



**EXCHANGE STUDENTS  
WELCOME TO HU UNIVERSITY  
OF APPLIED SCIENCES UTRECHT**

**Preparing for your stay**



# Preparing for your stay CHECKLIST

## TO DO BEFORE ARRIVAL IN UTRECHT

- ☐ Complete application
- ☐ Complete Immigration process
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Health Insurance
- ☐ Liability Insurance

## TO DO AFTER ARRIVAL IN UTRECHT

- ☐ From Schiphol to Utrecht
- ☐ Public transportation
- ☐ Rent or buy a bike
- ☐ Introduction Day
- ☐ Registration at municipality/  
get BSN number
- ☐ Get residence Permit
- ☐ Open a Dutch bank account
- ☐ Medical care: register with a GP
- ☐ Help and guidance studying  
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- ☐ Student associations
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- ☐ Dutch lessons
- ☐ Immigration Rights and obligations

## PREPARING FOR YOUR STAY

**Welcome to HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. Are you ready to start your international adventure? Let's make sure you get off to a flying start.**

Your journey started with the first step: applying for the programme of your choice. After that, you're on your way! Are you already feeling those pre-arrival jitters? Now you can start to prepare your stay in the Netherlands. Is your head spinning with all the things you have to arrange?

No worries, we've got your back. There are a number of things you can check off

before you even arrive. Think of housing, visa and finishing your application. We have collected all the information to make this part of your journey go as smoothly as possible. That way, you can board the train, plane or car knowing everything's all set.

Once you've arrived, you'll have to do a number of things to help you get settled. Amongst them are some must do's, like registering with the municipality. And some should do's, such as opening a Dutch bank account so you can easily pay for things. How to do this? Just browse this document for quick and easy directives.

Last but not least – all official things aside – we have a lot of tips for your day-to-day life in the Netherlands. Such as, how will you get around cheaply to discover our beautiful country? And what will you do in your spare time? Studying abroad requires a lot of arranging, but it is also a once in a lifetime experience you will never forget!

Do you still have questions after all this? Don't hesitate to contact us by phone (+31) (0)88 481 81 81 or email [exchange@hu.nl](mailto:exchange@hu.nl). We will gladly help you along.



**You've made the decision to study at HU. Preparing your stay thoroughly will make for a soft landing.**

## COMPLETE APPLICATION

After we have received your nomination from your home university, we will send you an invitation to register. Our application process is done step by step. Each step requires our approval before you can move on to the next step. During the process you will be required to fill in your personal data and to upload the following documents:

- A copy of your passport. The document should be valid until at least the start of the semester (EU/EEA or Swiss national students) or until at least 6 months after the start of the semester (non-EU students). EU/EEA or Swiss national students may also upload a copy of their national ID card (a driving license is not accepted as a valid ID).
- A copy of your learning agreement signed by you and your home university.
- Some programmes require additional documents to be uploaded. Please see our website for details.

The application deadline for Fall semester and Full Year students is May 1, for Spring semester students October 15.

## NON-EU ONLY

### COMPLETE IMMIGRATION PROCESS (VISA/DUTCH RESIDENCE PERMIT)

As a non-EU/EEA student, you need an entry visa (MVV) or a Dutch residence permit (VVR) to stay and study in the Netherlands. Are you from Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New-Zealand, Vatican City, the United States of America or South-Korea? If so, you do not require an entry visa.

Our Immigration Officers will submit your visa application to the Dutch Immigration (IND) after you have been officially admitted to your exchange programme. Non-EU/EEA nationals will receive an invitation to submit documents to Mobility-Online during their application process. It is not possible to arrange your entry visa or residence permit yourself!

Keep in mind that applying for a visa can take some time. There are strict deadlines in place to make sure your

visa is arranged in time for the start of the study. Please submit your visa application online in Mobility-Online and make your visa fee payment before the following deadline:

- Do you require an MVV? Your Fall semester deadline is 15 June. Your Spring semester is 1 December.
- Do you only require a residence permit? Your Fall semester deadline is 15 July. Your Spring semester deadline is 1 December.
- For more specific information on the immigration process and requirements of (financial) documents, please visit our [website](#).
- We advise you to not arrange your flights until your visa has been issued by the immigration department.

