

KU LEUVEN FACULTY OF ARTS CAMPUS LEUVEN

INFORMATION FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS 2017-2018

ADMISSION

- ❑ In principle we accept all students selected by their own University under existing exchange agreements. Please note that we do not recognise 'free-movers'. Therefore, if your University does not have a link with us, please ask your International Coordinator to contact us.
- ❑ Prospective students are asked to complete the online application form for exchange students on the following website: www.kuleuven.be/admissions/exchange/application.html. The official deadline for this is 30 April if you intend to come during the first semester or during the full year, and 1 October if you intend to come for the second semester only.
- ❑ Please note that the following information refers *to students coming to study at our Leuven campus only*. The programmes in translation and interpretation taught in Antwerp and in Brussels are now officially part of the KU Leuven Faculty of Arts as well, but their exchange activities are administered separately. If you are unsure where you will be studying, please ask your home coordinator for confirmation and afterwards contact the coordinator in Antwerp or in Brussels for more information if applicable.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2017-2018

AUTUMN TERM (FIRST SEMESTER)

Orientation Days	During the week of 18 September
Opening Academic Year	25 September
Teaching starts	26 September
All Saints' Day	1 November: no classes, all offices closed
All Souls' Day	2 November: no classes, all offices closed
Armistice Day	11 November: no classes, all offices closed
Teaching ends	23 December
Christmas break	25 December – 7 January: no classes, all offices closed
Exam revision period	8-14 January
Exam period	15 January – 3 February
Patron Saint's Day	2 February: no exams, all offices closed
Mid-year break	3-11 February: no classes

SPRING TERM (SECOND SEMESTER)

Orientation Days (for new students)	During the week of 5 February
Teaching starts	12 February
Easter break	31 March – 15 April: no classes
May Day	1 May: no classes, all offices closed
Ascension Day	10 May: no classes, all offices closed
Whit Monday	21 May: no classes, all offices closed
Teaching ends	26 May
Exam revision period	26 May – 10 June
Exam period	11-30 June (in some faculties exams start earlier!)

CONTACT DETAILS

You can reach Nadine Kerstens:

- ❑ by telephone: +32 16 324861 (office)
- ❑ by e-mail: nadine.kerstens@kuleuven.be
- ❑ by post: KU Leuven, Fac. of Arts, Blijde Inkomststraat 21 bus 3312, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium
- ❑ live: in office LETT 00.24

TRAVEL

- ❑ We trust you will be able to find the best way to travel to Leuven yourself. There are several trains per hour from various directions, and the airport at Brussels (13 minutes from Leuven) is also well-served (two direct trains per hour). Do not take the taxi from the airport, as that will cost you c.€60 (vs. €8.90 for the train). P.S. Please note that if you are flying low-cost to 'Brussels-South (Charleroi)' you will end up at an airport near the French border. Do make sure you can get to Leuven the same day, or arrange accommodation along the way.
- ❑ www.kuleuven.be/transportation/ provides some details about the various options (train/air/car/...). The Belgian railways site www.b-rail.be/ and the KU Leuven podcast for new international students www.kuleuven.be/english/podcast are other useful tools.
P.S. When trying to find your way, always ask for 'Leuven', and not for 'Louvain', as otherwise a lot of people in Belgium will send you to our French-speaking sister university in Wallonia.

ARRIVAL

- ❑ Please make sure you arrive a few days before the beginning of the Orientation Days, to allow yourself time to find accommodation.
- ❑ Upon arrival, check in to your guest room directly or go to the Housing Service (cf. below under 'Accommodation'), and come to the Faculty of Arts at your earliest convenience. Please do make sure to visit the Faculty of Arts before the beginning of the academic year, we will be able to update you with any last-minute information.
- ❑ The Faculty of Arts is very easy to find from the railway station. It takes less than 10 minutes to walk the distance (follow 'Maria-Theresiastraat'). Please see the map on p. 5 of this brochure.
- ❑ A number of our students have volunteered to be 'buddies', i.e. to guide you around and help you settle in (cf. www.kuleuven.be/english/studentsservices/orientationdays/askbuddy). As Flemish students have a reputation for being 'distant', we suggest you use this opportunity to make friends with at least some of them upon your arrival. You will also be able to contact them before your arrival, and hopefully to arrange for them to meet you at the railway station.

