



# Faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

## Study Guide

### 1 Overall impression

Amsterdam is probably one of the nicest cities to go for a double degree. The possibilities for going out, seeing new stuff and student life are almost infinite. There is always something going on and the amount of leisure activities offered is huge. The studies are interesting and offer a more European perspective in contrast to the Swiss centred studies at UZH. However, some courses are rather boring.

### 2 Making preparations

(e.g. administrative matters, finding information)

Before going to Amsterdam, there are basically two things which should be arranged. Firstly, an appointment for registration at the municipality of Amsterdam, which you can easily book over their website (also available in English). However, a lot of people apply for registration, thus it is recommendable to book your appointment as early as possible, since the waiting time is probably around 1 to 2 months. By that, a BSN Number will be given to you, so that you can open a Dutch bank account. Moreover, registration is mandatory if you plan to stay in Amsterdam for the studies.

Secondly, you should arrange your accommodation before your arrival. The housing situation is terrible, so be sure to apply for UVA housing or trying to find something in advance.

### 3 Contacts/Responsibilities

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

You can easily contact the University by dropping by at the central student desk or the education desk of the law faculty which are both located on Roeterseilandcampus, where most of your classes will take place.

### 4 Housing

Finding accommodation in Amsterdam is extremely difficult. The city is facing a severe housing crisis and a lot of international students are coming in. It is very recommendable to apply for student housing at UVA, however you might not get in. If that is the case, you can find something by yourself on e.g. kamernet.nl or Rentslam. It is advised to seize every opportunity, however it might take long (1-2 Months) to find a suitable option and you may have to pay a lot. Try to avoid going to Amsterdam without a fixed accommodation. Also, be aware that there are a lot of scams going on, so do not pay any money before seeing the place and making sure that the landlord is trustworthy. Moreover, you need a rental contract to register yourself at the municipality, so make sure that you get one. There are a lot of people trying to rent out rooms without any contract for tax reasons. If you see that you can

apply anyway and if you get the room you can report the landlord to the municipality and only the landlord will get fined without the possibility to throw you out.

## **5 Arrival**

As mentioned, make sure that you have accommodation and appointment at the municipality arranged when you get to Amsterdam. The rest you can arrange after arriving.

## **6 Telephone**

(e.g. costs, carriers)

Personally, I had a subscription in Switzerland which included data in the Netherlands. I found this very convenient and only had to buy a cheap pre paid SIM for some domestic

## **7 Bank account**

It is very recommendable to open a Dutch bank account after you get your BSN number from the municipality. Most online purchases only work over "iDeal" which is a service you can obtain only through a Dutch bank account. Moreover, some stores and restaurants only accept payment by Dutch Maestro cards and do not accept Mastercard, Visa or Cash. This might be a bit inconvenient at the beginning but as soon as you get your account you will be able to move freely.

## **8 Transport**

In my opinion, the easiest way to get from Switzerland to Amsterdam is by night train. It is also possible to only book a seat instead of a bed, which might be a bit uncomfortable but is very cheap if you book in advance and allows you to take all the luggage you want with you. You can also take a train during the day, but take the infamous Deutsche Bahn into account which usually has huge delays or cancels trains randomly at last minute. Of course you can also take the plane or a Flixbus.

## **9 General information about the Partner Faculty and student life**

There is a rich student life at UVA where you can join plenty of activities. I would very much recommend attending the introduction day, where you can meet your fellow students and make friends. Also, there is a track-wide whatsapp group which you can join even before moving there and thus stay in contact with others. Moreover, you can check out USC Sports (similar to ASVZ at UZH) where you can participate in different sport clubs and fitness groups. Most students in the track are internationals. This will allow you to get in touch with people from all over Europe (and even the world sometimes) which can be a very enriching experience.

## **10 Teaching and studying at the Partner Faculty**

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

Most Modules have an exam and additional assignments you will have to complete during the classes. It is recommended to take one elective in the first semester and one in the second. The workload may appear big in the beginning but don't worry, it will get easier especially in the second semester and

you will have plenty of time to explore the city and countryside. The teaching quality varies a lot between different modules so be prepared to also attend rather boring classes. However, the European focus is very mind-opening in my opinion.

## **11 City**

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

There is an incredible amount of thing to explore in Amsterdam and hundreds of different guides to consult which are full of good recommendations. So don't be shy to search for interesting stuff to see and do ;) Anyway here are some of my favourites:

- Internationaal Theater: High quality theatre plays at a decent rate for students, also in German or English since there are a lot of international festivals taking place.
- NXT Museum: Very cool digital art exhibitions
- Stedelijk Museum: Get blown away by weird but beautiful modern art
- Free Tours: Choose between a huge amount of interesting tip-based tours
- Bourbon Street: Enjoy live music almost every day in this cool bar for only 5euros entrance
- OCCII: Alternative Rock club with cheap drinks and a super nice atmosphere
- Radion: One of the most recognized underground Techno clubs
- Thuishaven: A very nice day rave location
- Muiden: A short bike ride away you can find this beautiful village with a nice castle to explore and tasty appeltaart to eat
- Strand Blijburg: A nice beach close to the city centre
- Egmond an Zee: Swim in the North sea and explore its huge beaches and dunes only 1 hour train ride away
- Café Krater, Café Kriterion, Café Fest: The best bars if you want to go for a beer after class

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