



Faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Study Guide

1 Overall impression

I had a lovely year in a beautiful city!

2 Making preparations

(e.g. administrative matters, finding information)

Find a place to stay!!!! Do not underestimate this task. And the University of Amsterdam will send out informative e-mail which will help you. You have to send them a certified copy of your Bachelor's degree. One thing they will check is whether you have prior knowledge of international law. If not, you will be required to do an introductory class (including an exam you would be required to pass in order to continue with your studies) and if you are for University of Bern you should have had 'Einführung in das Völkerrecht' and 'Europarecht'. However, in your Bachelor's degree it is only written Öffentliches Recht I+II+III. Therefore, you should inform them that those categories include those classes (maybe send them a copy of the KSL description per e-mail as I did).

3 Contacts/Responsibilities

(e.g. important contact persons at the Partner University and Faculty)

Go to the Education Desk or the Digital Student Service Desk for questions. They will tell you where to go with your questions if they cannot help you.

4 Housing

I found my housing through student housing which I recommend. First, you have to register and pay a fee of around 400 euros which you will not get back if they find you housing. However, if you get student housing (esp. a studio) you will end up paying less than finding a room for 700 euros in a shared apartment through Facebook. Second, you will receive a link (it was in the first weekend in May at around 11pm) and I strongly advise to try to make use of this link immediately. The faster you answer the higher the chances that you will get student housing. The link leads to a form in which you can state which housing company you prefer and which price category you want. Here, it might be useful to know that in the second most expensive (500-600 euros I think) the landlord is mainly DUWO (well organized) and the second and most expensive category are all studios and if you live in a studio you are entitled to receive rent allowance from the Dutch government (I received over 200 euros per month and my rent was around 600 euros - so I ended up paying around 400 euros per month for my

23m2 studio which was 20min by bike away from the Campus and the city centre which is great for Amsterdam).

5 Arrival

I arrived on one of the universities pick-up dates. On such pick-up days they will pick you up from the airport/centraal station and then drive you to a campus (Science Park) where you can pick up your keys from your student housing (if you have that), get your student card and register yourself at the municipally, which was really nice as this would have been more time consuming otherwise. I received before arrival an e-mail from the University in which they warned me that it will be very busy and it might take a long time but it ended up being very efficient

6 Telephone

(e.g. costs, carriers)

I have a Huawei with double SIM. So I had my Swiss SIM card and added a Lyca SIM card - I paid monthly 11 euros for (I think) 5GB internet and some free text messages and phone call minutes.

7 Bank account

I had an ABN Amro bank account (for free). I would recommend registering already in August for an appointment at the bank. I only did that as I already was in Amsterdam and I ended up only having an appointment at the end of September. I heard of ING as well which should be basically the same. I would recommend a Dutch bank account as then you can use Tikkie and Ideal. They will want to know whether you have a BSN (Burgerservicenummer) which you will receive after you registered at the municipally

8 Transport

I flew to Swiss but you can also use the train. However, note that Deutsche Bahn is not too reliable. They are prone to be late which can cause you to miss your connection in Frankfurt am Main. In Amsterdam you will be cycling as everyone else! I can recommend cheapass bike (10euros per months) but the bikes are really basic and used and Swapfiets (16-19 euros; for which you will need a Dutch bank account as you have to pay through Ideal). The good thing of renting a bike is that they seem likely stolen to be stolen. For public transport you will need a OV chipkaart.

9 General information about the Partner Faculty and student life

You will mainly study at the Roeterseiland campus which is really nice! And if you live near Science Park I can recommend using the study spaces there. However, you won't have too much class, so you will not spend too much time at University itself except you learn best in libraries (then I recommend Science Park, Law Library in Roeterseiland or Single Library). You will most likely socialise with international students from all over the world. I joined a Volleyball team (UvO) and through my team I had more contact with Dutch ppl (I can recommend!). Additionally, the USC offers a great sports program! I can recommend the gym at Science Park!

10 Teaching and studying at the Partner Faculty

(e.g. program structure, methodology, exams, etc.)

You will have quite a busy autumn semester with two blocks. Each block consist of 7 weeks and in the 8th week you will have the exams which will take place digital. So you'll write it on a computer but in a room with all the other students. In most courses you will have to deliver assignments which count to your end mark (which is actually quite helpful). In January, you will have free except you need to re-take some exams and in the spring semester it will be equally busy with another two blocks during which you will also need to write your master thesis. The grades are 1-10 – if you make 60% of the points you would get a 6, with 100% of all the point you would get a 10 etc. and with a 5.5 you will pass and you will need an average of an 8 (an no grade less than a 7 and no re-takes) in order to qualify for cum laude. The track itself lacks a bit of organization as, for example, it might happen that you will receive your exam results back way after the deadline and rather close to the date of the re-take exam. The classes are also quite fuller than expected, probably because students of different tracks are allowed to take your mandatory classes which is a bit unfortunate. However, I enjoyed to study there and I did learn a lot. The University was really fast in adapting to the Covid-19 Pandemic and changed fastly to online examination and adjusted the deadline for the first version of the master thesis!

11 City

(e.g. cultural activities, sports, discounts, nightlife, must-sees, short trips, etc.)

As I mentioned above, try to get into contact with Dutch people through group sports like Volleyball (try outs are in the end of August and beginning of September) and the USC has a great sports program to an affordable price. Just embrace the life on a bike as you will miss it when you are back home (with all the steep hills everywhere). Naturally, in Amsterdam there is a lot to explore and you will never be bored.

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