



"Welcome to the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (BSS) of the University of Groningen!"

We hope you will have an unforgettable exchange experience during your stay in Groningen that will meet your expectations or even exceed them.

This exchange guide will help you getting prepared for your exchange semester at our faculty. It also includes useful information that will help you find your way as an exchange student in the city of Groningen and the Netherlands.

At the very end of this guide, you can find an overview with contact information of our student services.

BEING AN EXCHANGE STUDENT IN GRONINGEN IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is small in size but has extensive international trade links and high standards of education, health care and social equality. As one of the founding members of the EU and with other European capitals only a short distance away, the Netherlands is at the heart of Europe. Our merchant past is still evident today in both the historic architecture and the international outlook of the population. Although Dutch is the main language, English is widely spoken. Our climate is characterized by moderate summers and changeable winters.

Groningen is the capital city of the province Groningen. With a population of 243,833 (2024) it is the largest city in the north of the Netherlands. Groningen is known as a young and dynamic student city. With so many students in the city there is a vibrant nightlife, a thriving youth culture and many opportunities for sports and leisure. In short, nothing beats Groningen!

If you want to see how students are living in the city, have a look at:

[#thecityisourcampus](https://twitter.com/thecityisourcampus)

Exchange guide



university of
 groningen

faculty of behavioural
 and social sciences

INFO ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN

The University of Groningen was founded in 1614 by Ubbo Emmius. For more than four centuries, the UG has experience in teaching and excels in research in all kinds of areas. Here is a quick glance at some [UG facts](#).

Follow us:

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- [Instagram](#)
- [YouTube](#)

ABOUT THE FACULTY

Our faculty receives international students and exchange students from all over the world. No doubt, this will be an enrichment to your international experience.

The University of Groningen is an international institution with many partnerships across the world, many international students from more than 60 different countries, and a global dimension to university life.

The Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (BSS) is a vibrant Faculty with equally many international partnerships and students. As a research and knowledge hub focusing on individuals and society, the Faculty provides students the opportunity to study issues related to human behaviour, the relationships between people, and society as a whole.

The Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences has three departments, all of which warmly welcome inbound exchange students: Pedagogical Sciences, Psychology, and Sociology.

- [Website](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [YouTube](#)

BUILDINGS OF THE FACULTY OF BSS

The Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences has two locations. The main location is situated near the old Hortus garden. The other location is at the Bloemstraat. There you can find two buildings that are mainly used for educational purposes.

Click the map below to enlarge it:



OTHER FACULTIES

Besides Behavioural and Social Sciences, the University of Groningen has 10 other faculties from which you can choose a certain amount of courses upon availability:

- Economics and Business
- Theology and Religious Studies
- Arts
- Medical Sciences
- Law
- Spatial Sciences
- Science and Engineering
- Philosophy
- University College Groningen
- University of Groningen/Campus Fryslân



Pre-departure information

HOW TO GET TO GRONINGEN?

If you're an international student starting your programme in September or February, remember to arrange your transport to the Netherlands in time to attend the [Welcoming Ceremony](#) and your faculty's introduction programme.

Travel by plane:

The closest airports to the University of Groningen are Eelde Airport, Groningen (45 mins away); Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam (2hr 10 mins) and Bremen Airport, Bremen, Germany (2hr).

If you are travelling a long distance, you are likely to fly into Schiphol Airport and arrange separate transportation from the airport to the University.

Schiphol Airport Amsterdam:

When you arrive at Schiphol Airport for the first time, it can be daunting but it is easy to find your way around due to the clear signage.

The easiest way to travel to Groningen is to take the train which stops on platforms direct below the Schiphol Plaza and leaves hourly to Groningen Central Station.

Plan your journey by train via the [NS Travel Planner](#).

Additional connections every hour involve just one change of trains sometimes. The journey from Amsterdam or Schiphol Airport to Groningen takes a little over 2 hours.

