



University of Reading

2022-2023

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Application process was surprisingly easy. Writing a motivation letter and sending a transcript of records were the only requirements. It was nice that you could enter 3 destinations options.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	Support was good at UU. We had different sessions before departing to exchange location. They sent lots of emails about the opportunities so I am very thankful I could experience this.
academic preparation	I didn't prepare in an academic way. It was the start of the year so when I arrived there were introduction weeks. After the first week the lectures and seminars started. I did not have to buy books for the modules I was following, so academic preparation was unnecessary.
language preparation	My study at UU was in English as well. So in terms of language preparation I did not expect difficulties. To chat with people from the UK can be hard sometimes because of their accent. But you adapt very quickly and the language barrier is something you forget really quick.
finances	Besides my student loan with the Dutch government I had the erasmus+ grant. Because the UK is very expensive, I had to borrow some money from my parents.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	I followed three economic modules. The layout of education is similar to the Netherlands. You follow a lecture and seminar each week for most of the models. The size of the group is not too big which makes it easier to follow the classes.
academic quality of education activities	I think the quality of these modules was good. I have not seen all the tests so far, so I cant say for sure. But I think the level in the Netherlands is a bit higher in terms of economic modules.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	The support from the study abroad office in Reading was really good. They reply fast, are always there to help and they organised multiple trips and sessions.
transfer of credits	This has not happened at the time of writing this.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	This was really good. They made you feel very welcome. The first 2 weeks were a lot of fun, got to know all the people. Enrollment was organised in a good way, as well as the accomodation.



accommodation
Accommodation was okay. There were different halls around campus so I can't judge everything. The halls I stayed in were okay, sometimes things wouldn't work and the wifi wasn't the best. But the room was nice and I liked living with more people in the same hall.
leisure & culture
Reading is nice but not the best city. For me it was the campus that was really nice. There are some buildings that are beautiful. You can go out and do some beers on campus which is really nice because you can see a lot of different students. Besides, it is half an hour away from London with train which is good as well. Within an hour you can be in central London. Erasmus organised some trips as well so I got to see quite a lot from the UK.
suggestions/tips
Go visit places outside of Reading. It's something I think you should do because you won't be so close after the exchange.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend this to others. Mostly because of the experience. I didn't choose Reading because of the beautiful city, but to live abroad and meet new people. That was really nice to experience and I made some good friends from all over the world.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
When you choose to go on exchange and live abroad I would advise you to be open all the time. I think it's important to get to know people while you're here and it will make your stay way more fun.

2019-2020

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The application process takes a long time. This was quite stressful,
counselling & support at Utrecht University
For support, the International Office held multiple pre-departure meetings, along with potential individual meetings.
academic preparation
My academic preparation consisted of revising previous course material, which aligned well with material in Reading.
language preparation
None, but you are REQUIRED to speak advanced English, otherwise it's going to be extremely tough.
finances
Before the exchange it is possible to register for student accommodation, this is rather expensive, but cheaper (and more fun) than leasing outside the university. Expect to pay around £500 per month for accommodation, this'll be the largest expense you'll be facing. Groceries and other expenses are quite similar to the Netherlands with some slight variations.



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The University of Reading excellently organizes every step during your stay. You'll be linked to an exchange counselor, which'll be aware of your situation and manage your problems with all the help they can provide. During my stay I even accidentally organized paperwork that they would be providing.

Studying at the University of Reading takes a lot of effort and time in order to understand the material and obtain sufficient grades. This goes hand in the hand with the large amounts of spare time, leaving plenty of room for studying and socializing.

academic quality of education activities

British academic quality is on the same level as the Netherlands, with few contact hours, but lots of selfstudy. Lectures and tutorials are structured in a similar manner as the Netherlands and Utrecht specifically.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

At Reading University a few offices were specifically dedicated to the support for exchange students. Those offices were always available and everything got fixed within the next few days. The exchange coordinator also went to Utrecht University, so he was quite happy someone from Utrecht was on exchange there.

transfer of credits

The United Kingdom uses the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS), this system is based upon percentiles. However, a 40% is similar to a 5.5 in the Netherlands due to the UK's grading structure.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The week prior to classes, an orientation week was in order, where the British student life got introduced. The orientation week consisted of multiple great parties every day for the week, along with a plethora of other activities.

accommodation

The student accommodation has different levels, where registration is based on first come, first serve. All rooms have a joined kitchen/common area with 8 people, luckily British people are VERY social. My roommates were mainly shy international students, but the students across the hall and the floors above were primarily British. Eventually you get quite close with some flatmates, making it quite sad when your exchange comes to an end.

