

Study Report - Aarhus University - Autumn 2019

Your study programme

Aarhus university offers quite an extended list of courses for exchange students. Since the bachelor of law is exclusively taught in Danish, you can only choose Master courses. There are many courses available on EU law, but I chose for the International law related ones: International Commercial Arbitration, Law of Armed Conflict and Legal Negotiation.

All courses were set up in a similar way: One 3-hour class per week in which there will be theory as well as exercises and group discussions. This is different from studying in Groningen as there will be no separate working groups and no real exercises.

All three of the courses I took had an oral exam at the end of the semester. I was unfamiliar with this type of examination, so I wasn't sure what to expect. However, the professors try to prepare you for this as much as they can and afterwards I was really happy with this way of having examinations.

The level of studying at AU is not something to worry about. Despite the fact that you will be following Master courses, the courses are really doable if you are used to the LLB programme in Groningen. The university will tell you that it is very important to have fun during your exchange, and I would say you have plenty of time for that while still getting a good grade.

Language

Danes are generally really good at English, so without any knowledge of the Danish language, you will be fine. However, I took a Danish language course and really enjoyed the basic understanding of Danish it gave me. It is nice to be able to order in Danish and understand a little bit of what people are saying around you. Therefore, even though it is not really necessary, I can really recommend taking one of those language courses. You can find the different language programmes on the website of AU.

Finance and other Conditions

It is not a secret that Denmark is an expensive country. At first sight, the price difference with the Netherlands is not too big. But at the end of the month you will notice that all the small things add up. However, the university offers a lot of cheaper options for students. At all university events there are cheap drinks and the library offers hot meals every day for a really good price.

Aarhus university does not have specific requirements for exchange students. However, it is mandatory for internationals to register at the municipality. The university will help you with this in the introduction week.

Preparation and contacts with the faculty abroad

Aarhus University is really well organised. They sign all the required documents and reply to your emails really quick. Well ahead of the start of the semester they make sure you are enrolled for the courses. Also, they will send you the introduction programme on time so you know when you have to start moving to Denmark.

Housing

Housing in Aarhus is not guaranteed by the university, but they do try to give everyone a reasonable offer. When you apply to AU, you can also apply for housing. Either the university gives you the possibility to rent a room in a dormitory, or they bring you into contact with a Danish student that wishes to sublet their room. I got one of those subletting offers and it

worked out really well! Notice, however, that if you refuse the offer from AU, you will have to look for something yourself. Of course it depends on the room you're getting, but the renting prices for students are quite similar to those in Groningen.

Guidance/Reception at host university

AU offers an amazing intro programme. They divide you into little groups and will assign everyone a Danish student that will be your "buddy" for the first weeks. This buddy will be assigned to you before arrival and can answer any questions you have, pick you up from the train station, etc. At the start of the semester, an entire week is organised by the university in which you will do activities and meet a lot of people. Participation is not mandatory, but I would really recommend to take part in this week as it helps you to find your way around campus and the city. Additionally, in this week the university will make sure you sign up at the municipality and apply for Danish healthcare, which is necessary in order to study in Denmark.

After the introduction week classes will start but the university will keep organising many events. At the start of the Autumn semester, AU organises the "biggest Friday bar", which is some kind of festival in the University park. There is a lot of live music and cheap food and drinks. In spring there is a really big event where different faculties compete in a boat race. This is followed by a big party on campus. Besides these big events there are many nice activities such as pubquizes, game nights, Christmas celebrations and a farewell dinner.

Culture, free time and travelling

Danish people love parties, games, sports and beer and there are many ways to enjoy this way of life as an international student. Every Friday each faculty organises a Friday bar where students finish of their week together and have cheap drinks. Furthermore, as a non-profit organisation within the university, the Studenterhus organises an International night every Tuesday. Every week this I-night has a theme and exchange students come here to meet people while having some drinks and playing beerpong. Of course the city offers a lot as well and if you find the right places, going out is not too expensive.

It is possible for exchange student to join one of the student sport clubs, and many do. This is a great way to mingle with Danish students and get some exercise at the same time. I joined a soccer club specifically for law students, which was really nice©

Since Denmark is not too big it is easy to travel around and see some other cities. You will have an autumn/spring break in which many students make trips around the country. You can get anywhere with public transport, but renting a car is just as easy. Of course it nice to visit Copenhagen, but Denmark has many more great places, such as

If you have lived in Groningen, you will find it easy to adapt to the Danish culture. Aarhus is, just like Groningen, a typical student city in which everyone is easy to talk to and uses a bike to get around (so get one as soon as you arrive!). The city is not too big so everything will be close by and easy to reach. Also, Aarhus has a lot to offer as it is located at the sea and surrounded by forests. Besides that, the municipality organises many events in and around the city, so there is no need to get bored.

Tips

To conclude some last tips. First of all, the easiest way to get a bike is through Swapfiets. Here you can rent a bike for the time you are in Aarhus. Furthermore, the size of the campus can be quite overwhelming so in order to find the right buildings I could recommend downloading the AUfind app. Finally, Aarhus is a great city that has a lot to offer, so use that to have an amazing time!