

[Pays-Bas] – [Hogeschool Utrecht]

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I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

Help : How was your experience abroad? If you could go back I time, would you go to this university and why ?

II. Before the travel

A. Preparation

1. Visa

Help : Do I need a visa ? If yes, what is the process ?

I did my study mobility in the Netherlands and therefore did not need a visa.

2. The flight

Help : what flight did you take (the company name, airport etc.) and when did you take your flight ticket

I booked my flight ticket two weeks before my departure. I travelled with KLM from Montpellier-Méditerranée airport to Amsterdam-Schiphol one.

3. My luggage

Help : what to not forget in the luggage (what was useful and what you would like to have taken)

With the Covid rules, my accommodation did not provide kitchen utensils, pans or plates, nor did it provide sheets, duvets or pillows for the bedroom. Apart from the furniture which was included in the rent, I had to bring back enough to get by. My roommate had contacted me before our departure. As she was driving in from Belgium, I didn't hesitate to ask her if she could lend me a duvet for five months. Before leaving, I had made a list so that I wouldn't forget anything to put in my suitcase, such as a pair of scissors, rubber bands, spices, toiletries, my winter clothes, etc. I am very satisfied to have brought the minimum but the necessary because otherwise I would have had to buy here and that would have been expensive for me.

4. Bank account

Help : did you have to change bank? To respect some amount requirement on the bank account etc.

I haven't opened a bank account in the Netherlands as I'm only staying for a semester and I can always pay with my bank card in general (from Crédit Agricole), otherwise I manage with cash or PayPal.

5. Insurance

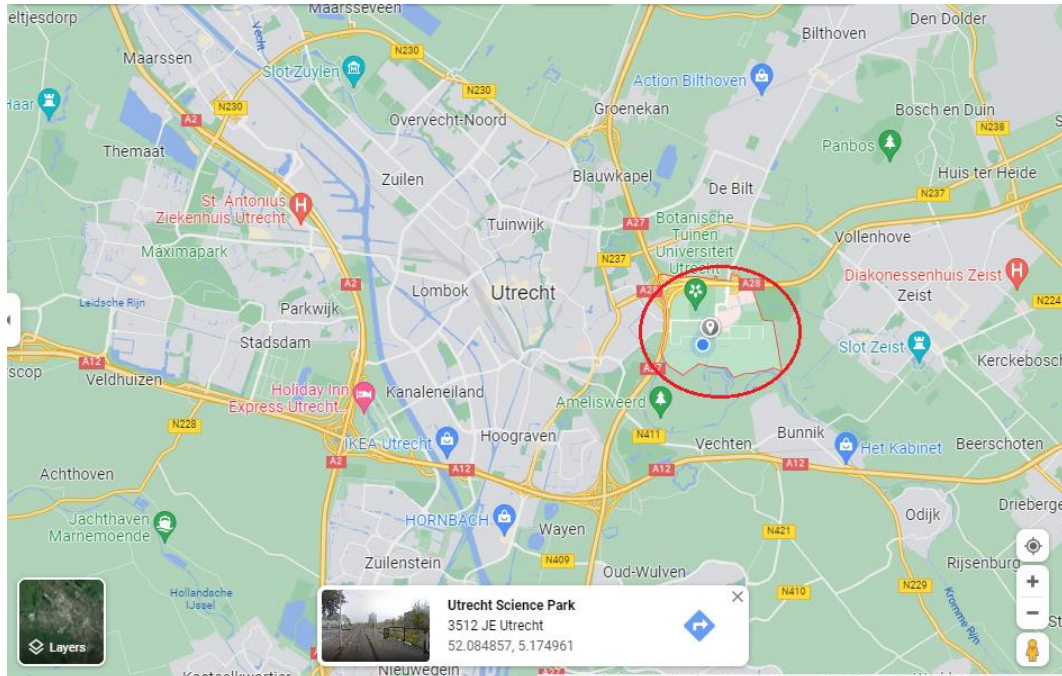
Help : What insurance did you subscribe to ?

I already had personal liability insurance with my bank Crédit Agricole. I took out a repatriation insurance with April for about €190 for five months in the Netherlands.

B. Housing

1. Where to live

Help : Do a google maps capture and circle the area you recommend to live in (and the one you do not recommend)



I would strongly advise living in the Science Park Campus of Utrecht, which is convenient because the university is nearby and the rent for accommodation in student housing is reasonable.

2. Find a flat or a room

Help : How did you find your flat? Do you have any recommendation

Once I applied for an exchange programme at HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, I received an email from the International Office with information regarding the booking of an university room on campus. It is important to look in advance the amount of rent, at what type of room you are looking for (single or shared), how many international roommates/flatmates you would like to share this experience with (4 in Cambridgelaan or 12 in Pythagoraslaan for example), the location of the residence, etc. because the reservation opens on a specific date and is based on a first come, first served principle.

3. Cost

Help : How much should I plan for a room?

It depends on whether you are looking for a single room or not, a shared flat or not, on campus or in the city centre. On campus, I would say less than 500€ in general. Personally, I am in a flat share in Cambridgelaan with 3 other girls and I share my room with one girl: I pay a monthly rent of 352€.

III. When I arrive at the university

A. Inscription at the university

Help : How was the process, what did you have to do?

Before the start of the semester, emails are sent to our Outlook mailbox from the person responsible for the option we have chosen. We then have to attend the Introduction sessions for exchange students and follow the steps sent by email to add our courses to our timetable by logging on the platform “ *my.hu.nl* ”.

B. Information on the university

1. Courses

Help : List the different courses, and for each course, describe the format, the content, the exam, what did you like and not like, would you recommend it for the next student?

