



## Exchange Reports

### ESADE Law School

### Barcelona, Spain

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### Teaching and Learning Environment

- Classes are only once per week, so it was easy to schedule your classes into 2 or 3 days per week. I took approx. 7 classes, as each class is worth less credits. Teachers were fine. Exams were all closed book and handwritten.
- I took 6 courses and an optional one-week Spanish course (not for credit). All courses for credit were taught in English. Courses were lecture style with encouraged participation. One of my courses was evaluated by a final paper, four of my courses had final exams, one of my courses was evaluated by a final group assignment and many of my courses had assignments throughout the semester.
- ESADE offered exchange students a wide variety of English classes at both the Masters and Bachelor levels. I took 7 courses over three days of classes per week, which was a very manageable schedule. Overall, I would describe the quality and style of instruction at ESADE as hit or miss. I had the opportunity to take some really excellent courses which I would highly recommend such as World Trade Law, Self-Determination and Minority Rights, and Re-Imagining Capitalism. I also took some courses that were unorganized and poorly communicated. Assessment methods were a mixed bag for me. I had regular smaller assignments due throughout the semester and final assessments consisted of take-home exams, papers, traditional exams, and presentations.



1 - Submitted by Sophia G.

- I took 6 courses, each worth about 4-6 ECT credits which transfer over to 15 Queen's Law credits. All courses were taught in English and there was an array of courses offered (real estate, Chinese law international arbitration, etc.) The assessment methods used were primarily participation and exams. Attendance was mandatory for all courses.
- I took 5 courses. I found the class selection process somewhat confusing at first, takes a couple of hours to get used to. The instruction quality varied between classes. For a couple it was excellent for several it was subpar. However, I found that classes were much easier to pass than at Queen's.

## Quality of Administrative Support for Students

- Registration for courses was during the summer however we had to change some of our courses when we arrived in Barcelona due to scheduling conflicts. Course selection was slightly confusing but Viviana at ESADE tried her best to accommodate exchange students as much as she could. We were provided information about a student residence however, we opted to rent our own apartment instead. During orientation we were provided with the contact information of staff at ESADE to help deal with any problems we were having - I never needed to use these services.
- Unfortunately, ESADE was undergoing an entire overhaul of their system software during the time of registration, course-selection, and orientation. As a result, the Administration was quite overwhelmed and limited in their capacity to assist students. I can't speak to the quality of admin support in previous years, but I imagine things would run much more smoothly without the technical difficulties they were trying to overcome. Admin did not provide much assistance in finding housing, which can be quite difficult, however they do provide all students with housing resources to consider during orientation. I did not have many interactions with the admin team during my time at ESADE, but from what I understand from friends who did, they always tried their best to assist students when problems arose.
- Registration occurs in July-August. I was provided some assistance by ESADE staff concerning Visas and assuring that my courses would be transferable to my Queen's Law degree. There was a mandatory meeting with the Exchange coordinator at the beginning of the year.



2 - Submitted by Selina H.

## Campus Facilities

- ESADE campus had a law library, cafeteria, study rooms. No gym membership was offered on campus but many exchange students joined gyms near our apartments.
- The law school facilities were clean and quiet, the cafeterias were wonderful and full of options

- The facilities were all very modern and excellent.
- ESADE Law School is not located in a central neighbourhood of Barcelona, so students should be prepared for a bit of a commute to school. The law school has limited facilities with a library and a cafeteria being the extent of it. ESADE has two campuses that are located about 40 minutes apart. ESADE's gym is located on the other campus, but I believe students of either campus can access it. Although the law & business campus is relatively small and does not have many facilities, the buildings themselves are nice, and classrooms are modern and well-equipped.

