

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

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**Exchange university**

TU Delft

**Degree programme**

Civil and Arch Engineering

## Best decision I made recently.

### Before departure

I am interested in pursuing my career in academia. Thus, receiving my MSc from more than one renowned university will definitely be a plus for my CV, and will help me for my PhD applications in the future.

Choosing TU Delft over other universities for my exchange studies was not a difficult choice; the attention they pay for their research facilities is remarkable. TU Delft is heavily dependent upon excellent and unique research infrastructure to attract outstanding scientific talent, to train new generations of engineers and to conduct ground-breaking research, and I was aiming to participate in one of these outstanding researches going there. Moreover, one of the most important aspects of developing new ideas is sharing knowledge with others, this often occurs via personal contact with researchers. I hoped this opportunity will introduce me to new academic contacts: Professors, researchers and fellow students. Furthermore, the flexibility and freedom given for an exchange student to choose his courses is certainly unique compared to other universities.

As an international student, I had to apply for a Dutch residence permit. No much preparation was done by me, only notifying TU Delft that I will need one, and filling few applications stating that I am ready to take medical tests there if necessary. However, I had to send 4500 Euro to start the process, which one can be exempted from if he/she has a scholarship. And then he/she will have to send the scholarship papers as well.

### Upon arrival

I arrived 2 weeks earlier. Indeed, there was a very extended orientation program, however, I couldn't actively participate on it because I was busy looking for an accommodation at the city.

### Financials

I received an Erasmus scholarship, paying around 300 euros for each month you spend outside Sweden. The city is way less expensive compared to Stockholm. Moreover, there is a 228 euro fee I had to pay to ask TU Delft to arrange my accommodation there (which I don't encourage anyone received his/her admission after April to pay it) and another 317 euro for the Visa application.

The living cost is so cheap compared to Stockholm. Furthermore, you can move literally everywhere within Delft with a bike, which will save a lot from expected transportation costs.

### Accommodation

I applied to get a room through the university by paying a non-refundable fee of 228 euros. However, they are following a First come First served policy. And since exchange students finalise their admission a little bit later than full time students, I found most of the nearby rooms are already taken, and I was offered a room in The Hague (another city!! 45 mins biking to the university). So, I declined their offer and of course I lost my 228 euros for nothing. On the other hand, it was very stressful and hard experience to find a room after arrival, and all accommodations close to the campus are very expensive (average of 450-500 euros), but cheaper rooms are available if one spend more time and effort looking.

## **University and studies**

In my field of study, civil engineering, TU Delft is considered the best in Europe and the second best in the world. And I could see why closely! The facilities, laboratories, lectures' room and the quality of teaching there is unmatched.

The main difference it has from KTH is the diversity of courses available for students to choose from. Moreover, most of the courses there are recorded and available online within 30 mins after the class, which makes revising the lectures and summarising it way easier. Although the courses are more demanding than those at KTH, lower credit hours are assigned for the courses, which mean one need to take up to 8 courses to fulfil the 30 credit hours needed by a semester. Moreover, the courses are really challenging and they expect much work from the student, which required most of us to leave the campus by 11:00 pm most of our time there. Also, most of the exams are oral exams which examine your understanding to the studied material, but not how well you can use your calculator!

Despite the many courses we had to take per quarter, we still had a day off each week. The contact hours are not that much for each course, but most of the work must be outside classes and submitting assignments and essays. Finally, all the courses available for the MSc program are given in English.

## **Courses**

I chose my courses in a way that allow me to test various disciplines in our field: Bridges, Mechanics, Retrofitting of existing structures and Structural dynamics.

Courses received:

1. Concrete bridges (more attention paid to prefabricated concrete bridges, cable stayed bridges and various construction methods). By far, it was the best course I had there.
2. Computational Modelling of Structures: Using DIANA to perform nonlinear analysis in different type of simple structural systems. The most demanding course I took, we had to submit a report every week for the whole 6 weeks.
3. Fibre-reinforced Polymer (FRP) Structures (behaviour, properties & role in structural design and retrofitting of existing structures).
4. Capita Selecta Concrete Structures (design of special structures as reservoirs, tanks & Silos).
5. Forensic Structural Engineering: understand & explain important structural failure mechanisms in various materials and coming up with design measures to avoid these problems.
6. Dynamics & Int. to Continuum Mechanics: Analyse static & dynamic problems of structural mechanics. Very introductory course but taught by a brilliant teacher, the best I met there.

## **City and country**

Unfortunately, the locals there are not very welcoming as is the case here in Stockholm.

## **Leisure and social activities**

Unfortunately, for a personal reason, I couldn't participate in any of the available activities. But I know there are a lot of opportunities available there for students.

## **Other recommendations and observations**

- People planning to go for an exchange in the third semester will miss the only mandatory course in the program at KTH (TaMOS). I suggest they take it in the second quarter of the first semester so they don't have to take the course during their Thesis work.

- Start your application as soon as possible so you can guarantee a nearby room provided by the university there.
- Don't miss the orientation program. Very well organised and the best way to meet new friends and class mates. Most of the assignments are done in groups, so be sure you start your classes with enough friends. Also, use this time to travel around and see the beautiful Netherlands.
- The studies there are really demanding. Be prepared mentally for that. Nothing is too hard to do or follow, but it will demand a lot of your time.