Block C : the first 10 weeks

- Consulting Skills : Thanks to the theoretical courses and the use of our Consulting skills in teams, we were asked to perform 3 role plays (advising companies whether to expand to another country or not), write a proposal as a consulting firm and conduct a case study. The individual assessment is characterised by two oral presentations (the first one being our portfolio and the second one our key takeout from this class). This class was the most instructive for me because it required concrete results throughout the first block which enabled us to see the progress of our Consulting skills.

- Managing Change & Innovation : We are asked to study online materials (read articles and watch videos) as a preparation for each class. Almost all the assignments of this class are done as team works. As a weekly and individual task, we have to create a deliverable on our takeaways in change and innovation. The way this class is taught to us, the pedagogy used was for me the most interesting : engaging in outside classroom learning, developing our creative thinking and connecting the course content to our own interests, skills and personal goals.

- Topics in International Business : This class is the most theoretical and thus resembles for me the pedagogy that we have in France with final assignments at the end of the block. The type of the assessment is a consulting report and an oral presentation of it, done as team. The individual part depends on the contribution of each team member to the writing of the report and the answering of the questions asked during the oral presentation. This was the hardest class for me I think : the theoretical part was very heavy, the assessment required a combination of different skills (Consulting, Marketing, Strategic management, Financial, Legal, etc.) and as it is done at the end of the block, it is very demanding.

Block D : the last 10 weeks

Having started this block 2 weeks ago, I will not yet be able to give you full information on the following subjects :

- Global Management Project : This class allows us to get straight into the swing of a real project of a client company. I liken it to a professional internship carried out as a team through this practical side throughout the block. We have regular contact with the client (the one of my team being the company DSV for example) and the tutor (teacher of this class) concerning the progress of our work. At the final deadline, we have to make an oral presentation to the company and also deliver them a PowerPoint and a consultation report.

- Business in Society : This class is focused on sustainability in a business context and thus raising awareness among us. There are a lot of assignments to hand in in continuous assessment (the majority being individual reports).

2. Advice on “contrat d’étude”

Help : would you recommend for a student when picking its courses

Regarding the Hogeschool Utrecht, it was not the courses that I had to choose but a Minor which contains different courses. It is therefore very important to read carefully the purpose of the Minors proposed and also to see what courses they include of course. A lot of exchange students choose their courses according to the types of final assessments, which I have not done personally but which I think could be an effective way of eliminating certain courses when you make your choice for the “contrat d’études”.

IV. When I life there

A. Safety

Help : Is it safe? Is there areas or times I should avoid

-The Science Park campus is very safe to live in. The last buses at night to get to campus are always full of students and the majority of students go home by bike also (in groups). For a girl, it is obviously always better not to go home alone at night though but it is clearly feasible in bike in my opinion if you live at the Science Park.

- Regarding the areas to avoid, a Dutch friend told me that Overvecht, Kanaleneiland and Lunetten are not safe as most of the issues such as robberies or even shootings can happen in these areas.

B. Phone and Internet

Help : How to be able to call and have internet

I kept my sim card and the same RED by SFR package I had in France, with which I have 12 GB of monthly internet in the European Union. I have a Wi-Fi connection in my accommodation and at the university. As I have a French number, I have to add +31 to the beginning of a Dutch number.

C. Events

Help : How to know about the events?

There are two organisations responsible for providing events for international students in Utrecht. One is BuddyGoDutch and the other is ESN Utrecht. The international office will inform you to register before you arrive in Utrecht. Once you have registered, you

will receive emails from BuddyGoDutch to pick up your ticket for each event. In general, you can follow both organisations on Instagram to keep up to date with their events, planning and to pick up your tickets.

D. Sports

Help : What sport can I do ? and how?

You can do sport at *Olympos*, the Utrecht University sports centre located at Science Park campus. As a student, you can get a membership card and have daily access to almost all sports activities there (beach volleyball, climbing, tennis, gym, etc.) at 17.50€ per month.

E. Eating

Help : Any recommendation? Or good tips (e.g. an international house buffet)

- *Broodje Ben* food truck is very popular in the Netherlands and at the Science park campus. It offers fresh and very diversified sandwiches (many specialities for vegetarian and vegan too).

- With my limited student budget, I can't afford to go to restaurants so the only restaurant I ate at in Utrecht was *Vegetalian* which I highly recommend.

- I was not able to participate at the *Potluck Dinner* organized by the organisation *BuddyGoDutch* but my flatmates told me it was great : it is about a gathering where everyone brings a homemade dish (from their countries for instance).

F. Go to the university : bus, car, bike

Help : How did you get access to the bus, car or bike

If you live on campus, you can walk or bike to the university, but you can also use the bus or tram. If you don't live on campus, you will have to use a bike (bicycle), bus or tram (knowing that there is no tram on weekends). Personally, I walk to class and used to get around town by bus or tram as it rained quite a bit the first months and also because I am not used to riding a bike. So I rented a *Swapfiets* (which is the website exchange students use to rent a bike here) bike from April only. A bike is also convenient when you want to get home from a party (Uber is expensive), you don't depend on the bus timetable which is 1am on the last ones and 6am on the first ones.

G. Travels

Help : What do you recommend and what do you not recommend

Transportation (whether by tramway, bus or train) is very expensive in this country so I recommend having a transportation card (Tripkey, the one suggested by the University for exchange students, or simply the OV-chipkaart) that allows you to benefit from a certain discount.

H. Any other information you would have liked to know about

Help : What would I liked to know if I could have gone back in time

I would have liked to know that the cost of living in the Netherlands (transport or even going out) is more expensive than in France in general because the purchasing power of



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