ACCOMMODATION

- ❑ Essential information regarding accommodation in Leuven can be found on our 'data sheet' (enclosed). For more information, please consult www.kuleuven.be/accommodation/.
- ❑ Only in certain cases will you be able to move into your term-time accommodation immediately. In all other cases, we advise you to book a guest room (e.g. a room in the youth hostel) for the first couple of nights (cf. the bottom of www.kuleuven.be/accommodation/guesthousing/index.html).
- ❑ To find a room in Leuven we recommend you:
 - to try to reserve a university room. A limited number of university rooms are available for international students. Please consult <https://admin.kuleuven.be/sab/ex/en/accommodation/index> for further information (early and strict deadline !!!) ;
 - to consider travelling up and down to Leuven during the summer to find a room, if you come for the whole year. Now that the housing crisis in Leuven is over, we believe that this is an expensive option, however;
 - to make sure you arrive as early as possible (before 25 September 2017 or before 12 February 2018). All is not lost if you cannot arrive on or before those days, but you may need more time to find a room, and/or end up with more expensive or lower-quality accommodation.
PS: Please note that the Housing Service is closed during week-ends and on 2 February (Patron Saint's Day).
- ❑ Most students in Leuven, both local and international, rent a private room (sub-leased in the case of semester students). Rent ranges from €300 to €375 per month, with the average price being around €350 per month. Rent is always room (+utilities) only, and never includes food.
- ❑ If you want to have a look at what is available, go to 'Kotwijs': www.kotwijs.be (updated from 9 May 2017 onwards). Choose 'rooms from a private landlord'.
Please note that you do not rent a room from the Housing Service as such – you always have to get in touch with the student or the landlord/landlady yourself.
- ❑ Someone else who might have rooms available is Ms Christel Snels at the US-run Loyola International Nachbahr Huis (christel.snels@rec.kuleuven.be). These rooms are only available for students who are staying for the whole year.
- ❑ It is also possible to find rooms just by looking around on the streets and watching out for orange posters advertising a 'kamer te huur' (room to let). Please note that the rooms being offered are not always in the property where the posters are displayed.

- ❑ Always make sure your landlord uses a university-approved contract (available from the Housing Service in Dutch [=legal status] and English [=for information only]) before you sign anything.
- ❑ Should you decide to use an 'accommodation agency' (which we do not recommend!) always contact the Housing Service before you sign a contract. Some of them have a tradition of not refunding deposits at the end of the student's stay etc.
- ❑ Kitchen utensils and bedding are not usually provided. You may find left-overs from your predecessors, but we suggest you do not in any case bring them with you. There are several cheap and/or second-hand shops in Leuven where you can buy them and even return them when you leave.

ORIENTATION DAYS

- ❑ The Orientation Days will take place during the week of 18 September 2017. New students arriving for the second semester are invited to the Orientation Days during the week of 5 February 2018.
- ❑ This is a very useful way to get to know Leuven, the University, and a lot of your fellow students, and it's free. More information is available from June onwards on www.kuleuven.be/orientationdays/. Please also register through that website.
- ❑ See the end of the section below for the details of the Faculty of Arts academic information session that concludes the Orientation Days. You should consider your presence at that session as compulsory.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMME + SELECTION OF COURSES (OR MODULES)

