



# GETTING STARTED

VU AMSTERDAM  
SUMMER SCHOOL  
WELCOME GUIDE

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# Hallo!

Hoe gaat het? (how are you in Dutch? :D) We are so excited to welcome you at the VU Amsterdam Summer School. We hope that you will get the most out of your study abroad experience with us. To those already living in the Netherlands: we hope you get inspired by all the different nationalities you will meet and perhaps you discover more of our amazing country. Amsterdam is a vibrant city that will surprise you with its many faces and hidden treasures. Whether you are a Dutch or an international student, you for sure make friends from all around the world.

In this getting started document we have included all practical information for you to make the most out of your time with us in Amsterdam. We hope it will help you prepare for your arrival and with finding your way around Amsterdam and the university.

Have you already signed up for our social programme. Sign up here!

We are here to help you in making your stay in Amsterdam as productive and enjoyable as possible. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions before, during or after you stay.

Good luck with your preparations and we'll see you this summer!

Groetjes (greetings in Dutch),

Bianca, Celia, Helena,  
Aleksandra, Sara and Mark  
Team VU Amsterdam Summer School

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# ABOUT VU AMSTERDAM

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is a leading European research university, established in 1880. With more than 23,500 students, we are a modern organization at the cutting edge of academic higher education. Our students are challenged to ask critical questions, tackle problems and place what they are learning in a wider philosophical, ethical and social context. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers a wide range of English taught programmes at three levels: Bachelor's (BA, BSc), Master's (MA, MSc) and doctoral (PhD). Nine faculties share a single campus and cover a wide spectrum of arts, sciences, business and medicine.

## UNIVERSITY FACTS AND FIGURES

Facts:

- 31,704 students
- 5,190 international Bachelor's, Master's and PhD students
- 9 faculties

Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programmes:

- 23 interdisciplinary research institutes
- Over 200 programmes taught in English
- Campus university in Amsterdam Zuidas

## VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM:

- is consistently listed among the world's top universities in various rankings;
- is located in one of the most dynamic and fastgrowing business districts in the Netherlands;
- is a modern campus university;
- offers an international environment. A quarter of the students in our English-taught programmes come from abroad;
- provides high-quality education in small and highly interactive classes;
- is located in lively and multicultural Amsterdam, the city with the largest concentration of students in the Netherlands and where English is the second language;
- is open to all cultures, nationalities and religions.

