

*Study abroad at*  
**School of Business and Economics**

**INFORMATION SHEET FOR STUDENTS 2017-2018**

**The city of Maastricht**

Maastricht has everything big cities offer: fine restaurants, excellent hotels, theatres and clubs, but with the added advantage of being safe and manageable in size. In short, Maastricht and its surroundings have the best of both worlds!



A city rich in history, Maastricht has a truly international flavour and as the charming provincial capital of Limburg, it is one of the oldest and most attractive cities in the Netherlands.

It is centrally located in the heart of Europe, bordering Belgium (a brisk 47 minute walk or 11 minutes of vigorous bike riding away) and Germany (only 35 minutes by car), which means that Brussels is 1.5 hours away, Amsterdam 2 hours, Paris and Frankfurt 3 hours, and London 4.5 hours. Also, there are nine airports within an hour's travel, where low cost carriers will take you to any European city in a heartbeat.

Maastricht is a shoppers' paradise: there are about 500 shops vying for your hard-earned cash. Famous fashion brands have beautiful shops here, and there are countless boutiques and speciality shops that present unique fashion and design items and accessories. It's historic city centre provides a fantastic backdrop to the ultimate shopping experience.

It is also the culinary capital of the Netherlands, with more than 500 cafes, many culinary shops and 157 restaurants, three of which have Michelin stars.

## Maastricht University

Maastricht University is highly regarded in Europe for its unique teaching style and high-quality research. In fact, its School of Business and Economics has been awarded three prestigious accreditations, resulting in the so-called Triple Crown accreditation. Only 1% of business schools worldwide have this Triple Crown, meaning that the School is amongst a very select group of institutions such as INSEAD, Vlerick Business School, London Business School and SBE's exchange partners HEC Montreal, Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV-EAESP), and Aston Business School.



The School is a distinctly international institution with a student population numbering over 60 nationalities. Of the total of 4.200 bachelor's and master's students more than 2.500 (60%) have a foreign background. Annually, SBE welcomes about 700 exchange students from over 145 partner universities worldwide.



## Eligibility

As exchange student you must be officially nominated by your home university. Also, we can only accept you if you major in Economics or Business (or related). If you are a bachelor's student, you have to have completed at least two semesters of relevant study before you start your exchange programme at SBE. If you want to take master's level courses while at SBE, you have to have a valid and relevant bachelor's degree when you start your exchange here.

## English Language Requirement

Since the working language at our School is English and all courses are taught in English, all exchange students are required to have an advanced level of the English language - comparable to the level B2 of the [Common European Framework of Reference](#) - to be able to successfully complete their courses. SBE does **not** require any proof of an English language test score, but do make sure your English is up to par when you start your exchange.

Please note that if the goal of your exchange at SBE is to improve your English, this is not the right place to come to. Our educational system - Problem Based Learning or PBL - requires you to actively take part in the tutorial meetings as we call them. The PBL method is explicitly student-centred rather than teacher-centred, and the students are expected to take the initiative. Speaking up and actively taking part in discussions is a crucial part of the system and this will also influence your final grades. Therefore it is extremely important that you have an excellent command of both written and spoken English.

## Problem-Based Learning System (PBL)

PBL was adopted by Maastricht University in 1976. PBL tries to overcome the weaknesses of traditional education by giving the students a very active role. Students do not spend hours listening to lectures – although there are some, usually at the start of the study period - but instead, per course, attend two-hour tutorial group meetings twice a week. These meetings form the core part of the study programme and are the driving force for learning. Within the tutorial groups, problems are presented as cases and are researched in periods of six to eight weeks. At SBE, a study period consists of seven study weeks and one exam week.

A tutorial group is composed of 8 to 15 students plus a tutor: a staff member who guides the group process but who does not automatically give answers to the problems. It is up to the students to discover where their knowledge falls short and to fill in the gaps. To do so, students will have to spend a lot of time between tutorial meetings to read articles and books, and to do research in the university library.