## Student Accommodation and Food

- Used Airbnb for accommodation. Was more expensive but less of a hassle. Food was really good, and relatively cheap. Plenty of nice, cheap, and cheerful restaurants, along with more upscale options.
- We found our accommodation on Airbnb (we did two long term Airbnbs as this was more affordable and Airbnb is reliable). - I lived with two other Queen's Law students in the neighbourhoods of Poble Sec and Placa Espanya. There are many supermarkets in every neighbourhood of Barcelona making it very easy to grocery shop and more restaurants than you will ever be able to try in one semester.
- Student accommodation can be tricky to secure in Barcelona. There are a lot of housing scams in the city, and apartments are often misrepresented in photos shown online. In light of this, I would suggest staying in an Airbnb or hotel for the first week or so in order to see potential living spaces in person. I would recommend trying to find accommodations in the L'Eixample area. I would say it is the best location in terms of safety, proximity to central activities, and overall quality of neighbourhoods. I lived in a student apartment right off of La Rambla, the busiest street in the city. The apartment was great and surprisingly quiet, as well as super conveniently located, however the area itself is very busy and touristy. In terms of food, there are big grocery stores sprawled throughout the city, and little ones everywhere so proximity to groceries will never be an issue. Local food is amazing but avoid tourist traps (restos on main tourist strips, people outside advertising, places with stock images of Spanish food outside). The cafeteria at ESADE is decent and reasonably priced, and their coffee is amazing!
- My accommodation was off campus via spotahome.com. I had a hard time finding a place at first — when I arrived at the place, I had originally paid for were many issues such as noise and I was left to find a new place and luckily had my deposit returned to me. After a few days of searching, I was fortunate enough to communicate with an agent while searching on the website. I would keep in mind that you have to pay one month's rent before being able to communicate with the landlord/see the place, so I would recommend researching the area well, questioning the price of the room if it is particularly cheap, and seeing if there are any red flags about the building online.
- I got off-campus housing using Vanguard. They have several places to live off campus in different parts of the city.

## Travel to Downtown and Environs

- Public transit is very easy, and inexpensive. Can get nearly anywhere in the city on the metro or bus.
- Barcelona has great public transportation: the metro and buses go everywhere. I got an unlimited metro pass for 3 months (just be careful not to lose it). Buses run all night long. The metro and buses go to the airport.
- I found public transit to be excellent in Barcelona. I purchased the T-JOVE metro pass which is an unlimited 3 month pass for people under 25. It cost 100 euros, and I believe the unlimited 3 month pass for people over the age of 25 is 150 euros, which is very reasonable. I liked having the unlimited pass because I used it all the time. Getting to and from school, the airport, tourist attractions and friends' houses were all straight forward and convenient. In terms of travelling within the surrounding areas, I would highly recommend a day trip to Montserrat and Girona.

Within the city itself all of the popular attractions are a must see. Make sure to get up to Tibidabo and Montjuic. Hot tip: The main beach in Barcelona is called Barceloneta, which is fun and conveniently located, however very busy and crowded. If you jump on transit for 20-30 minutes up the coast you can access beaches such as Bogatell that are a little less busy, quieter, and have nicer sand. As far as travel outside of Barcelona, I would recommend trying to book trips ahead of time Although travelling within Europe is always pretty cheap, I was able to find much better deals on the trips that I booked a little in advance. In my experience, last-minute travel deals and price drops were not really a thing.

- I would recommend living in central Barcelona instead of by the school. I lived in Eixample near Sagrada Familia and this was a great location to explore the city. Public transit is very accessible. I would definitely see the Bunkers, Tibidabo, the Sagrada Familia, Barceloneta, and Plaza Catalunya.
- You can travel tons of places very easily from Barcelona. There are regular trains and buses to Valencia and other places in Spain. If going further afield such as to Madrid flying is the best option. Another fun option for a trip is to rent a car and go to Marseilles which is something I did and was one of the highlights of my trip.

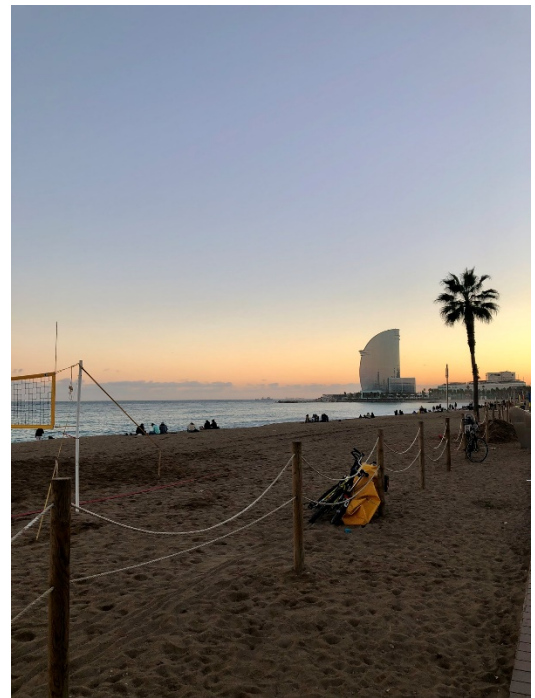


3- Submitted by Lauren G.



