

University of Reading

2023-2024

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Simple and straight forward
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Excellent. Nothing to elaborate on.
academic preparation
The academic level on the University of Reading is similar to the University of Utrecht.
language preparation
The economics program in Utrecht is taught in English. As a third-year student you are used to speaking, listening, writing and studying in English, therefore studying in the UK should be no problem for any UU student the Economics & Business Economics program.
finances
As an international student you are advised, by the UOR, to book an accommodation on campus (finding an accommodation in Reading is hard as an international). This on campus accommodation is expensive in comparison to renting a room in Utrecht (but it is worth it!). Talking about prices of daily consumption (food and drinks). These prices are similar to Utrecht. Ofcourse living in Reading is in general more expensive than living in Utrecht, that's predominantly due to the fact that you are an exchange student, so you want to see different parts of the UK. These trips are always more expensive than budgeted!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
My courses were focused on macro-economics. The UOR is very well organized, like the UU. I did not have any misunderstandings about what courses I was able to follow or what assignments I had to do.
academic quality of education activities
As I said, the academic level on UOR is similar to the UU. If you are successful on the UU, then you surely are successful on UOR.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
There is an exchange officer that is always available to answer your questions. I did not need any counselling/support, because I had a great time with great people!
transfer of credits
Different from the UU, students on the UOR follow 3 courses (each worth 10 ECTS) in the period September-January (UU period 1 and 2).

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme



There was only a welcome speech. You have to find ways to meet people by yourself, since there are no welcome activities planned.
accommodation
The accommodation was perfect. I was living in an apartment with 7 other great guys who were always in for a night out. An advantage of living on campus is that your apartment is cleaned 2 times a week, that saves a lot of unpleasant time.
leisure & culture
Reading perfectly located in the UK. It takes on 20 minutes (by train) to go the centre of London, 40 minutes to Windsor (typical British). If you would like to see different parts of the UK (e.g. Scotland), you fly for low prices to places like Dublin and Edinburgh (Heathrow 40 minutes by train).
suggestions/tips

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, but only if you are an independent person who is not shy and likes to study in a multinational environment, then yes. Since UOR is not facilitating activities for you to get in touch with others, you have to do it yourself.
do you have any additional advice or comments?

2022-2023

PREPARATION

exchange application process
Was fairly doable, it is mostly just filling in a lot of documents, which can be a lot you need to keep track of. In the end however everything you need to do is presented to you and you should be able to just get through the process without too much hassle.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The exchange office here in Utrecht were pretty helpful and responded within a few days to emails. I personally didn't need them outside of a question here and there and signing documents.
academic preparation
This exchange would just be a continuation of my studies and as I just followed similar courses there I did not need to do any extra academic preparation in advance.
language preparation
I personally did not need extra English preparations.
finances
Be sure to have your finances in order to comfortably live on your own for the exchange period and take into account a bit extra for activities outside of studies, like trips to places throughout the UK (or even farther) as they are all very accessible. On campus it is card-only and throughout the rest of the country card is the preferred method of payment most of the time. A lot of places also offer students discounts if you look for them. And I really recommend going out of your way to find the cheaper supermarkets, like Aldi and Asda as they can



save you a lot of money throughout your exchange. They are a bit farther from the campus, so buying weekly groceries there is perfect.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The content was fine in general, even though there was a tiny bit of overlap with my own courses. I had 3 courses for the semester, which were 1 tutorial (not always) and 1 lecture each. The lectures were basically the same as I have at UU, but the tutorials were larger groups where they just solved the homework problems.

At Reading University, the assessment of all the courses is done in the summer period, which meant for me that I had to do an alternative assessment as I went in the Autumn period. Most of the time it would just be an exam or slightly modified project, which was done after courses had ended. That meant that I had to take one of the exams there and one of them back home online. One of the project deadlines also extended to after I had went back home, but that wasn't a problem as it could be submitted online as well.