You can be met at Schiphol Airport during the arrival period (2 days) by a University of Groningen Student Ambassador. More information can be found [here](#).

Would you like to travel by group to reduce ticket costs? Group Ticket Finder can help you find travel buddies to split the cost with. More information about Group Ticket Finder can be found under the heading *Transportation* in this Exchange Guide.

Bremen Airport Germany:

Another way to arrive in the Netherlands is via Bremen Airport in Germany. The cheapest and easiest way to travel from Bremen to Groningen Central Station is to take the [Flixbus](#). This will take you from Bremen station to Groningen Central Station in about 2,5 hours and costs around € 20,- (one way), depending on the time you travel.

You can book your ticket online or buy one directly from the driver. The buses run about 8 times a day, from 6.30h to 23.30h.

Eelde Airport Groningen:

The closest airport to the city of Groningen is Eelde Airport, which is 15 kilometres from Groningen. The Qbuzz number 2 bus travels between Groningen Airport Eelde and Groningen Central Station and the trip lasts roughly 50 minutes.

From Groningen Central Station to Groningen City Centre it is easy to navigate with many buses stopping outside the Central Station and timetables can be found [here](#). There are also taxis parked outside the station and most rides within the City will cost less than € 20,-. If you do get lost, just ask someone – they will be happy to help!

ACCOMMODATION

The University of Groningen is not a campus university and therefore does not offer campus accommodation. We advise students to book **accommodation** with an organization that is specialized in (international) student housing ([SSH](#))

Once you have been nominated to the BSS faculty by the international office of your home university we will provide you with detailed information on how to register for a room via [SSH](#).

More housing options can be found [here](#).

Regular updates on the housing situation in Groningen as well as many housing possibilities and tips can be found via the [athomeingroningen website](#).



PLAN YOUR FINANCES

It is essential that you make sure you have enough money for your study and living costs. You should plan your finances well in advance of your arrival as it can be almost impossible to arrange funding after you start your programme.

These are approximate monthly costs (in Euro) but they may be more or less depending on your lifestyle. For the latest accommodation cost, please have a look at the [website of SSH](#).

- Groceries € 200,- / € 300,-
- Rent, incl. gas, water, electricity € 400,- / € 750,-
- Course materials € 30,-
- Insurance € 100,- / € 150,-
- Internet/Cable/Telephone € 60,-
- Shopping € 60,-
- Entertainment € 80,-

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

If you wish to open a bank account in your country which you can use in the Netherlands, look for a bank with global connections.

Information about opening and running a bank account in the Netherlands is available on arrival at the University. To open an account in the Netherlands, you will normally need to provide proof of the following:

- › Valid passport or ID
- › Proof of enrolment at the University of Groningen;
- › Proof of residence for verification of your Dutch address, e.g. your rental contract;
- › Proof of registration at the municipality (BSN number).

There are a number of banks available in the city and The University of Groningen works closely with the [ING Bank](#) who will work to ensure you can activate your account on the same day. Banks usually only open a bank account if you stay in the Netherlands for at least one full semester (5 months).

VISA/RESIDENCE PERMIT

Detailed information about visa and residence permit can be found [here](#).

Incoming exchange students from non-European countries will receive detailed information and instructions on the procedure related to visa/ residence permit after being admitted to the exchange programme of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences.

INSURANCE

Incoming exchange students are responsible for arranging adequate insurance which covers their entire study period at the University of Groningen. Please consult your insurance company to see what needs to be arranged for your stay abroad.

You should take out the following types of insurance:

- 1) Health insurance (including accident insurance and repatriation coverage)
- 2) Third-party liability insurance (for costs resulting from damage caused by you, e.g. through a bike accident).
- 3) Travel insurance

Information on mandatory health insurance in the Netherlands can be found [here](#).

You can also arrange insurance via a Dutch company (for example [AON Student Insurance](#)),



STUDY START EVENTS

Upon your arrival there will be several events that will help you get started and make friends. These events will also provide you with more information.