More in-depth information about the Problem Based Learning is available via:

- ✓ [www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/education/exchange/sbe](http://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/education/exchange/sbe)  
→ More information → Problem-Based Learning
- ✓ [www.umpblprep.nl](http://www.umpblprep.nl)
- ✓ Our video on YouTube [PBL in a nutshell](#)

## Important Dates

### FALL SEMESTER

**Compulsory Introduction Days**  
31 August & 01 September 2017

**Fall semester period incl. exams**  
04 September 2017 – 31 January 2018

**Application deadline for exchange students**  
15 May 2017

**Course registration and deadline**  
 Period 1: 01 June 2017 – 15 July 2017  
 Period 2: 01 June 2017 – 17 September 2017  
 Period 3: 01 June 2017 – 12 November 2017

### SPRING SEMESTER

**Compulsory Introduction Days**  
01 February & 02 February 2018

**Spring semester period incl. exams**  
05 February – 15 July 2018

**Application deadline for exchange students**  
15 October 2017

**Course registration and deadline**  
 Period 4: 01 June 2017 – 03 December 2017  
 Period 5: 01 June 2017 – 25 February 2018  
 Period 6: 01 June 2017 – 22 April 2018

### Deadlines

As long as you register for courses before the deadline, participation is guaranteed; *there is no limit to the number of participants per course.*

Please be aware that all deadlines at SBE are extremely strict. Once the deadline has passed, the system closes automatically and *you can no longer register or deregister for courses.* Up until the deadlines, you can register/deregister and switch at will.

## Course Selection

### Course database

In the [online course database](#) you can find all the information you need about SBE's bachelor's and master's courses, such as the course coordinator(s), learning outcomes and competences, number of ECTS, literature and prerequisites. **Make sure you meet those prerequisites.**

If the information in the course database is not enough, you may contact the relevant course coordinator at SBE. You will find the e-mail address in each course description.

Please note that SBE does not offer academic advice; if you need feedback on your course selection talk to the academic advisor of your home university.

### First year courses

Most exchange students will take 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year courses, but you are allowed to sign up for some of our first year courses if needed. If you want to combine second and third year courses with first year courses, or if you want to combine bachelor's level courses with master's courses, please realise that you might have your tutorials- and possibly even the exams- on the same day and at the same time. If this happens it is up to you to talk to the course schedulers for a solution; however, SBE will not alter the course and exam schedule to accommodate you.

### Study load

Per semester you can register for a maximum of two (2) and a minimum of one (1) course per study period and only one (1) skills training per skills training period. Skills training sessions are not compulsory. At SBE we consider a fulltime study load per semester to be 4 courses and 1 skills training.

#### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

**Most SBE courses (except for the skills trainings) are worth 6.5 ECTS.  
In some study programmes, however, the number of ECTS per course is different.  
CHECK the number of ECTS before signing up for a course.**

### Course changes after the deadline. Hint: not possible

At SBE, unlike at most other universities, students **are not allowed to change their course choice after the registration deadline**. As mentioned before, Maastricht University uses the Problem Based Learning Method, where the average group size is 15 students. We therefore need to do a lot of planning to find enough rooms and teachers/tutors, and to make sure there are about the same number of students in each tutorial group. If we allowed students to change after the deadline this would create a lot of organisational and logistical challenges.

This is why you need to carefully check our online course database, as it should give you enough information about the courses to make an academically sound decision. Again, if you still need more information though you can always contact the relevant course coordinator at SBE via email.

**If you have to get advice on, or pre-approval for, your SBE courses, get this taken care of well before the registration deadline.**



## Immigration matters

Nationals of the following countries do not need a **long-stay visa** to study in the Netherlands: Members of the EU, EEA, Switzerland, **UK**, Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, South Korea, USA and Vatican City State. A long-stay visa is necessary for nationals of all other countries.

For a stay of more than three (3) months, all non-EU nationals need a **residence permit**. Please check the webpage of our Visa Office for more information: <http://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/visa>

If applicable, UM's Visa Office will contact you regarding the visa and/or residence permit application. If you hear from them, we urge you to respond **as soon as possible** and to provide them with the necessary documents.

Students needing a long-stay visa: without it you are not allowed to enter the Netherlands. It is not possible to be in the Netherlands and wait for your visa there. If you miss more than one week of tutorials because of visa problems, you can no longer take part in the class.

### Important note:

**If your long-stay visa is not ready in time, do not apply for a short-stay visa instead. If you do so anyway, Dutch Immigration Laws will oblige us to cancel your SBE student registration and you will not be allowed to follow courses.**

### \*Nuffic Certificate – for Chinese nationals only\*

All Chinese nationals (even if they are currently living outside China) who wish to enrol in an English-taught programme at a Dutch higher education institution must apply for a Nuffic Certificate to be eligible for a Dutch entry visa. This does not apply to Hong Kong (SAR), Macau (SAR) or Taiwan (ROC) nationals, or to those with British National Overseas citizenship.

