, France
how did you travel to your destination?	My parents drove me, returned by train
name university abroad	Université de Poitiers
start date	01 / 09 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	31 / 01 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	This was fairly easy to accomplish. Every step is written down in the hand book. The application form speaks for itself. Just don't miss deadline.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The International Office is easy to contact and they will help you with all your questions. I recommend speaking to someone that went to your university of choice before you. In my case that someone did not really exist so I wasn't able to do that, but I would have liked to be more prepared on how things work over there and where I should have gone first upon arriving in Poitiers.
academic preparation	I did not really give much thought to the academic preparation. In retrospect maybe I should have given it more thought since the academic side of my exchange was the hardest part in my experience.
language preparation	Since I am studying the language of the country I was visiting the language preparation wasn't a real problem for me. I knew I would be able to understand most people. However I would advise to speak the language more in your daily life as you prepare to go abroad.
finances	To me the process of applying for a grant was not very clear. I was not that aware of the different steps and deadlines, I just knew to start early, which I did. And the International Office will clarify things for you on the way. I would advise to make a document map in Word for all your files, it makes things clearer in my opinion

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	It was much harder than I thought. Very disorganised planning. 50% of the courses must be followed in History, in reality it seemed to mean that every course is to be followed in History because it is impossible to find courses that went along with the planning of the two history courses I was obliged to attend. There wasn't a lot of guidance in this department.

academic quality of education activities
The content was of quality. I followed first year and second year courses and in case of some I really had to try my hardest to keep up!
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I had no information of where to be or where to go. There was no email, no information. And when I finally decided to just go to the university they were angry with me because I had not shown up at the start ceremony of the academic year. In my experience the coordinator was fine doing the administrative side of my stay abroad but she did not have any knowledge of the courses, plaig etc. so she could not really advise on what to do. I was warned that the courses I chose in advance would likely have been changed upon arrival, which was indeed the case. It was very difficult to organise my courses. no one seemed to know what was possible. However a lot of social gatherings were organised so meeting people was not a problem, really easy even!
transfer of credits
I have experienced some difficulty since the contact is harder to maintain when you're not there anymore.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	They offered a wide range of activities! It was really fun and easy to meet the other Erasmus Students even when not living at the campus.
accommodation	I lived in an Airbnb since I preferred not to live at the campus, but I heard from my friends at the campus that they will make sure every international student is given a room. I heard only of one bad experience.
leisure & culture	Really beautiful town with a lot of history around you. A lot of cultural events are organised, great museum. There is a sports ground accessible for students and they offer sports classes especially for students, great way to meet French students apart from the Erasmus ones. The atmosphere is really nice! It is a smaller town which makes it easy to get to know the city very well in a relatively short amount time.
suggestions/tips	Participate in trips organised by ESn, there are really fun and it is a great way to also see the region around Poitiers.

CONCLUSIONS	
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain	Yes, I would recommend this destination. It is a beautiful city and the people were nice. I think that the problems that I experienced are just an exemple of a cultural clash which you will encounter at every university I imagine. Just be prepared that the organisation will be very different then the one in Utrecht. They expect you to be very proactive, so ask all your questios! The thing I really missed, was an intro week for all the Erasmus students with an explanation on how the university works.
do you have any additional advice or comments?	Always ask first how they are doing and then ask your question.