- [KEI week](#)
- [Welcoming ceremony](#)
- [ESN introduction week](#)
- [Faculty introduction \(mandatory!\)](#)

COURSES, EXAMS & SCHEDULES

For detailed information on courses, exams, schedules and study tips, please visit our [website](#).

- [Ocasys](#): To view the course offer per faculty, have a look at the course catalogue Ocasys.
- [Schedule generator](#): If you want to find out when and where your courses are taking place, enter them in the online schedule generator.
- [Academic calendar](#): To see how the semester is structured (lectures and exams), have a look at the academic calendar.
- [RUG online library](#): Lecturers will either upload journal articles on Nestor (see ICT facilities), or you have to look up the articles yourself according to the provided literature list.

After arrival

Life in Groningen

REGISTRATION CITY HALL

Anyone staying in the Netherlands for four months or longer must register with the Municipal Personal Records Database Gemeentelijke Basis Administratie (GBA) at City Hall. It is advisable that you register as soon as possible and not wait until the four months are over, as you may need your registration papers for other purposes.

- Mandatory for everyone who stays longer than 4 months in NL
- Non-EU/EEA students are informed about registration procedure by Immigration Service Desk (ISD)
- EU/EEA students have to register at the city hall

For more information can be found [here](#).

Don't forget to de-register before you leave Groningen again!

TRANSPORTATION

In order to travel by train, bus, tram and metro in the Netherlands it is recommended to buy the so-called OV-chipkaart. Your card is active immediately, and if you have enough balance on your card, you can travel 2nd class with NS right away. You can top up your card balance at any NS Ticket Machine. More information can be found [here](#).

A handy app to use for planning your journey is [9292](#). The 9292 app is a comprehensive travel planner for navigating public transportation in the Netherlands. It provides real-time updates, journey planning, and ticket information.

Would you like to share your ticket costs with other exchange students? On Group Ticket Finder you can connect with others who share your journey and secure a Group Ticket for a reduced price. More information can be found on their [website](#).

The best way to get around in Groningen is by bicycle. Most people in Groningen own at least one bike and most of the time they have two. There are more bicycles than people! It is best if you buy a cheap second-hand bicycle, shiny new bikes have a high chance of getting stolen. You might also want to use two bike locks and to attach your bike to something by using a chain lock.

You could also rent a bike which will cost you around 15 euros a month. Have a look at the website of [Swapfiets](#) (monthly bike rental, EU students only) and the website of the [OV-fiets](#) (daily bike rental).

BUILDINGS

The University of Groningen is not a campus university, which is why courses are given in different buildings throughout the city.

Information on locations of the buildings can be found [here](#).

UNIVERSITY CARD

After successful application for the exchange programme, you will be registered in our student administration system Progress.NET. A student number will be generated and you will receive an email requiring you to activate your student account. After uploading a picture, your student card will be processed. This can take up to two weeks

Once the card is ready, you will receive a notification email from the central student information services on where and when to pick up your card.

The student card can be used

- at the printers and photocopiers
- to borrow books from the University Library
- as proof of identity when you register for exams and when you sit exams
- to use the facilities of the Sports Centre

University Life

Log in at [myPrint](#) to charge money to your student card (Note: Don't charge the card with high amounts of money. If you don't use up all the credit before the end of your exchange, the remaining amount cannot be paid out!)

You can also use this website to send print jobs from your laptop/computer to a printer.

More information on the student card (e.g. what to do in case of loss or theft) can be found [here](#).

ICT FACILITIES

The Student Portal

Login via:
Student Portal/ Nestor: <http://studentportal.rug.nl/>

Once you have activated your student account, you can access all information on the Student Portal. Information on how to use the Student Portal can be found [here](#).

WiFi

The WiFi network used at University of Groningen is called eduroam. Information on how to connect to eduroam can be found [here](#). (login Student Portal required)

STUDY PLACES

There are several places where you can study at the university/ faculty.