The Nuffic Certificate is a document issued by Nuffic (Netherlands organization for international cooperation in higher education) that confirms the validity of students' diplomas and degrees, and their English language proficiency test scores. The minimum language requirement is a TOEFL iBT (only the iBT version is accepted) score of at least 79 or an IELTS (academic) score of at least 6.0.

Chinese nationals who study at one of our partner institutions in Hong Kong (SAR), Macau (SAR), Taiwan (ROC) or any English-speaking country (e.g. Australia, New Zealand, United States, Canada, Singapore) where education is completely in English are exempted from the English language proficiency test. When applying for the Nuffic Certificate these students must provide a motivation letter stating that they request an exemption for the English language test because they are currently studying at a university located in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau or in an English speaking country. We will provide the Nuffic organization with a list of the names of the students who are eligible for the exemption.

Note that an exemption may be given only for the English language test score part of the application for a Nuffic certificate. *If you are a Chinese national you will always need a Nuffic Certificate* (in this case only proving the validity of your diplomas and degrees) as part of the application for a long-stay visa for the Netherlands.

We strongly recommend that you apply for the Nuffic Certificate at least four months prior to your intended departure for the Netherlands. Please note that the application for a Nuffic Certificate does NOT replace the visa application, or the exchange application procedures of SBE or other Dutch universities and Institutions of Higher Education.

The entire application procedure for the Nuffic Certificate can be found via: <https://www.studyinholland.nl/> → Practical Matters → Visas and permits → Nuffic Certificate for Chinese students → Application procedure

## Housing

Most exchange students end up staying at the UM Guesthouse. As you can tell, this organisation is affiliated with Maastricht University. The main buildings are located in the vicinity of SBE and are easily accessible by bike or on foot. Unfortunately, SBE cannot guarantee that all students who apply for a room in the UM Guesthouse actually get a room there. Applications are processed on a first-come-first-served basis, and we have no influence on that process.



If you want a room in the UM Guesthouse, go to <http://www.maastrichthousing.com>, and click *I am a student* >> *I am an Exchange student*. Select the dates of your stay, and you will get an overview of available rooms. To book a room you first need to register as user; registration costs are non-refundable. If the UM Guesthouse is fully booked, or if you prefer to stay elsewhere, you can click on the option *private market*.

If you do not want to use [maastrichthousing.com](http://www.maastrichthousing.com) to find housing on the private market you can just browse the internet yourself for landlords or companies that offer furnished rooms in Maastricht, or you can look for local students who need someone to sublet their room or apartment to.

Examples of letting agencies:

<http://www.jules-housing.com/>

<https://www.thestudenthotel.com/maastricht/>

It is up to you if you want to try and find a room on the private market, but if you do then keep the following in mind:

- ✓ ALWAYS check whether the address of the room/apartment offered actually exists (via google maps, for example).
- ✓ NEVER transfer money in advance!
- ✓ ALWAYS check the credentials of the person (sub)letting the room.
- ✓ CHECK if your room/apartment is furnished (check for mattress and linens!) or unfurnished. Rooms rented at the UM Guesthouse are all furnished.

**Warning:** Please note that the International Relations Office at SBE cannot and will not interfere on your behalf if you have problems, issues or legal disputes with your landlord, not even if this landlord is the UM Guesthouse. Talk to your own lawyer, or check <http://www.housinghelpdesk.com/home>.



## Cost Estimate

<b>Accommodation in UM Guesthouse:</b>	Starts at approx. €350 per month (double room).
<b>Food / meals:</b>	<p>SBE houses a cafeteria facility that offers a broad assortment of food and beverages at student-friendly prices. UM does not offer meal plans.</p> <p>Groceries: expect to pay approx. €50 per week</p> <p>Restaurants: €10 and up (main dish)</p>
<b>Public transportation:</b>	<p>Within Maastricht public transportation means using the city bus. To go from one place in the Netherlands to the next, you can use the train. You will need an OV-chip card to use public transportation in the Netherlands.</p> <p>More information: <a href="http://9292.nl/en">http://9292.nl/en</a> <a href="http://9292.nl/en/fares-and-public-transport/ov-chipkaart">http://9292.nl/en/fares-and-public-transport/ov-chipkaart</a> <a href="https://www.arriva.nl/consumers.htm">https://www.arriva.nl/consumers.htm</a> <a href="http://www.ns.nl/en">http://www.ns.nl/en</a></p>
<b>Academic expenses:</b>	About €80 to €90 per study period for books and copy costs.
<b>Other administrative fees:</b>	No fees to be paid at SBE; you just pay your normal tuition at your home university for the semester.