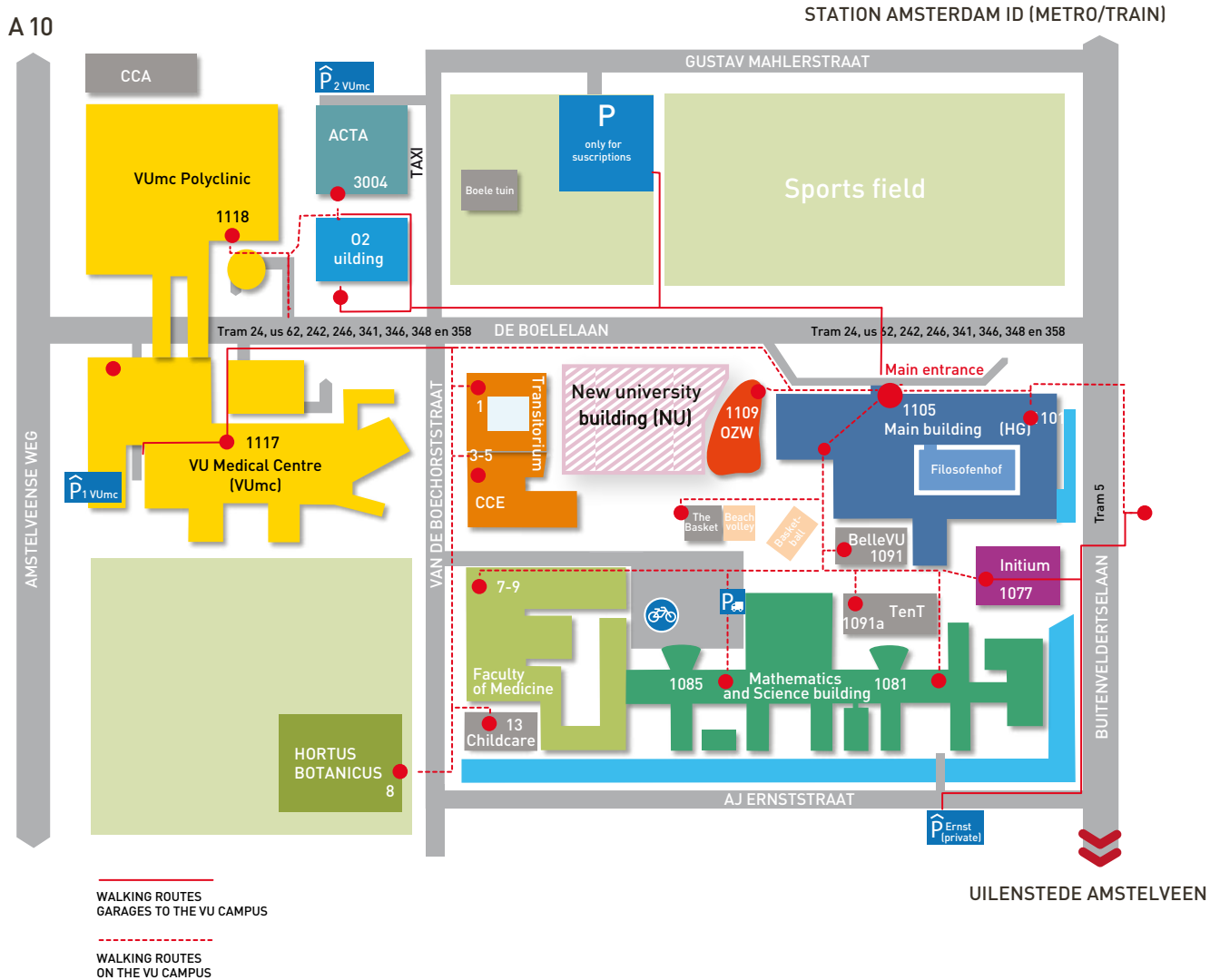


## UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

VU Amsterdam campus offers excellent facilities for research and teaching, with modern buildings and research infrastructure, and innovative facilities. In addition, the campus offers an inspiring, welcoming and lively range of related services, making it a pleasant place to be by opening its doors to a broad cross-section of the public:

- Great public transport connection: 15 minute tram or bike ride to the historic city center, 8 minute train journey to Schiphol Airport and Amsterdam Zuid train station
- The campus is located in the middle of the most dynamic and fastest growing business districts in the Netherlands called the Zuidas
- Extensive library facilities of the VU University Library
- Free WiFi is available for all students and employees on campus
- A basketball field, multiple beach volleyball fields and tennis tables are located on the campus ground, free to use for students any time of day. It is possible to borrow a basket ball, volleyball and table tennis bats at the Summer School service desk between opening hours.
- A varied cultural programme of theatre, film, music and dance at the Griffioen Cultural Centre, currently situated in the new university building on campus.
- A wide and tempting range of shops, cafés and restaurants

# CAMPUS MAP







## THE NETHERLANDS AND THE DUTCH

The Netherlands is located in the northwestern part of continental Europe. The most important historical period of the Netherlands is called the Dutch Golden Age. During the seventeenth century the Dutch were the dominant economic, political and military power in the world. Dutch art and culture from this period, for instance painters like Rembrandt and Johannes Vermeer, are known all over the world. The Netherlands is known for its windmills, tulips, clogs and use of the colour "Orange". It is less well-known that about half of the country is below sea level, a result of Dutch inventive use of draining lakes and dykes.

The Netherlands is a safe and friendly country where English is widely spoken. The Dutch have an exceptionally good command of the English language.



# THE CITY OF AMSTERDAM

The capital of the Netherlands has over 900.000 inhabitants of which about ten percent are university students. The city counts up to 180 different nationalities making it one of the most international cities in the world. Over five million tourists yearly visit some of the 8863 monuments in the city. Most visitors come to Amsterdam for the world famous Van Gogh museum, Anne Frank House, Rijksmuseum and the UNESCO World Heritage canal zone. The history of Amsterdam is that of a multicultural trading city that welcomes its visitors with open arms.

In the summer there are many activities in Amsterdam, such as the famous Vondelpark open air stage, film festivals and more. You can find information about Amsterdam and the events calendar on the [I Amsterdam website](#) and via [Amsterdam City Guide](#).

Check also [I Amsterdam handy apps](#) for visitors, with useful apps for transportation.

