

Exchange experience report Exeter University England, UK , Autumn semester 2019-2020

For my ERASMUS exchange, I went to the University of Exeter in England. This university is not only recommended for its excellent reputation in business and economics, it also boasts an excellent programme for law. As one of the Oxbridge Universities in England it comes as no surprise that this university gave me the most unforgettable and exciting experience. I would highly recommend anybody that wishes go to England on their exchange to consider Exeter.

1. My Study Programme

The courses available at 3rd or 4th year level for foreign exchange students during my semester and year were:

- Gender, Sexuality and Law
- Introduction to Discrimination Law
- Company Law Foundation
- European Internet Law
- Access to Justice 2
- Islamic Law and Society
- Lethal Force, the ECHR and Democracy
- Research Paper
- Equality and Diversity at Work
- Human Rights and Human Dignity
- Medical Ethics and Law Foundations
- International Commercial Litigation
- Law, Politics, and Power.

The courses I choose to follow were Company Law Foundations, Research paper, Equality and Diversity at Work and International Commercial Litigation. I had to take four courses in a single semester (two blocks in Groningen), each of which were 15 Exeter credits. One Exeter credit is worth 0.5 ECTS in Groningen. I think it is also important to note that all these courses will be taken simultaneously, meaning that you will be focusing on these four courses for the entirety of the two blocks and single semester. It is not divided into 2 courses in one block like in Groningen.

The first course I fought hard to get was Company Law foundations. The main reason why I wanted to go to Exeter was because of its excellent association with business, and thereby too the law programmed boasted good corporate and business law courses.

This course required a pre-requisite of law of contract. Nevertheless, I had no issues on proving my eligibility for this course, nor did they really inquire about it.

This course consisted of a great practical and theoretical interest. It considers not only private companies but also public ones. It examines the nature of the corporate form and the constitution and administration of companies. Furthermore, it focuses heavily on the roles of directors and shareholders and the relationship between them.

I really enjoyed this course because it was of introductory nature, meaning all the basic themes and topics were explored. However, for anybody thinking that this is shallow in nature, it most definitely is not. It was quite the challenge and requires a lot of study and keeping up to par with the readings to be able to understand what is going on.

Furthermore, the switch was difficult to make from the usual civil law and European law nature of the courses we received in Groningen compared the heavily case-based and common law approach taken by Exeter.

The method of assessment for this course was an exam of 2 hours and 15 minutes.

The second course I chose to do was the research paper. Which consisted of producing a paper of 6,000 words on a legal topic. A supervisor / professor is then assigned to you to guide your research and writing. This was a very interesting module as I felt it helped me develop my interests more into the field I want to explore for my Masters. This was a straight forward course whereby you focus and write a paper of your own choosing. I had an excellent supervisor, from whom I learned a great deal from and also fostered a good relationship with.

The third course, I didn't necessarily want to do, but surprisingly ended up enjoying was Equality and Diversity at Work. This was a very interesting course because it is unlike any I have done in the past. It put students of economics, law and psychology together in a single class. It was therefore interdisciplinary and very difficult. The module aims at to synthesize different perspectives and work with others collaboratively in finding solutions to today's equality problems. Within the course you discuss race, age and other characteristics that are often discriminated against and view them in a workplace. It is a course that is completely different from anything I have ever experienced before and it was extremely relevant in today's society. The method of assessment for this course was an essay.

The last course I had the pleasure of joining and which I fought incredible hard to join was International Commercial Litigation. By far was this my favorite course of all. It was incredibly interesting as it mixed a EU law, Brexit, and UK law all in one. It was a real challenge because the two essays that were used as a form of assessment were extremely difficult but very rewarding. The course examines the legal issues arising from commercial situations that present links with more than one county. It transcends borders and asks questions as to which court can hear the case, and which law is eligible to govern the dispute. Every class presented new information that was invaluable and incredibly interesting and ultimately led me to identify what I want to pursue later in my career. This course was assessed using equally weighty two essays.

I would really recommend any of these courses, especially for aspiring business and corporate lawyers. However, I must stress that now that Brexit is officially happening and in full progress the courses containing EU law will most likely be altered or removed. Furthermore, a lot of the courses that are not focused on EU law, such as Foundations to company law focus incredibly heavily on national UK legislation with no European or International aspects. This means a lot of the third and fourth year courses are geared towards UK graduating law students; which might be helpful and motivating to those wishing to pursue careers in England. However, for those not considering establishing or pursuing a career in England it might be something to consider.

2. Language

All of the courses were naturally given in English. All of which was very understandable and clear. The level of English required to pass the courses is at a high level. For the courses that I pursued you definitely need to be a capable C1/C2 English speaker, if not native. This is because the courses are examined mainly on essays which have very high standards.

3. Finance and other Conditions

Although Exeter is geographically not the largest city, it can be quite costly. This is mainly because it is a true university town, meaning that a lot of places are catering to students and therefore rack up the prices quite a bit. Furthermore, Exeter University is not in the city, meaning a lot of lunch options are pricey. Nevertheless, I argue that you can make your Exeter expensive as you please.

There are no additional costs in the host university, nor in the application procedure.

You will not need a residence permit if you are renting.

4. Housing

For housing I paid an around 1000 euros per month for a single-bedroom studio. This was mainly because it was impossible to find housing for less than half a month. Most establishments had leases from 55 weeks or above with weekly payments. Furthermore, this housing was quite far away from the University faculty which is located outside of town. I would advise any students considering Exeter to apply for the student campus dorms immediately, as it could provide a good alternative if nothing else can be found. Just as a note, these accommodations can become increasingly expensive depending on the type and size you apply for.

5. Guidance / Reception at Host University

If you wish to be properly introduced and have a very warm welcome, Exeter University is the place for you. There are so many opportunities to meet new people and other exchange students, that there isn't really ever a dull or lonely moment. There are a lot of ice-breaker events that include hundreds of clubs and sports that are available to join. There are campus tours for new students. Taster sessions. Literally any kind of club you can think of is available. There is a true university spirit at Exeter, which all students immediately get invested in.

The exchange officers and faculty in general are very attentive and considerate. They have an excellent welfare and mental health institution which deals with any kinds of issues that can be challenging whilst on exchange, and far away from home and family.

The only troubles I had were with the selection of my courses, which was quite a feat. This was because home university students have first choice. Meaning that exchange students have available to them the courses that were not chosen by the Exeter students themselves. This becomes quite complicated because you will have to try to fight for a spot in the courses you like. Furthermore, issues arise when time table clashes occur.

6. Culture, Free time and travelling

Being only 3 hours away from London, every weekend can be spent in the big city with loads of clubs and fun. However, you do not necessarily have to go out of Exeter in order to have fun. There are a lot of clubs and places to have fun, there are tons of events every weekend and

almost every week of the night; from pub crawls to dress up parties, to whatever you can think of pretty much.

I would also really recommend travelling around the UK, from which Exeter is perfect to do so. Bristol, Bath, London are all places that I really enjoyed visiting during my stay there.