I don't have the precise information on retakes, but you might have to pay a small fee if you want to take it.

academic quality of education activities

The teachers were alright and quite a few of them came from abroad to teach. The content itself was fine though.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The study abroad office is great, they have excellent support and respond very quick if you email them. I have also heard (not used it myself) that they have great counselling as well if you are struggling with anything in particular.

transfer of credits

This should be fine, the only thing is that most courses in Reading have 10 ECTS instead of the 7,5 ECTS per course here at UU. They also don't have the period system, but just have 2 semesters each year. That means that you are doing 3 courses of 10 ECTS if you are going for one semester, which is perfectly doable in my experience.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The study abroad office organised a few activities during the orientation programme, but the student union organised the freshers week which was great. A lot of parties and also activities organised by all the different student societies, a lot of which were free try-outs. There are so many societies that it will be hard not to find anything you'll like and I really recommend just doing a bunch of those different try-outs.

accommodation

The university accommodation is not the greatest. It still is the easiest way of finding a place which is also close to campus (I was at a 15 min walk from most of my lectures), so I do still recommend it. I think my main complaint is that it was pretty expensive for what we got. There were options for shared bathrooms/kitchens or not and most of the rooms were fairly small. The necessities were there and worked most of the time and if something was broken they would fix it within a week.

leisure & culture

The study abroad office organised a few trips to places like Cambridge and the student union had a clubnight twice a week in their own building. Visiting other places yourself is also very easy as Reading train station is very well connected. There are societies for every hobby and sport you can think of and the University halls organise social activities once a week, both of which are great to get to know people.

Culture is fairly similar to the Netherlands, although you will still find some differences.

suggestions/tips



Just do it. It may seem daunting, but it is an experience you will always be grateful for.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Definitely. Reading has the amenities of London, without being the size. It is also very welcoming to international students and there is a lot of support and activities for them. In the end it doesn't really matter a whole lot where you end up, but if you had to choose, then Reading is a safe and very fun/rewarding bet.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

In the end it does not really matter where you go to, but just going is an invaluable experience that I would recommend heartily to anyone who gets the chance.



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 cant 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. Its something I think you should do because you wont 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 advice you to be open all the time. I think its important to get to know people while you're here and it will make your stay way more fun.



PREPARATION
exchange application process
I personally found the application process quite exhausting since it was a very long process, I would recommend to start early with it.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
study advisor was very helpful
academic preparation
I did not do any specified academic preparation
language preparation
I did not do any language preparation, following a Bachelor where the main language is English helps a lot.
finances
living in the UK requires similar expenses as in the Netherlands but housing expenses are pretty high in relation to what you actual get for that price. Nevertheless, I would count in a bit more expenses since you will probability do a lot a activities/ travels. I did receive the Erasmus grand not sure if that is still possible for the next years due to Brexit.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
In Reading everything was well organised, there is an exchange team present responding to all of your emails and questions.
academic quality of education activities
I would say that the academic quality is the same as in the Utrecht maybe a bit lower, but there were only lecture for my courses and no tutorials which was a negative point. There was not a lot of homework so you had a lot of free time to travel for example. During the lectures the quality seems lower but considering the essays and exam one could see that it has a similar level as in Utrecht.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
/
transfer of credits
During the exchange you have to send your selected courses to the board of examiners, they will evaluate if the course fits the required level that you have to take. Transfer of credits will happen at a later stage

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
It is important to be present during the welcome week since that is the week where I personally made all of my friends. There was a welcome event for all the exchange students which was quite nice. And during the week there were a lot of activities for exchange students and freshers where I would recommend you to go .
accommodation
I lived in Stenton hall on campus, which was quite nice, I had my own bathroom but ad to share the kitchen which was no issue. But I only lived with freshers together, so I would recommend to ask for a flat with older students. I would definitely recommend to live on campus that is where most of the exchange students lived. Stenton hall was very nice located , but if you don` t want your own bathroom I would recommend Bridges hall which was also very nice from what I have seen.



leisure & culture
You can participate in a lot of sports clubs on campus and they even had a gym on campus which offered daily group lessons which were quite nice. The campus also had club every Wednesday was the student night. Additionally you can travel a lot from the Reading central station in 20min you are in London , 30min in oxford This is a great opportunity to see the UK and surroundings.
suggestions/tips
I would definitely recommend to do as much as possible during the stay since time flies, unfortunately it is only three months. I made amazing friends and we travelled to Edinburgh and Wales together. Also go to London as much as possible since it really is a ones in a lifetime opportunity. but be aware that reading itself is not that exciting , but the campus is quite nice.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes yes, I would definitely recommend the University of reading I had the best time there!!doing an exchange is definitely worth it no matter the destination but being so close to London made it unforgettable!
do you have any additional advice or comments?
take a meal plan, the food in the dining hall was amazing I would recommend the meal plan where you can eat once a day. And do not forget to actually study.



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
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
leisure & culture
<p>The social life is abundant in the United Kingdom. The Study Abroad programme 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.</p> <p>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.</p>
suggestions/tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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?