## HOUSING

Of course, you need somewhere to live during your studies at HU. Student housing is in limited supply and, therefore, finding a place to live can be a real challenge. So start looking for a place to live as soon as possible. We have an agreement with SSH Short Stay and XIOR, two local housing corporations that rent out temporary

furnished housing to international students. As accommodation is very limited, rooms are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Make sure to apply as soon as rooms become available as rooms are normally fully booked within a matter of days. In case you are not able to find housing via HU, there are many helpful websites offering accommodation in and around Utrecht. But be careful, if an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is. On our [website](#) you'll find a number of links to websites and agencies that our students have found helpful.

## HEALTHCARE INSURANCE

Under Dutch law, you are obligated to have basic health insurance during your stay here. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have sufficient coverage. If you are uninsured or underinsured, you can be fined. You are free to choose your own health insurance policy, however there are certain requirements depending on your current situation and nationality.

### • You are an EU/EEA or Swiss national

You may use a health insurance policy from your own country, as long as you are sure that it provides sufficient cover in the Netherlands. Make sure that you obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

### • You are not an EU/EEA or Swiss national

If you're a non-EU/EEA national and you're not (yet) participating in any form of (part-time) work, you are not allowed to arrange a Dutch basic insurance. There is one insurance company who provides a health insurance cover designed specifically for non-EU/EEA students, namely [AON insurance](#).

If you have not arranged sufficient health insurance cover before your arrival, you should do so immediately after. If you are participating in an exchange programme lasting less than 12 months and you are sure that a policy from your own country provides sufficient cover in the Netherlands, you may use that policy during your stay.