- [University of Groningen Library](#)
- Computer workstations/ workplaces at the faculty:
 - Gadourek building (ground and first floor)
 - Heymans building (1st floor + HV 306, 307, 406, 407)

FOOD & DRINKS

The canteen of the faculty BSS is located in the Heymans building (Grote Kruisstraat 2/1). We encourage you to bring your own cup to get tea and coffee at the coffee corner, or pay 1,- for a reusable one!

More information on UoG food & drinks locations can be found [here](#):

UNIVERSITY SHOP

The university also has a shop next to the Academy building. Students, staff and visitors can come to the shop for university merchandise, career services and any general questions. You can also visit their online [webshop](#).

STUDY ASSOCIATIONS

Study associations as they exist in the Netherlands are a unique concept and can in such a form hardly be found in other countries.

Study associations begin where your study program stops and consist of students following the same study while trying to build a bridge between study-related tasks and social activities.

There are several faculty affiliated study associations which can help you with finding your way around the faculty and Groningen.

They offer several activities to do with your studies, like lectures, workshops but also game-nights and are a way to make friends fast.

Study associations at the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences:

VIP (Psychology)

With more than 1600 members, VIP is currently the largest study association in Groningen!

The purpose of a study association can be divided into three main objectives:

- Connection to the study program
- Gaining practical insights into the field
- Main purpose: Having a great time together!

For more information, visit their [website](#).

Student activities



Odiom (Pedagogical and Educational Sciences)

Odiom is the study association of the studies Pedagogical & Educational Sciences.

Odiom focuses on forming the link between being a student, developing yourself, education and the work field. It is an association where members come together to build social contacts and to participate in relaxing activities.

For more information visit their [website](#).

Societas (Sociology)

Societas is the study association for students of sociology. The associations offers a wide variety of activities related to Sociology and student life.

For more information visit their [website](#).

Other study associations

For more information on other study associations have a look [here](#).

ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK (ESN)

Groningen has a very active Erasmus Student Network (ESN). ESN Groningen aims to ensure that international students have the best possible time in Groningen. ESN is organizing over 150 social events throughout the year, as well as a huge introduction week every semester to make sure that all new students in Groningen have the best possible kick-off to their time in the city.

Information on the ESN introduction week can be found [here](#).

ACLO SPORTS

The ACLO is the overarching student sports organization of the UoG and the Hanze University of Applied Sciences and for the 50 sports clubs of the ACLO. The ACLO offers many different types of sports.

For more information have a look at the ACLO [website](#).

CULTURE & ARTS

Student Culture Centre Usva is the cultural facility of the University of Groningen.

Usva strives to encourage students to develop themselves in the arts and culture. Therefore, Usva provides an artistic platform in Groningen where students have the opportunity to discover and engage with the arts.

For more information, visit their [website](#).

EMPLOYMENT & STUDY

As an international student in the Netherlands, you may want to work alongside your studies or internship. If so, there are some restrictions you will need to take into account.

[Here](#) you can find more information.



Safety and wellbeing

HEALTH MATTERS

Visit [this website](#) for information on the Dutch health care system.

General practitioner (GP)

In the Netherlands, a general practitioner (GP) or family doctor is called a 'huisarts'. We strongly advise you to register with a GP as soon as possible after arrival. Without registration, you cannot make an appointment. If you need help to find a GP (especially one who speaks English) you can consult a study advisor or email the Mobility Office. Many more options can be found via Google.

GPs can be visited during consulting hours, after making an appointment by telephone. You can only consult a specialist if you are referred to one by the GP.

How to reach a doctor outside of consulting hours:

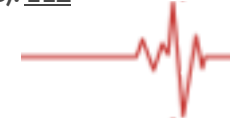
Should you urgently need the help from a GP at night, during the weekend or on public holidays, you should call the central 'After-hours GP service' "[Centrale Doktersdienst](#)". In most cases, they will ask you to come over for a consultation.

Tel: 0900 - 92 29 (€0,10 per minute).

