

Erasmus Exchange Report 2016/2017

University of Groningen

Thanks to the program of International and European Law, I have got the opportunity to spend one semester abroad. During the first semester of the academic year 2016/2017, I was studying in University of East Anglia in England, UK. In this report, I will evaluate the exchange in several aspects: the program, the assessment, finance, the University and the city.

The Program

Since there is no language obstacle in studying in the UK, foreign students can choose all the courses they want, in this case, all the law courses. A few days after I received the decision from the international office in RUG that I was going to study in University of East Anglia, the host university sent an email with the information of the courses that can be taken in the coming semester. The options were quite a lot, from first year courses to third year ones. Students need to submit the courses they want to follow, however that does not mean that they will definitely follow these courses. The hosting university would adjust courses. The program is very flexible because of the variety of the options. During my exchange I was following three third year courses: Media Law, International Law and Competition Law. All the courses were very interesting, especially when they were from a very different aspect than what we have been taught in RUG. Furthermore, they were more specialized in different subjects of law, which is very practical. The method of teaching is similar to what we have in RUG, there were two lectures for one courses every week and one seminar every other week. During the seminar, the lecturer would discuss more details with students in very small groups so that everyone gets the chance to interact. In general, I would say the program was well organized as well as the content of the courses. My personal favorite is Internet Law, which it looks law from a new and very modern perspective. I would definitely recommend future students to follow this course.

The Assessment

All the third year courses were assessed by the assignments. Therefore, if one decided to follow third year courses, there will be no exams. From my own experience, the assignments would be on the core topics of the courses, which sometime would be discussed during the seminar. Therefore, attending seminars is essential if one wants to get good grades. Furthermore, during the whole semester, there would be a lot of literatures to read in order to have a better understanding of the courses as well as to prepare for the seminars, do read those, they would be very helpful for the assignments.

Finance

Living in the UK is relatively more expensive than living in the Netherlands as a

student mostly because of the rent. Students studying in UK under the Erasmus will get 270 euro per month, yet it will not even cover the rent. I was staying on campus (most of the exchange student did because it is hard to find accommodation for one semester by themselves), and I was signed to the most expensive one, which was 170 pounds per week.

Apart from the accommodation, other expenses were fine; the prices are relatively in the same level with the Netherlands. Also, students will get 20% discount from many shops in the city center, which would save also some money. Travelling by train within the UK is very expensive. Therefore, always plan trips in advance because the price will be differ. In general the earlier you buy the tickets, the cheaper they could get.

Because of the different of the rent also the way of spending money, it is difficult to say how much per month one would cost to study there. It is not a cheap place, yet it is not as expensive as I imagined.

The University

In general, I would definitely recommend future students to do their exchange in the University of East Anglia (UEA). It is a very nice university. Everything went smoothly, from the beginning of my application to the end of the exchange. During my study everything there was well organized. Unlike RUG that is decentralized to many parts of the city, UEA is in one campus, and students would find everything they need on campus. Job affairs and career information sessions were held most every week, therefore students could be well prepared for their future careers. There were also many guest lectures from the court, law firms and other fields, which ones could learn a lot from. Another point I want to mention is that the library is open 24/7, therefore if ones want to burn some late night oil to catch up the study, there is always a place no matter how late it is. Apart from study, there are many students associations that held events every week, therefore the social life there would not be boring. What is more, there is a well-equipped gym on campus with a reason price, so if ones want to get fit, there is a place to go. In other words, there would always be something going on, you will never get bored.

The City

UEA is located in Norwich, England, in the northeast of London, which is not far away from the coast. It is not as exciting as London, yet it is a peaceful city to live. People are generally nice who will treat you with typical English manners. Norwich is used to be the second largest city in England during the Middle Age. In the center, there are castles that represent its glory from the old days. It might not as well knows as other major cities, but for sure it has it own charms and people would love the city when they get to know it.