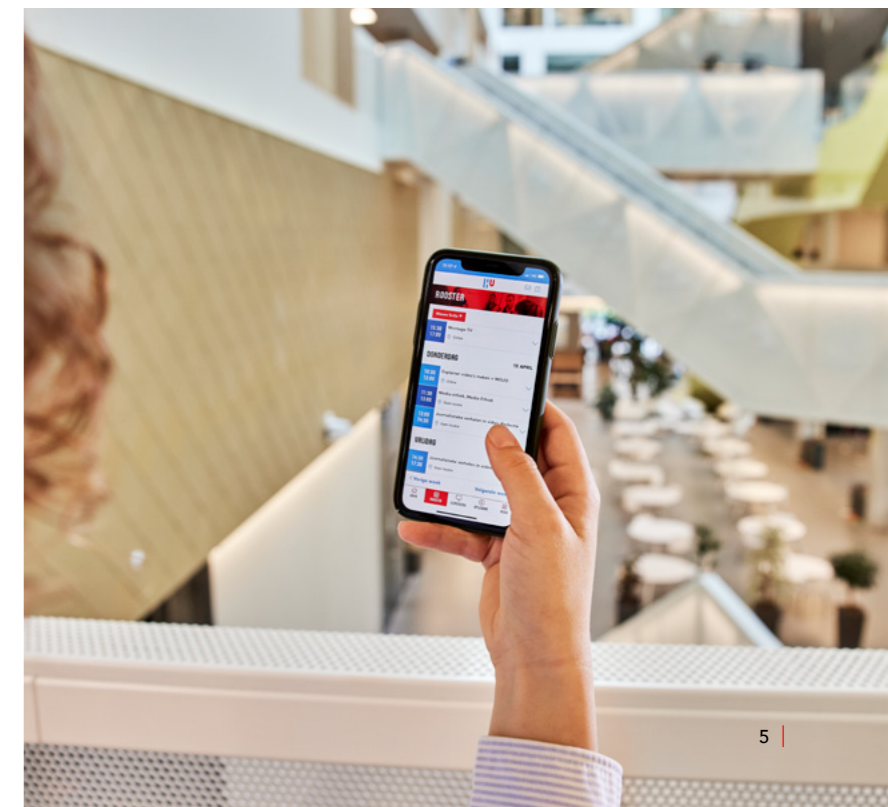
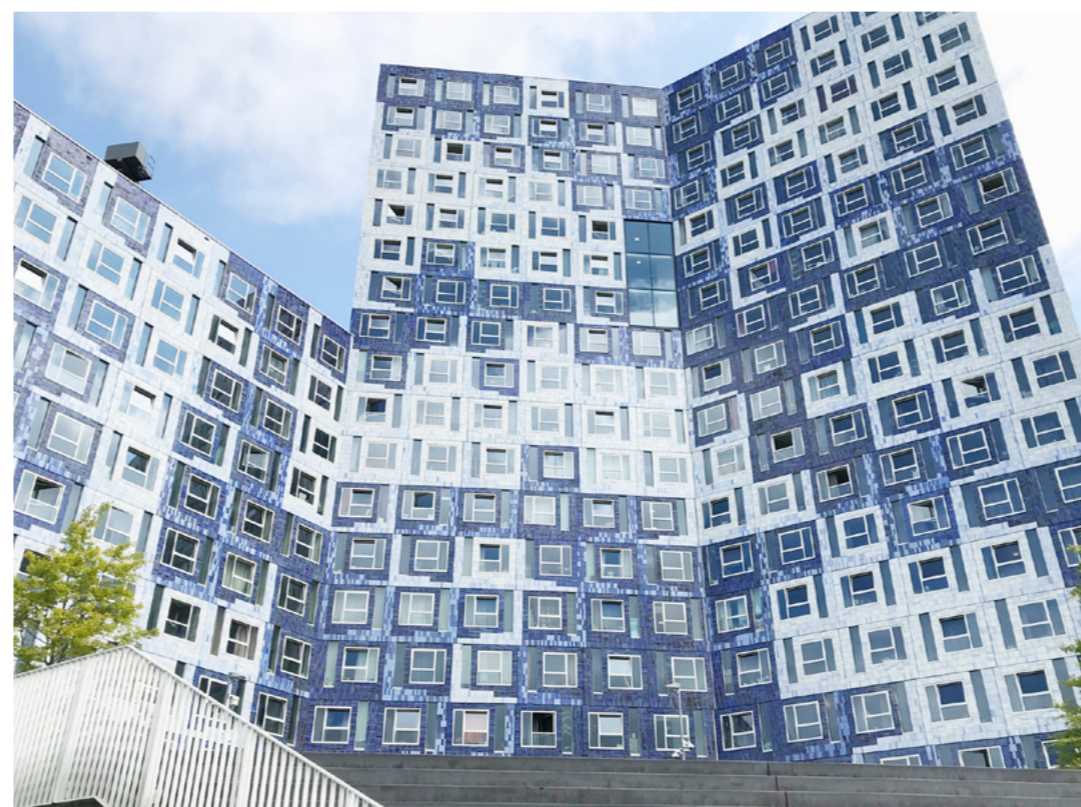
### • You have a paid job or work placement while you're here

If you have a part-time job during your stay in the Netherlands, or a paid work placement as part of your study programme, you will need to apply for a Dutch basic insurance. A healthcare policy from your own country won't suffice in this case. Dutch health insurance can cost up to € 150 a month, although in most cases you will be able to claim part of the fee back.

Health insurance cover is very important and the Dutch requirements can be quite complicated. [The website of Study in Holland](#) explains the various conditions and possibilities clearly. Or visit our [Insurance page](#) for a quick overview.

## LIABILITY INSURANCE

We strongly recommend taking out a [liability insurance](#), which covers the cost of accidentally damaging someone else's property. The costs of such a claim can be quite high and yet the premiums for a liability insurance are just a few euros per month. It is certainly worth making sure that you are covered!