- ❑ As we are an 'ECTS Label' university we require all Erasmus+ students to submit a Learning Agreement (enclosed if you are an Erasmus+ student) before their arrival. Please return the Learning Agreement at your earliest convenience, but note that unless your University requires an earlier answer you should not expect a reply before 1 September. As far as we are concerned, you will of course be allowed to change your programme at the beginning of the semester; the deadline for registering for courses is the third Wednesday of the semester (11 October 2017 and 28 February 2018 respectively). This means we do not require you to register for courses in advance or immediately upon arrival: you can use the first two weeks of the semester to 'shop around', after which we expect you to come and tell us what courses you intend to take for credit. Unless you have made clear other arrangements with your home coordinator, you then forward your final programme, incl. course descriptions, to him/her for approval.
- ❑ As long as you meet the prerequisites, you are in principle free to choose any course on offer in regular (i.e. state-subsidised) study programmes. Please note that these do *not* include programmes such as the 'Master of European Politics and Policies' or the 'Master of European Studies'. In other words, you will not be allowed to choose courses from those programmes, or only to a very limited extent.
- ❑ With the above exception you need not limit yourself to courses on offer in the Faculty of Arts only, although you will need prior approval (through us) if you suggest a programme consisting mainly of courses from one other faculty.
- ❑ The selection you make may be limited by your own University in order to integrate your period of study at Leuven with your normal programme at home. Please make sure you know what your guidelines are *before* you leave for Leuven.
- ❑ The selection you make may also be limited or set in terms of study load. In principle you are expected to collect 60 ECTS credits for a full-time full-year stay, or 30 ECTS credits for a full-time workload for one semester. Again your own coordinator at home will be able to tell you if and how far you are allowed to deviate from the norm.
- ❑ If you do not speak Dutch, you will (*from 15 July onwards!*) find course information on onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/e/SC_50074694.htm#bl=all. Please note that until 15 July, that website shows this year's information (=2016-2017). Until that time, please use the attached provisional list of courses for 2017-2018. Course information can be found by typing in the course number on onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/e/
- ❑ All other courses (except languages) are in principle taught through Dutch, or are available to fee-paying students only. However, once you are in Leuven we might be able to organise alternatives for courses taught through Dutch – you can find references to such courses or modules (incl. the English translation of their titles) by typing in your requirements on onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/e/
- ❑ Als je wel Nederlands spreekt of verstaat, kun je gaan kijken op onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/n/
Je kiest dan gewoon de Faculteit en daarna de studierichting die je interesseert. Zo vind je alle vakbeschrijvingen, uurroosters, enz.
Pas op: ook op die site vind je de definitieve informatie voor 2017-2018 pas vanaf 15 juli.
- ❑ If you want to *study* English, German, French, Italian, Spanish etc. at university you should look at onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/v/e/SC_51016753.htm (BA programme), https://onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/e/SC_51017026.htm#bl=all (MA) respectively.

Please note, however, that those languages are studied very analytically in Leuven, and that you should actually speak the languages concerned before you study them. The same holds for the study of the literature(s) in those languages.

- ❑ If you want to *learn* (instead of study) a language you should go to the Centre for Modern Languages (cf. www.clt.be). You will have to pay to take their courses (€120 - €135 per language and per level), and KU Leuven cannot refund the cost. However, if you are an Erasmus+ student and you want to learn Dutch, you can do so for free at the Institute for Modern Languages (cf. ilt.kuleuven.be) – your fee is paid for by us (and by the European Commission / Flemish government).
It is always nice to speak (even if it is only a little of) your host country's language. If you want to do so, however, you will have to persevere – Flemish people will automatically switch to your own language or to English if they detect a foreign accent. That is also your safety net – you can always survive with English (and often also with French).
- ❑ Two important details: all the information, incl. timetables, will be definitive on 15 July only. Therefore please check the information again at that time. Secondly, you will remain an exchange student even if you take all your courses from the Study Abroad Programme in European Culture and Society – technically speaking the latter is open to fee-paying non-European students only.
- ❑ All the above (and much more) will be explained in detail in the academic information sessions to be held on Monday 25 September 2017 from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and on Monday 12 February 2018 from 9 to 11 a.m. (for new students only) in LETT 08.16 (8th floor, Faculty of Arts building, Blijde Inkomststraat 21, Leuven). **Please make sure that you attend the session at the beginning of your stay in Leuven, as you will miss out on a lot of information if you do not!**

EXAMS

- ❑ A number of your exams may be 'oral exams'. This is nothing to be afraid of – you do not have to improvise on the spot, but get between 20 and 60 minutes to prepare your answers. You do this in the same way as you would do for a written exam, except that at the end of your preparation you present your answer orally to the examiner. He/she may then ask some more questions to make sure that you have really understood what you are saying. If you do this well, your results may actually be higher than for a written exam, where you do not have the chance to defend yourself.
- ❑ More information on how to cope with exams will be given at the end of November and at the beginning of May.

