

## **Experience Abroad University of Exeter, UK, Autumn Semester 2019-2020**

### **Study program**

As a law student coming from Groningen I was excited to be studying in Exeter. This is because it was the first time I could hand pick the courses I was interested in during my whole bachelor's period. The course catalog provided by Exeter's website contains complete information on all their elective courses. This includes an overview of the modules itself such as what they consist of, what they aim to achieve after student have followed the module itself and how they are assessed. However, as a first semester student, I was only able to pick modules that was available during the period of my stay.

The modules in Exeter are taught throughout the whole semester, accompanied by a form of assessment for students after having followed the module. Law modules which spans a whole semester consists of 15 Exeter credits or 7.5 ECTS. This means that prospective exchange students from Groningen would need to follow four modules in Exeter in order to retain the required 30 ECTS from the study abroad period. The four modules I myself have followed during the period abroad were Introduction to Discrimination Law, Law Politics and Power, Medical Ethics and Law foundation and Research Paper. I purposely narrowed my choices to these four modules due to the fact that they were solely marked by coursework instead of examinations. In Groningen, since most modules are marked by examinations I thought that it would be a nice change of pace then what I was used to.

I recommend that anyone who is interested to do their semester abroad in Exeter to arrive there on time or at least contact them if you are going to arrive late. This is to ensure your spot in the courses you would actually want to follow as modules are still subjected to availability even when registering them with the University. If it turns out that the courses you are following does not suit your expectations you can always change them up to two weeks, however this is also subject to the availability of space for the course itself. Out of the four course that I myself took, I was most interested in medical ethics and law foundations. The course discussed medical laws, with focus on the legal rights of patients when undergoing medical treatment. Interesting topics such as assisted death and abortion rights were discussed throughout the course. The assessment consisted of choosing one of two topics to discuss in a 3000-word essay. Another course I enjoyed following was introduction to discrimination law due to my pure interest in the field. The course discussed discrimination laws from a British point of view, however the assessment was a bit stressful as student are given 2 days to complete a 2500-word essay which comprises 100% of the course grade. In my personal opinion, the level of study for any courses in Exeter which is solely assessed by coursework should not be that high as students are given a certain amount of time to complete the work itself. Most lectures are recorded and contents of the course itself are published on their student portal.

### **Language**

As the university is based in the UK, all courses are taught in English, most of the lecturers that taught my modules were also British.

## Finance and other Conditions

As a non-EU, I was required to obtain a visa which was specifically for short term study. The cost of the Visa itself was around 100++ pounds and took around two weeks to process, however UK visas and immigration mentioned that it could take longer. I personally arrived late for the exchange due to the fact that I underestimated the amount of time needed to process the Visa, so I recommend sorting it out if you need it at least a month in advance before leaving for the UK. Since I am a non-EU national I am not very familiar on how Brexit would impact EU nationals who would like to study abroad in the UK, however I recommend checking the conditions before applying in order ensure that everything runs smoothly.

In comparison to the Netherlands, the UK is a bit more expensive. I had to spend more as everything was converted into pounds. I have noticed that groceries are more expensive in the UK than it is in the Netherlands. Moreover, I did not find any markets in Exeter that is similar to the one they have in Vismarkt every other day, so students usually depend on getting their groceries from supermarkets such as Sainsbury's and Tesco. In my opinion around 500 pounds a month for living is sufficient and a person could be very comfortable with 600 – 700 pounds a month. However, this would exclude rent.

## Preparation and contact with the faculty board

There are several procedures which needs to be completed by prospective students on Exeter's portal. The university has a strict policy on replying within twenty four hours, ensuring smooth handling of any issues an exchange student may have such as change of courses.

## Housing

Rent in the UK is fairly expensive in comparison to the Netherlands. The cheapest and most convenient accommodation provided by Exeter would be their student dorms, which are mostly located around campus. They cost around 400 – 500 pounds a month. If you decide to find accommodation around the city center, it would be possible to find one for a similar price, however it takes at the least twenty minutes to walk to university or by bus which comes by every thirty minutes. University students rarely bike since Exeter is quite hilly. There are however no additional cost asked by the university. I recommend making housing arrangements quick as I was quite late to do so and ended up having to live 20 minutes outside of the city's main part.

## Guidance/reception at host university

I cannot give much comments on this as I did not participate in any of the welcoming ceremony and activities as I arrived late due to visa troubles. However, the university is always very helpful on assisting their students on any trouble they may encounter.

## Culture, Free time and traveling

Exeter is a small student city, so it's filled with all the necessary entertainment a student could wish for such as night clubs, pubs, sports facilities etc. The only challenge is traveling, as the city is located a bit far towards the west. It takes 2.5 hours to go to London with a train, but bear in mind public transportation in the UK may be fairly expensive. Without a rail card, a single trip to London from Exeter by train could cost around 50 – 60 pounds.