**After months of preparation and packing your bags, you finally set foot on Dutch soil. What will your next step be?**

## TRAVELING FROM SCHIPHOL AIRPORT TO UTRECHT

Chances are your plane will land on Schiphol Airport (AMS). The easiest way to travel from Schiphol Airport to Utrecht is by train. This takes approximately 30 minutes, and trains depart every 15 minutes. Simply follow the signs that say TRAINS at Schiphol Airport.

Don't forget to buy a ticket first! Train tickets are available at the yellow ticket machines near the platforms on Schiphol Plaza or from the ticket offices. Pay close attention to what kind of ticket you buy. Some tickets require you to check-in before boarding the train. You simply hold the ticket to the card reader of a check-in pole or gate, and you will hear a beep.

The city of Utrecht is conveniently located in the centre of the country, so alternative travel options are by car or bus.

For travel advice and departure timetables, you can also check the website of the [Dutch National Railway \(NS\)](https://www.ns.nl).

## ESN ARRIVAL ASSISTANCE

Each semester, The Erasmus Student Network organises an arrival assistance at Schiphol Airport and at Utrecht Central Station. We will send you more information about how to register before your arrival in the Netherlands.

## TRAVEL WITHIN UTRECHT

After arriving at Utrecht Central Station, you can take a bus, a taxi or a tram to your new home!

Visit <https://9292.nl/en> to see the timetables for buses and trams in Utrecht. There are also direct buses and trams to Utrecht Science Park. You can buy a disposable ticket in the bus or at the tram stop.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Once you start to settle in Utrecht, you'll want to make your way around town somewhat freely. You will need a travel card to use the public transport system.

Below you can find some examples of travel cards you can purchase:

- The Student Mobility Card is a custom-made mobility card for international students. You can use one card for all Dutch transport and you get a 15% discount during weekends and weekday off-peak hours. To apply, go to: [www.studentmobility.nl](https://www.studentmobility.nl).
- Another option is purchasing a personal OV-chip card and look for subscriptions that offer discounts for trains or buses. An OV-chip card is a plastic card similar to a debit or credit card, that you can charge with credit. You can choose to link this card with an account to automatically recharge through your bank account, so you'll always have sufficient credit to check in.
- For a suitable subscription on train travel, check the [products](#) of the NS. For instance, 40% off during off-peak hours.

- It is also possible to get a subscription with U-OV, the provider of buses and trams in Utrecht. Their Customer Service (telephone number 0900- 525 2241) is happy to help you in English. You can also visit their U-OV Service Stores at Utrecht Central Station for more information.

You can also use an anonymous or disposable OV-chip card. Anonymous cards can be obtained at railway stations, at the supermarket and tobacco shops. Please note that you can only arrange subscriptions or discounts with a personal card!

## BUY OR RENT A BIKE

After your arrival you will soon notice that most people get around Utrecht by bike! While a lot of students will buy an old bike, renting a bike is also a good option, especially for exchange students. There are several companies that rent bikes to students, some examples are:

- [Student Mobility](#)
- [Swapfiets](#)

## INTRODUCTION DAY

The International Office organises a mandatory Introduction Day before the start of each semester. During this interactive day you will learn more about HU, Utrecht and the Netherlands. You will also get to meet with your academic coordinator to learn more about your programme and meet your fellow students. Details of the Introduction Day will be shared with you before you travel to the Netherlands.

## REGISTRATION MUNICIPALITY/ GET A BSN NUMBER

If you are going to live in the Netherlands for more than 4 months, you need to make an appointment for your registration with the municipality **within 5 days after your arrival**. Make your appointment at the City of Utrecht by filing in their [online appointment tool](#).

Make sure you bring the following documents, when you go to your appointment at city hall:

- A valid document of identity (passport or ID-card) for every person to be registered during the appointment.

