

Exchange report – University of Surrey, Guildford, UK

I had a marvelous time during my exchange in Surrey. The university is campus-based, so everything is in the same area. The courses I took were good, and not too burdensome. Also, the student life was amazing.

Prior to coming to Surrey, I had to get in contact with the international relations office and exchange coordinators in Surrey with regard to my visa. They were very helpful and provided all the necessary documentations in a timely manner. Also, you can sign up to the 'buddy scheme', where you will be contacted by a Surrey student who will help you settle in and basically help you know your way around campus and Guildford town. Before the commencement of the study period, all exchange students have to attend the orientation program, which is a 3-day program comprising of all the basics you need to know during your stay in Surrey. Among others you will re-register and pick up your student card and get a tour of the campus. This is also an opportunity to get to know the other exchange students.

Since we need 30 credits per semester, I was obliged to take 4 courses during the exchange. I took international criminal law, counter-terrorism law, sentencing, and evidence. The former two being international law courses, and the latter two are English law courses. As I have done numerous international law courses in Groningen, the first two courses are not a problem. Unfortunately, I had to put into a bit more effort for the other two courses since I had never taken English law or common law courses before. The courses in general are not very difficult, but I had to read a bit the background and just in general about the English law system. After the first couple of weeks, I was able to follow the courses just fine.

The module comprise of two classes per week, a 2-hour lecture and a tutorial for each courses. For lectures you have to do some reading prior to the lecture. As for tutorials, you have to answer several questions provided online prior to attending the tutorials. Attendance is mandatory for tutorials. Also, in week 7, around mid-November, all the courses have a formative assessment. This means that all the students have the opportunity to do a practice assessment, which will be graded by the lecturer but will not count towards the final grade. This is not mandatory, but it does help a lot in knowing what the lecturer expect in the summative assessment. It is also important to emphasize that the passing grade in Surrey is 40% out of 100.

There are two methods of assessment in Surrey, depending on the courses. It can either be a 3.000 words essay or a 2-hour exam. I had to do two of both, which is a good combination, since the essays are due before the exam period started so it gives me enough time to do both. The lecturer provides the topics of the essay. They provide a choice of 3 topics and you have to choose 1. The topics are published in the beginning of December and due the third week of January, which gives you plenty of time. Also, you can always approach the lecturer with questions about the essay until

before the Christmas holiday. The essay is handed in online through SurreyLearn, which is the nestor of Surrey. As for the exam, there are 6 questions and you have to answer 2 questions in two hour. The lecturer requires the answer to be as in depth as possible, which is quite time-consuming, so you have to be very careful with the time.

Overall, the courses I took were quite good. I would highly recommend the international law courses, since I already know the basis of the study prior to taking the course. As for the English law courses, I find it really interesting but it does take more effort. There are some European law courses available as an alternative.

With respect to the accommodation in Surrey, the university offers accommodation services which you have to apply for online. Make sure to apply in time. The information about the accommodation can be found here: <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/accommodation/about/index.htm>, and the prices are listed on the website as well. The campus where all the classes are is called 'stag hill', so it is very convenient if you get an accommodation in stag hill, since classes are basically 3 minutes walk away. The accommodation in Surrey was more expensive than in Groningen, so I had the band B room in stag hill campus. The room was quite small, but it was manageable. The kitchen and bathroom was cleaned by a cleaning service weekly. The living condition was nice; usually you get to hang out with your housemate in the kitchen. Also, if you have mail sent to you, it will be sent to the housing reception and they will send you an email notifying there is a mail or package for you and you can go to the reception and pick it up.

The life in general in Guildford is more expensive than in Groningen, including groceries, transport, and night-outs. Guildford is only half an hour away by train to Central London, and the train costs about 13 pounds one-way. Alternatively, you can take the bus to Central London, which takes about an hour depending on the traffic, for about 5 pounds. The campus is about 20 minutes walk away from the city center. You can also take the bus from campus to the city center, which takes about 10 minutes, and costs 90 pence. There is a mall, a cinema, some restaurants, pubs, and clubs in the center. Although, there is also a club on campus which hold events every Friday. There is also a supermarket in the city. However, there is also a big supermarket (Tesco) about 15 minutes walk from the campus on the opposite direction of the city center.

All in all, I would recommend students to go on exchange in the University of Surrey. The teaching method really helps the student in doing well in the assessment. The living condition is really good; since everything is located on the same campus it is very convenient. Also there are numerous leisure activities in Guildford, and Central London is only half an hour away.