## City Life Highlights

- Watch your belongings, a sizeable number of exchange students had their wallets, phones, or bags stolen. Be extra vigilant late at night, and if you have been drinking.
- My cell phone provider was Orange - I paid 20 Euros each month for a month-to-month plan that you top up every 28 days. We paid on average \$1000 per month each (for a three bedroom very nice apartment in a great/safe area). Avoid living in El Raval (also don't go there alone at night - can be dangerous). If you wear a purse, bring a cross-body purse, and always have the zipper done up (many pickpockets) - I had zero issues with this but I was always aware of where my belongings were.
- I've lived in quite a few big cities, and Barcelona is by far the best! Comparatively, Barcelona is very affordable, even with the painful dollar to euro conversion. Rent (with roommates) seems to be around 600 euros, but it depends on what you are looking for. As I mentioned previously, transit is reasonably priced and food for the most part is pretty inexpensive as well. The restaurants and bars are amazing, especially once you get to know the best local ones. There are also many festivals, holidays and celebrations that take place in the Fall, which were incredible to be a part of, make sure you get out to all of them! Setting up a phone card was very easy and cost effective. I went to the provider 'Orange' because they have good pay as you go sim card options and have locations everywhere in the city. I bought a monthly sim card for 20 euros, which had a ton of data and unlimited talk and text. They also offer cards for 10 and 15 euros a month which I found out about later. They have less data, but still quite a bit, especially compared to Canadian plans.
- I loved being able to explore Spain, Portugal, and France during my stay at ESADE. Some tips that I can think of are that setting up a cellphone can be done by getting a Spanish SIM card, most people I know got them through a company called Orange and then you can reload your SIM monthly through your phone. It would be helpful to learn a little bit of Spanish beforehand as the Spanish course offered to ESADE students is only one week. There are endless restaurants to check out in Barcelona particularly in the Eixample area and for at home, Aldi is a good grocery store and Glovo is also a great app similar to Uber eats.
- To get a SIM is fairly easy. There is an orange tabac located at Barcelona airport and you can get a data roaming sim that can be used anywhere in the EU there and can be refilled online. Barcelona is a very modern city and things are convenient and simple to accomplish for the most part.



4 - Submitted by Selina H.

## Student Life

- We had a city bus tour and a welcome party for exchange students. I met most of my friends during the one-week optional Spanish course - I highly recommend this course for meeting friends and learning the basics of Spanish. A few of my courses had local students in them - some of these courses involved group projects where I worked with local students.
- ESADE does not do much student life programming. Orientation was good, but after that there was not much in the way of student events. There is an ESADE student exchange group that organizes some events and excursions, but its typically for all ESADE exchange students, not just law. I would highly, highly recommend taking the 1-week Spanish course that ESADE offers before orientation and classes start. Not only was it a great way to brush up on my Spanish, but it was also where I met a lot of my closest friends on exchange.

## Additional Comments

- Barcelona is an amazing city to live in, there's always something new to discover and you'll never be bored. I travelled around Europe during school breaks and weekends. However, I spent a lot of my time in Barcelona and loved feeling like I had a life there. Since class attendance is mandatory (you have to attend 80% of classes) it encourages you to feel as though you truly live in Barcelona - I really enjoyed that.
- Going on exchange to Barcelona is the best decision I've ever made! It is such an exciting and vibrant place to live as a student, and the other exchange students you meet will become life-long friends. My only cautionary piece of advice is not to expect the same "academic experience" that we have at Queen's Law. ESADE can offer you some great courses and perspectives that you wouldn't have access to at Queen's but is ultimately not as organized and rigorous as a Canadian law school.



5 - Submitted by Lauren G.