- A proof of deregistration when you come from Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Saba or Sint Eustatius.
- A rental contract or contract of sale of your home, or your proprietor's permission, for which you need to complete [the form 'verklaring bewoning adres'](#) (pdf in Dutch). Please note: you cannot be registered earlier than the start date of your rental or purchase contract.
- Original documents from abroad of yourself, such as a birth certificate.
- Non-EU/EEA or Swiss nationals need to present their immigration letter confirming the issue if their Dutch residence permit or Dutch residence permit card (if they already have it).

Read more about the Utrecht [registration procedures](#).

If you are moving to a town outside of Utrecht, you will need to register at their municipality. Please contact your local municipality for more information.





When registering with the municipality, you will also be issued with a 'Burgerservicenummer', also known as a BSN number. A BSN number is a citizen service number which has a unique personal registration number held by every citizen in the Netherlands.

A BSN is the first step towards opening a bank account, working, applying for benefits, filing your taxes, making use of the healthcare system and so on. Read more about the [BSN number](#) and how to register.

### RESIDENCE PERMIT

Once you're in the Netherlands, you need to pick up your Dutch residence permit for study. The Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Services organise Central Collection days for pick-up of the residence permits. The International Office will inform you in August on the exact date, times and location in Utrecht. You will receive an email once the date is set with more information about the procedure, and what documents you need to bring with you. If your residence permit is not yet available at this date, you will have to pick up your residence permit at the IND Office in Zwolle. If this is the case, you will receive all information about the collection in due time.

### DUTCH BANK ACCOUNT

If you stay in the Netherlands for a longer period, it may be useful to open a Dutch bank account, specifically if you are from a non-EU country. Not all shops and supermarkets accept credit cards. You can ask any bank if they offer special student accounts and what is needed to open one. In most cases, students can book a liability insurance at a reduced price within a 'student package' account. Be sure to check the options at your bank.

If you want to open a Dutch bank account, you will need:

- your passport (or national ID card of an EU/EEA country)
- your lease or rental agreement
- your student card (or other proof of registration at the HU)

Banks sometimes request students' Burgerservicenummer (BSN). That is the Citizen Service Number, which you will receive automatically after registering at the municipality. Some banks will not let you open an account if you are in the Netherlands for less than 6 months. The ING bank does offer bank accounts for a short period. You can open an account via their [website](#) or in one of their offices.

Read all about [opening a Dutch bank account](#).

### MEDICAL CARE: REGISTER WITH A GP

The general practitioner (GP or Huisarts in Dutch) has a central role in the Dutch healthcare system. For many newcomers the single most important difference between medical practice in The Netherlands and that of other countries is the predominant role of the GP. Your GP is the key to the Dutch world of medicine. The GP treats patients for basic problems and can answer most of your general health questions. Please note that for minor issues (such as the flu, a urinary tract infection, an earache) *you must go to your GP and not the emergency room!* Your insurance may not cover an emergency room visit unless it is a true emergency or you have been referred by your own GP.

So, if you are not feeling well or have complaints you must first go and see your GP. That is why we strongly advise you to register at a GP as soon as possible after your arrival. Find out if you can register at the [GP's at the HU Campus](#). Or read more about finding a [GP care in general](#) and finding a practice in your neighborhood.

### NEED HELP OR GUIDANCE DURING YOUR STUDIES?

When you are in need of guidance, advice or you want to have information on studying with a disability, the HU can help you in various ways. You can make appointments with student counsellors, student psychologists or attend training sessions. Please check out the [Student support website](#) for all the services and facilities we provide. There's more than you may think!

In addition, you can always go to our Student Information Point (STIP) counter or contact us via phone (+31 88 481 8181) or email ([STIP@hu.nl](mailto:STIP@hu.nl)) with any questions you may have.

### STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Make the most of your student-life in Utrecht and join one of our international student organisations or get a Dutch buddy/mentor!

- [The Erasmus Student Network \(ESN\)](#) aims to make you feel at home by bringing you into contact with other students, both Dutch and international. They organise activities throughout the year to learn more about your new city and country and to just have fun! You can count on

excursions, parties, sports days and social events. ESN also provides practical help and advice about all aspects of life and study in the Netherlands.