Keep your insurance card at hand when you call.

EMERGENCIES

General emergency number (police, fire brigade, ambulance): [112](#)



The emergency number should only be used if the situation is so urgent that you require an immediate response or immediate assistance due to a life-threatening/ dangerous situation!

Police

Groningen Police Station:
Rademarkt 12, 9711 CV Groningen
+31 (0)900 - 8844

[Here](#) you can find a special brochure with police information for international students.

GRONINGEN NEWS

Ukrant is the independent news outlet of the University of Groningen. Ukrant provides daily updates and stories, both in Dutch and English, on matters concerning the university, its staff, and students.

Groningen mail is a news outlet catered to internationals, expats and locals. Their content focuses on all things Groningen - including news, tips on living in Groningen, interesting facts about the city and history lessons.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Even though an exchange semester can be very exciting, you are in a completely new environment which might be challenging for you. Problems you might face could be for example homesickness, cultural differences, personal problems etc.

Students with a performance disability might need extra support during their exchange semester in Groningen.

On the website of the RUG you can find more information about [studying with a performance disability](#).

The university offers multiple services that you can make use of. If you're not sure whom to contact, you can always approach the Mobility Office. In case of study-related or personal problems, we advise you to make an appointment with a study advisor.

Appointments with study advisors of all BSS departments can be made through the:

[Student Service Desk](#)

Telephone +31 (0)50 363 6301

Email: owbalie.gmw@rug.nl

- [Study Advisors Psychology](#)
- [Study Advisors Pedagogical & Educational Sciences](#)
- [Study Advisor Sociology](#)

Depending on your problem, your study advisor might refer you to one of the other facilities offered by the university: the Student Service Centre (SSC). The SSC offers a wide range of support facilities – student counsellors (financial and legal questions), psychological counselling service (personal and academic issues, short-term counselling), trainers and psychologists (workshops, courses to improve your study skills and to support your personal development).

In case you have any questions about specific courses that you're taking, it is best to contact the lecturer and/or coordinator of the course. Contact information about lecturers can be found [here](#)

or via the course catalogue [Ocasys](#).

Most lecturers have walk-in hours which should be mentioned in their contact information. In case a lecturer does not have walk-in hours, we would advise you to approach them after the lecture.



End of stay

DEREGISTER FROM CITY HALL

Please note that before you leave Groningen and the University after finishing your studies, you need to deregister from the City Hall. More information can be found [here](#).

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS

You will receive an email about the procedure for the Transcript of Records shortly before the end of your exchange semester.

Contact information

Most important services A-Z	For which matters?
At home in Groningen For website click here	General information on <ul style="list-style-type: none">• housing in Groningen
Immigration Service Desk isd@rug.nl For website click here	Matters related to the <ul style="list-style-type: none">• visa/ residence permit
Information Services For website click here	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions about the university card• Statements of enrolment
Mobility and Scholarship Desk msd@rug.nl For website click here	Point of contact for students coming to Groningen via the programmes International Credit Mobility or SHARE
SSH Student Housing (independent non-profit organization) groningen@sshxl.nl For website click here	Questions about SSH booking, <ul style="list-style-type: none">• accommodation, rent payments etc
Student Service Centre ssc-info@rug.nl For website click here	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance disabilities• Legal consultation, etc.
Student Service Desk, Faculty BSS e-mail: owbalie.gmw@rug.nl phone: +31 50 363 6301 Visiting address: Heymans building, First floor Grote Kruisstraat 2/1 9712 TS Groningen Check website for opening hours!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schedule an appointment with a study advisor• De-enrolment from an exam or resit

Mobility Office

POSTAL ADDRESS

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www.rug.nl/gmw/exchange/

APPOINTMENTS

[www.rug.nl/gmw/exchange/
appointment_request](http://www.rug.nl/gmw/exchange/appointment_request)

INSTAGRAM

[/facultybss_universitygroning
en/](https://www.instagram.com/facultybss_universitygroningen/)