## REASONS TO STUDY IN AMSTERDAM

- High quality of life
- Multicultural society
- The Dutch speak fluent English
- Excellent facilities
- Access to world-class education
- Many museums such as the Rijksmuseum, the Van Gogh Museum, and the Anne Frank House
- Rich in history and historical architecture
- A centre of bike culture
- Centrally located in Europe







# SAFETY IN AMSTERDAM AND THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands and Amsterdam are very safe to travel. While visiting Amsterdam one should realize that it is a popular tourist destination and a true international city. Like in any metropolitan city a visitor should be cautious in busy touristic areas.

By taking a few basic precautions you can avoid your belongings being lost or stolen, for instance:

- Do not leave ID cards, cash cards, money, cheque books or keys lying around.
- Never leave valuable possessions in university buildings. The university is not liable for properties stolen from university premises.
- Never leave your room unlocked when you leave it -even if it is only for a short period of time.
- Make sure all windows are closed and locked, even upper floor windows.
- Insure your personal belongings.



## PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST



- CLOTHES AND TOWELS (check weather forecast beforehand)
- DEBIT, AND/OR CREDITCARD, CASH OPTIONAL
- HEALTH/TRAVEL/ PERSONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE
- EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION AND THE CONTACT DETAILS OF YOUR LOCAL CONSULATE OR EMBASSY
- AIRPLANE TICKET/PASSPORT/VISA
- LAPTOP, PLUG ADAPTER, (if neccessaey), NOTEBOOK, PEN
- UMBRELLA, SWIMMING CLOTHES, SUN GLASSES

## CLOTHES AND TOWELS

July can be the warmest month in The Netherlands – optimal for days on the beach or on sunny café terraces – but keep your umbrella nearby, as it is also the third-rainiest months of the year and at night it often cools down and it get be chilly. Amsterdam in summer, with its humid days and citywide waterways, is an ideal environment for mosquitoes. Be prepared with insect repellent and an itch relief remedy. Generally summer clothes should suffice but bring a warm outfit and an extra jumper just in case, at night you will for sure need it! Make sure you check the weather forecast before packing. We also recommend bringing a rain jacket or umbrella.

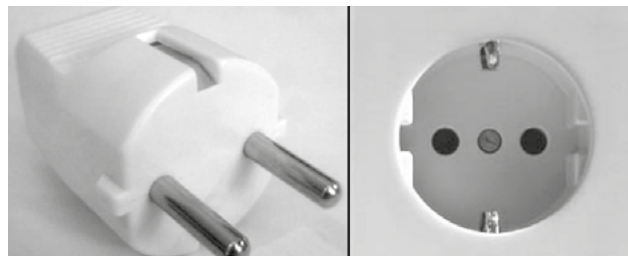
All rooms are fully furnished and bed linen as well as kitchen utensils (pots, pans, cutlery, plates, cups/ glasses) are provided at every accommodation. You will need to bring your own towel (except for Social Hub).



The Netherlands's official currency is the Euro. Euros come in both coins (€1 and €2, and various cents) and banknotes (€ 5, € 10, € 20, € 50, € 100, €200 and €500). You may want to bring some cash for the first day or so, but in general the vast majority of debit and credit cards are accepted in ATMs in the Netherlands. Not all shops and restaurants accept credit card but most will accept a debit card. Make sure to check if you can pay within Europe. Often this is a simple adjustment in the app of your bank. but important to do!

## PLUG ADAPTER

It may be necessary for you to bring a plug adapter in order to make use of the electricity network in the Netherlands. See below images of Dutch plugs. The electricity has a Voltage of 220-230 and a Frequency of 50 HZ.



## HEALTH/TRAVEL/ PERSONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

VU Amsterdam Summer School does not provide any insurance for students. Please make sure that you have your own insurance when you arrive in the Netherlands which covers medical costs, liability, accidents and expatriation to your home country in case of emergencies. If you need a doctor while being in the Netherlands you will first have to pay the bill yourself, afterwards you can send it to your insurance company to be reimbursed. Please check your home country insurance to see what is covered while in the Netherlands. You can take out additional insurance through [AON](#) or [IPS](#).



## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The International Office of VU Amsterdam is there to assist you with any practical issues concerning your stay and study. In the central hall of the main building you will find the International Student Desk (ISD) where the summer school team will be available between 9am and 14pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday (closed on Wednesday's).