HEALTH

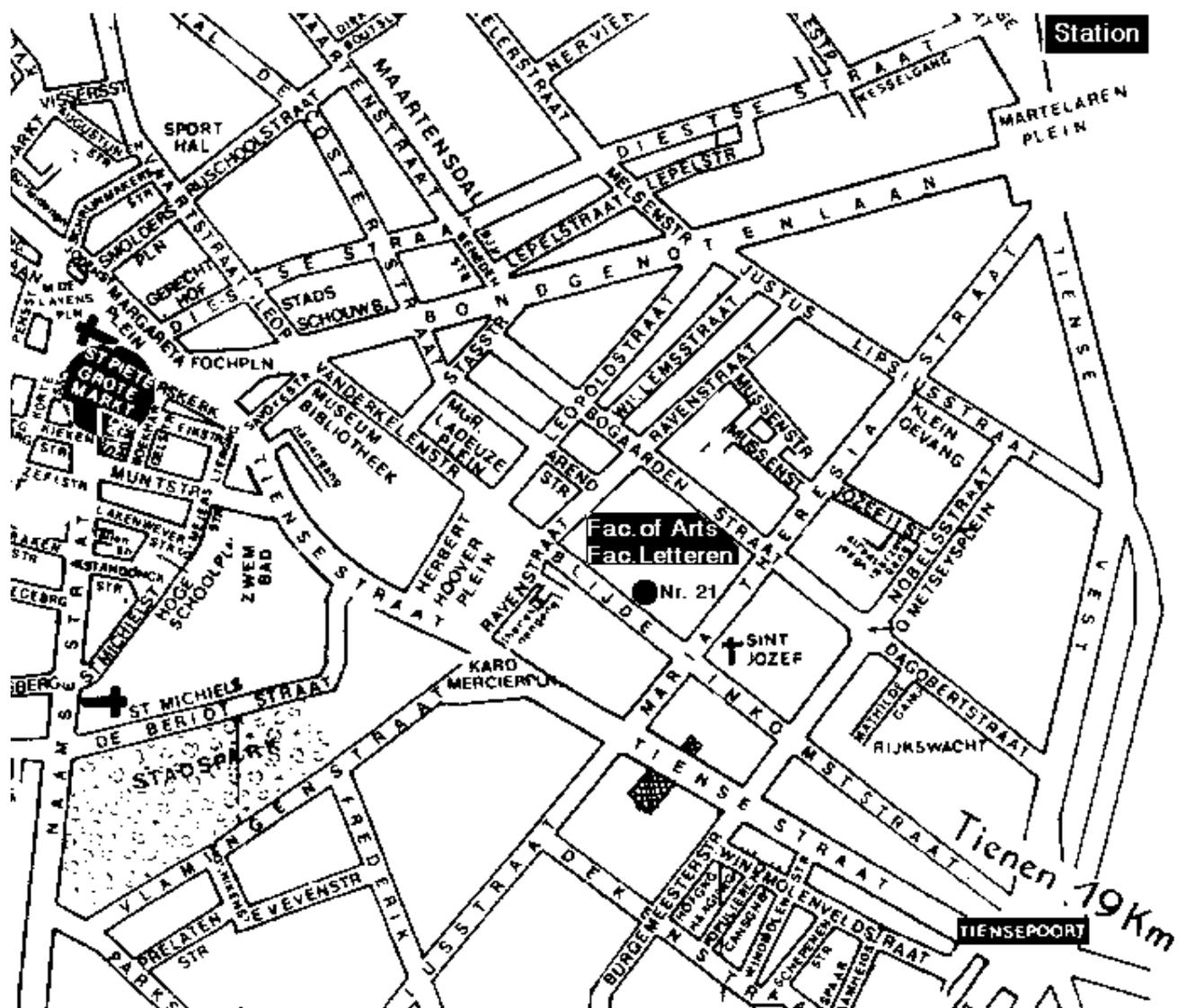
- ❑ If you are an EEA student you should ask your health service to give you a European Health Insurance Card to make sure you receive medical treatment at the same cost as the local students (i.e. roughly three-quarters of the cost of a visit to the doctor is reimbursed). Non-EEA students will find more information on www.kuleuven.be/english/services/insurances.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- ❑ www.kuleuven.be/english/ and (in particular) www.kuleuven.be/english/living.html
KU Leuven's homepages for international students and scholars.
- ❑ www.kuleuven.be/welcome/
KU Leuven's website for newly arriving international students and scholars.
- ❑ www.kuleuven.be/pangaea/
The homepage of 'Pangaea', the University's meeting place for international students. Very useful if you want to meet other international students or if you want to sign up for daytrips to Belgian or international places of interest.