- Or join the [Buddy Go Dutch programme](#) in which you will be matched with a Dutch student who will help you getting around in the city and the Netherlands in general.

### SPORTS & CULTURE

It is important to seek relaxation outside of your studies. This will help you blow off steam, gain energy and meet people. Practicing a sport or joining a workshop or a course are very good examples. For students there are some interesting options.

- [Olympos Sports Centre](#) offers a wide and varied range of sports and welcomes all HU students, offering a 50% discount on many activities. And the sporting centre is located right next to campus, so you're there in minutes after a hard day of studying.
- [Parnassos centre](#) provides courses and workshops in every field of the arts, including dance, theatre, music, film, creative writing and

photography. Get your creativity on in the city centre of Utrecht.

### WORKING IN THE NETHERLANDS

Students are allowed to have a side job in the Netherlands. Many international students plan to work part-time alongside their studies. Keep in mind, that you may not find a job straight away.

If you decide that you would like to find a job, there are certain regulations that you need to be aware of:

- Students with a Dutch residence permit for Study are only allowed to work for 16 hours a week, and full-time during the summer months (June, July, August). Your employer must arrange a work permit (TWV) for any form of part-time work other than an internship or work placement. A TWV is not required when you are performing work under a formal contract between the employer and the HU as part of your study programme at HU. Your employer may need a declaration from us confirming the restrictions on your working hours. You can request this by sending an email to [stip@hu.nl](mailto:stip@hu.nl).



Preparing for your stay - After arrival



Preparing for your stay - After arrival

- As soon as you are employed to do paid work in the Netherlands, you have to take out Dutch basic health insurance. As a non-EU student, your AON insurance is no longer sufficient once you start working.

We recommend you to look for health insurance as soon as possible once this applies to you, as you can expect fines if you do not arrange the insurance in time.

Visit [our website](#) for more about finding a job and the rules and regulations.

#### DISCOVERING THE CAMPUS

Studying at HU means you get to enjoy all the benefits and facilities of our campus: Utrecht Science Park (USP), a veritable miniature city on the outskirts of Utrecht. At the campus you will find the universities' buildings, libraries, student accommodation, restaurants and cafés, a sports centre, the university hospital and

various shops. It also enjoys excellent transport links to Utrecht and beyond.

Read more about the campus [on our website](#) and check out the interactive map.

#### DUTCH LESSONS

Luckily, almost everyone in the Netherlands speaks English. This often makes it less important for foreigners to learn Dutch.

On the other hand, a whole new world opens when you understand and speak a little bit of Dutch. Therefore HU offers a free Dutch for beginners course for exchange students, which is awarded with 5 ECTS. If you want to secure a spot in the course, make sure to tick the box to confirm this in your application *and* add the course to your learning agreement.

#### CONTACT

**Do you still have questions after all this?**

Don't hesitate to contact us by phone (+31) (0)88 481 81 81 or email [exchange@hu.nl](mailto:exchange@hu.nl).

Or you can visit the International Office at Padualaan 101 during the opening hours: Monday until Friday from 9.30am until 4.30pm.

We will gladly help you along.

#### IMMIGRATION RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

If you are studying at HU with a Dutch residence permit for Study, HU and the student both have rights and obligations. Please make sure to read the conditions on the [Dutch Immigration website](#) carefully, and keep track of your rights and obligations during your studies.

Please note that we require the following from you:

- You must inform the HU Immigration unit if you have changed your type of residence.
- You are expected to inform the HU Immigration unit if you wish to stop your study.
- You must be registered in a Dutch municipality.
- You may not work more than 16 hours a week (or full-time only during the summer months June, July and August). Your employer must arrange a working permit for you and you need to have a Dutch basic health insurance policy.
- You have an obligation to actively participate in your programme.



## COLOPHON

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# IMPACT YOUR FUTURE