VU Amsterdam Summer School  
De Boelelaan 1105  
1081 HV Amsterdam

Website: [www.vu.nl/summerschool](http://www.vu.nl/summerschool)

E-mail: [amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl](mailto:amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl)

Telephone: +31 (0)20 59 86429

VU emergency number: +31 (0)20-598 2222

## CONTACT DETAILS OF YOUR LOCAL CONSULATE OR EMBASSY

We advise you to note down the contact numbers/address of your consulate or embassy in The Netherlands and keep it with you while travelling and in The Netherlands.

### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

112	General alarm (for emergency situations)	
+31 0900 - 8844	Local police	
+31 020 - 444 4444	VU Hospital	De Boelelaan 1117, 1081HV Amsterdam
+31 020 - 598 2222	First Aid (VU)	De Boelelaan 1117, 1081HV Amsterdam
+31 020- 444 1400	VU GP Office (all students)	De Boelelaan 1131, 1081 HX Amsterdam
+31 020 - 598 0308	ACTA ( Dentist)	Gustav Mahlerlaan 3004, 1081 LA Amsterdam
+31 020 - 555 6666	Fire Department Amsterdam	
+31 020 - 543 0112	Fire department Amstelveen	
+31 020 - 777 7777	Taxi	
+31 020 794 08 00	Schiphol Airport	

### LOST AND FOUND

+31 020 - 474 7747	KLM	<a href="http://www.klm.nl">www.klm.nl</a>
	Public transportation	Train (NS): <a href="http://www.ns.nl">www.ns.nl</a> or tram/bus/metro: <a href="http://www.gvb.nl">www.gvb.nl</a>
General	General platform for lost and found	<a href="http://www.ilost.co">www.ilost.co</a>

### OTHER PHONE NUMBERS

+31 020 800 - 0410	Phone Operator (Collect call/ bad connection)	
+31 0900 - 9292	Public Transport Information	<a href="http://www.9292.nl">www.9292.nl</a>







# ACCOMMODATION AND DIRECTIONS



## DE BOELELAAN (CEA students only)

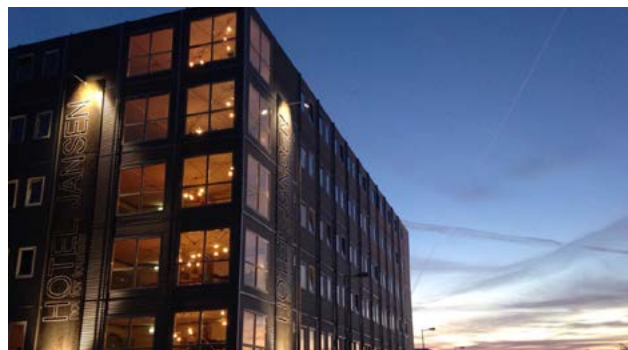
De Boelelaan 859-1043, 1082SB Amsterdam

- Private bedroom + bedlinen included.
- Shared bathroom + kitchen (with 4-6 others). Kitchen supplies included, towels are not!
- Free WiFi, laundry machine available
- 5 minute walk from the university, 15 minute bike/ tram ride to the city center, minute walk to shopping center with grocery store.
- Room cleaning not included/not offered.
  
- Check-in: details will be shared via your CEA provider.
- Check-out:  
Session 1: 15 July 10:00 a.m.  
Session 2: 30 July 10:00 a.m.

**For CEA students only. No reception available!**

### Directions from the Airport

- From Amsterdam Schiphol Airport take the Intercity or Sprinter train to Amsterdam Zuid station.
- De Boelelaan is a 8-10 minute walk from Amsterdam Zuid station. Please use Google maps or Mapsme for directions and make sure you can use if offline.



## HOTEL JANSEN Schinkel

Valschermkade 19, 1059CD Amsterdam

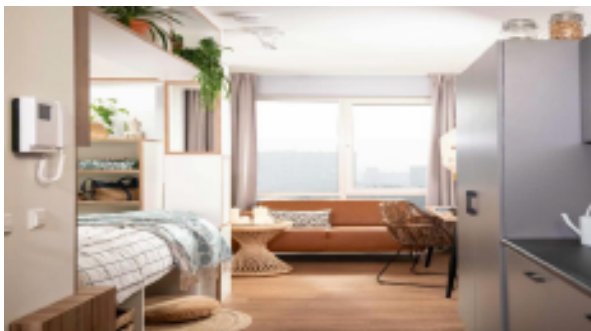
[www.hoteljansen.nl](http://www.hoteljansen.nl)  
[booking@hoteljansen.nl](mailto:booking@hoteljansen.nl)

- Private bedroom (bedlinen included, towel not) + bathroom
- Shared kitchen (supplies included) + laundry machine available
- 15 minute bike ride to the university and city center (30 minutes walking distance to the university)
  
- Room cleaning not included but can be booked for an extra fee via Hotel Jansen.
  
