

**EXCHANGE REPORT****Name****Year and semester for exchange**

Bolong Tang

2023-1

Exchange university

TU Delft

Degree programme

Computer Science

Exchange Semester at TU Delft, The Netherlands: A Comprehensive and Enriching Educational Experience

Before departure

My motivation to pursue exchange studies stemmed from a desire to broaden my academic and cultural horizons. I selected TU Delft in the Netherlands for its esteemed reputation in my field of study, its commitment to innovation, and the country's rich cultural heritage. Anticipating an immersive learning environment and the opportunity to engage with students from diverse backgrounds, I was excited to see how this experience would shape my global perspective.

Preparations involved a meticulous process: I took a basic Dutch language course to familiarize myself with everyday phrases, although I was aware that courses at TU Delft would be in English. The visa application was straightforward, thanks to the detailed guidelines provided by both TU Delft and the Dutch embassy. No vaccinations were required, but I ensured my health insurance covered international travel. Additionally, securing accommodation required early application to take advantage of university housing options.

Upon arrival

I arrived two weeks before the semester's start, allowing ample time to settle in. TU Delft organized an introductory week filled with tours, social events, and workshops designed to acclimate international students. The university boasts a vibrant student union, offering a variety of clubs ranging from sports to arts, facilitating an easy integration into student life.

Financials

I was fortunate to receive a scholarship from my home university, which significantly offset the living costs, higher than in Sweden. TU Delft's mandatory fees were reasonable, covering student union membership and access to facilities. To economize, I recommend using a bicycle for daily commute—a common and cost-effective practice in the Netherlands—and shopping at local markets for groceries.

Accommodation

The university's office provided a housing selection system where I got a place but finally I exchanged the housing with a Dutch student who was in the plan to exchange at KTH with the notification of KTH exchange office. I lived in a student residence in the campus, fostering a close-knit community atmosphere. The cost was below my initial budget, and the convenience and the quality of living conditions is superb.

University and studies

TU Delft's expansive campus is a hub for innovation, offering a wide range of programs in science, humanities, and technology. The educational approach at TU Delft, focusing on practical, research-based learning, was a stark contrast to the more theoretical emphasis at my home university. A typical day included lectures, group projects, and seminars, with coursework delivered in English. Additionally, TU Delft offered language courses, allowing me to further improve my Dutch.

Courses

The courses I enrolled in were carefully chosen to complement my Master's program, ensuring a seamless credit transfer to my home university. The interactive teaching style, combining theory with practical case studies, was particularly enriching. The emphasis on group work enhanced my collaborative skills and provided new perspectives on global challenges.

City and country

The Netherlands, with its picturesque landscapes, rich history, and open-minded culture, was captivating. Initially, the directness of Dutch communication was surprising, but I quickly appreciated the honesty and efficiency it fostered. Exploring the country's cities, museums, and countryside offered a deeper understanding of Dutch heritage and contemporary society.

Leisure and social activities

My leisure time was filled with exploring local attractions, participating in university clubs, and cycling through the country's extensive bike paths. TU Delft's diverse community facilitated forming lasting friendships with students from around the world. The university also organized cultural and sports activities, offering a balanced and engaging student life.

Sustainability

Sustainability was a core aspect of life in the Netherlands. My journey to TU Delft was made by a short flight, minimizing carbon emissions. I also use my bicycle for daily commute. The university promoted sustainable living through recycling programs and encouraged the use of digital textbooks. Additionally, the widespread use of bicycles significantly reduced the reliance on cars.

Other recommendations and observations

For future exchange students, I recommend engaging as much as possible with the local community and culture. Be open to new experiences and viewpoints. The Netherlands offers a unique blend of historical richness and modern innovation, making it an ideal destination for exchange studies. This journey has been a pivotal chapter in my academic and personal development, offering lessons and memories that will last a lifetime.