Enjoy your stay!

Nadine Kerstens
Roger Janssens



Incoming exchange students: a quick guide to what to do (next)

1. Find a room: consult 'kotwijs' (www.kotwijs.be) or go to the Housing Service (Studentenhuisvesting), Naamsestraat 80.
2. Visit the Faculty of Arts (Blijde Inkomststraat 21, room LETT 00.24) for your Welcome Pack and any last-minute information.
3. Register at the University (Registrar's Office, University Hall, Naamsestraat 22). Take your 'letter of admission', proof of enrolment at your home university, passport or ID-card, housing contract, and the money you might need for third-party liability insurance (c.€13, only for non-EAA students). You will receive a student card which also doubles as your library card (and your sports and/or culture card if you decide to choose those options).
4. Visit the municipal Foreigners' Office (Van Overstraetenplein 1, cf. the building marked 'Stadskantoor' near the railway station). You will be told the precise procedure for 2017-2018 when you register at the University. At the Foreigners' Office you will need your passport, 3 passport-sized photos (4.5 * 3.5 cm, with your head being 3 * 2 cm), proof of registration at KU Leuven, proof of health insurance (EEA students only), proof of sufficient income (grant or proof of solvency) (non-EEA students only).
5. Take part in the Orientation Days (see www.kuleuven.be/orientationdays/ for more information). As part of the Orientation Days, attend the academic information session on the first Monday of the semester (25 September 2017, 10.30-12.30, in LETT 08.16; 12 February 2018, 9-11, in LETT 08.16).
6. Activate (activate.kuleuven.be) your intranet account either from your student room connection or from a PC-room (e.g. Dekenstraat 2). You can do this from the morning after you have enrolled as a student. Your userid is 'rQQQQQQQ', with 'QQQQQQQ' being the last 7 digits of your student number (see your student card). Your activation code will be given to you on a scratch card at registration. Do activate your account as quickly as possible, as you will need it to access the PC's in the PC-rooms (cf. admin.kuleuven.be/icts/english/pcrooms/index) and to use our digital learning environment 'Toledo'. P.S.: You will be expected to use your KU Leuven e-mail account ('firstname.surname@student.kuleuven.be') for all official communication.
7. Register for a Dutch course at the ILT (Dekenstraat 6, ilt.kuleuven.be) if you'd like to and/or for other language courses at the CLT (Dekenstraat 4, www.clt.be) if you have to.
8. Finalise your study programme:
 - als je Nederlands spreekt/verstaat: onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/n/F_50000275.htm en klik op het programma dat het dichtst bij je interesse aanleunt (vergeet niet om op 'uurrooster' te klikken);
 - if you do not speak Dutch and you are not studying languages: see the enclosed provisional list of courses for 2017-2018 (before 15 July) onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/e/SC_50074694.htm (after 15 July)
 - if you do not speak Dutch but you are studying languages: onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/v/e/F_50000275.htm;
'Linguistics and literature'=Dutch/English/French/German/Greek/Hebrew/Italian/Latin/Spanish; enquire about Gothic/Kiswahili/Portuguese/Sanskrit/Swedish; 'Arabic and Islamic studies'=Arabic/Turkish/Persian; 'Japanology'= Japanese/Korean; 'Ancient Near East'=Aramaic/Coptic/Demotic/Egyptian/Sumerian/Ugaritic; 'Sinology'=Chinese; 'Slavic and East European studies'=Polish/Russian/Old (Church) Slavonic

The timetables for those courses can be found after 15 August by clicking on the number of contact hours in the course descriptions.

Do come and see us if you have any questions, and *please let us know by the third Wednesday of the semester which courses you have chosen* – there is nothing else you have to do to register for them. You will be particularly welcome if you have questions concerning ECTS and/or if we have to sign or stamp documents that you have to return to your home university. You will be sent information on exams by e-mail towards the end of November and/or the end of April.
9. Obtain health insurance (non-EEA students): www.kuleuven.be/english/services/insurances
10. Work hard, but do not forget to enjoy life in Leuven!