The room was very neat and so was the common area/kitchen, however, this really depends on the roommates. The room was quite large with a bathroom ensuite. My room was located at the Mackinder flats, which was a 5 minute walk from the learning facilities, grocery stores and libraries.

leisure & culture

The social life is abundant in the United Kingdom. The Study Abroad programm provided joined trips to major UK destinations, like Windsor castle and Cambridge for a small fee. Reading is the railway hub of the United Kingdom, trains to London go every 2/3 minutes and trains to Oxford every 10. Travelling by train is far more affordable and quicker (and reliable) than the Netherlands.

Reading itself has a plenty of bars, pubs and clubs. The university union organizes every Wednesday and Saturday a clubnight, which is recommended. Pubs are an amazing place to have affordable dinner and enjoy some British culture.



suggestions/tips

- Review your coursework extensively and you'll be sure to pass.
- Do not buy books, the library is fully automated and extremely efficient.
- Clubs in Reading only take cash upon entry.
- The University is completely closed during the Christmas-break, including the libraries and most students go back home during that period.
- The bus is an amazing way of transport and busdrivers are extremely nice and polite.

CONCLUSIONS

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

YES, YES and YES. The university of Reading and the United Kingdom are amazing places to explore and discover

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Don't let the paperwork before and after your exchange stress you out, it'll end up just fine and the exchange would be something to remember for the rest of your life.

PREPARATION

exchange application process

For me the application itself was not difficult. There was a lot of uncertainty though, because this was the first year students from Utrecht went to Reading. It was unclear which modules I could or could not take in Reading but I prepared for the worst case scenario and wanted to go anyway. Once I was accepted by Reading I got a lot of mails with information and everything became clear.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Utrecht University kept me up to date with information about the brexit which was still going on at the moment. This gave me the certainty that I could still go. However, they did not know much about the module selection when I needed their help, because for them it was also the first time that they had to contact Reading.

academic preparation

There was no academic preparation needed. You can buy the necessary books at the store on campus and module selection happens mostly in Reading, but you have to select a few you are interested in beforehand online.

language preparation

For studying in Reading you do not need any tests for your level of English. The only thing you need is a proof that your current study programme is taught in English.

finances

On the website of the University of Reading it is pretty clear how much you have to pay for accommodation. The Erasmus grant was not possible though because I officially did not study at that university for longer than 3 months. Moreover, now that they left the EU I do not know if it will be possible even if you stay longer than 3 months.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)



In the beginning it was unclear if the Henley Business School modules would be available for me, but once you arrive you get clear instructions on what to do to get your modules approved. I ended up being able to follow all the modules I chose myself. But there were also students who did not get certain modules approved based on their study transcript. So make sure you meet the requirements for each module.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of the education varied. It really depended on your professors, some were good some were not enthusiastic or not good at teaching or getting the class involved.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The study abroad office in reading is always happy to help you with any issues. Also your hall will have an assigned counsellor. They offer you help in any way they can. However, I have not used any of those counselling services because they gave me all the information I needed during the presentation and welcoming in the first week.

transfer of credits

The transfer of credits went alright. The alternative assessments I had to do were a bit late and one of them did not give me my grades on time. But after this was known by the university they sent me a confirmation mail that they transferred the credits.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome programme is very well organised. Upon arrival you get a bunch of maps and other relevant information. You get emails with information about what to do and where to be at what times. During the welcome presentation you get all information you need. They also organise 3 or 4 daytrips for international students. (the first one is free)

accommodation

The accommodation is not cheap, but it is organised well. On their website you can find all information about what types of room they offer and they let you know when you can apply.

leisure & culture

There are lots of activities organised outside classes. The campus has multiple bars, common rooms and even a club. If you download the Home at Halls app you can see all activities which include sport classes, game nights and many other things. You can also join a society but you have to pay for the entire year, even if you're there for only a few months.

suggestions/tips

Go to many activities to meet people and make friends, because you will have a lot of time and it is easy to get bored.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommend Reading if you want to see more of the UK. Reading has a big train station which can bring you anywhere. Social activities are also fun. The education at the university itself can lack a bit, so if that is a priority for you I would not recommend.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