- Free WiFi
- Check-in: 1 p.m. to 5 pm. (late arrival please email Hotel Jansen).
- Check out: 10:00 a.m.
- €350 deposit (will be paid back after check-out, if you leave your room clean, hand in the key etc.)
  
- **Reception available during specific hours!**

### Directions from the Airport

- From Schipol Airport take the Intercity/ Sprinter to Amsterdam Zuid Station
- From Amsterdam Zuid Station take Metro 51 to Henk Sneevlietweg Station
- Walk 15 Minutes: Please use Google maps or Mapsme for directions and make sure you can use if offline.

# ACCOMMODATION AND DIRECTIONS



## OUR DOMAIN

**Dalsteindreef 6002, 1112XJ, Diemen**

<https://www.thisisourdomain.nl/>

- Private studio with own bathroom and kitchen
- Additional facilities (free access to fitness/gym, the lounge, roof terrace, laundrette and study room.
- Room cleaning not included/not offered.
- Services nearby such as supermarket, bars and restaurants, bike repair and more
- Located in Diemen, about 30 minutes by bike or public transport from VU
- Free WiFi, 24/7 security
- Bed linen and kitchen supplies included, towels are not!
- Check-in:  
Session 1: 1 July, from 12:00 p.m.  
Session 2: 16 July, from 3:00 p.m.
- Check-out:  
Session 1: 15 July 10 a.m.  
Session 2: 30 July 10 a.m.

### Directions from the airport

- From Schiphol, take the Sprinter train to Diemen Zuid station
- From Diemen Zuid station, walk 3 minutes to OurDomain
- Please use Google maps or Mapsme for directions and make sure you can use if offline.  
\*For CEA students airport pick-up is arranged via their provider.



## VIA HOSTEL

**Diemerhof 20, 1112 XN Diemen**

<https://www.viahostels.com/amsterdam/>

- 4-8 person dorm rooms with bunkbeds
- Shared bathroom and kitchen (microwave and fridge, plates, cups, cutlery, no stove available)
- Basic breakfast buffet included
- Laundry machine available
- 30 minutes from VU Amsterdam and the city center by bike or public transport
- Supermarkets around the corner
- Beautifully designed hostel with restaurant+bar and 24/7 reception/security
- Free WiFi
- Bed linen included, towels are not!
- Check-in: from 3:00 p.m. (late arrival, please contact hostel)
- Check-out: 10:00 a.m.

### Directions from the Airport

- From Schiphol, take the Sprinter train to Diemen Zuid station
- From Diemen Zuid station, walk 9 minutes to Via Hostel
- Please use Google maps or Mapsme for directions and make sure you can use if offline.

# ACCOMMODATION AND DIRECTIONS



## THE SOCIAL HUB AMSTERDAM WEST

Van de Sande Bakhuijzenstraat 4, 1061 AG Amsterdam

<https://www.thesocialhub.co/>

- Private bedroom and bathroom
- Shared kitchen
- Located in Amsterdam West, 25 minutes from VU Amsterdam - getting a bike or public transport card is recommended
- Bedding, towel and kitchen utensils are included.
- Laundry room and 24/7 reception.
- Check-in:  
Session 1: 1 July, from 3:00 p.m.  
Session 2: 16 July, from 3:00 p.m.
- Check-out  
Session 1: 15 July 12 p.m.  
Session 2: 30 July 12 p.m.

### Directions from the airport

- From Schiphol, take the Sprinter train to Amsterdam Lelylaan
- From Amsterdam Lelylaan GVB Metro 50 or 51 to Jan van Galenstraat
- Please use Google maps or Maps for directions and make sure you can use if offline.



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# ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

## ARRIVAL AND INTRODUCTION DAYS

To make sure you get settled during your first days in Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam Summer School has organized a small welcome event on the day of arrival. **The arrival days are Saturday 1 July for Session 1, Sunday 16 July for Sessions 2a and 2b.**

**The VU Amsterdam Summer School team will be at the accommodations between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.**

At your accommodation you will be welcomed by our team. We will later have a drink and a snack waiting for **you at one of our Welcome event locations.**

**Session 1, Saturday 1 July:** welcome event at Via Hostel (for those staying at Via Hostel and Our Domain) and Hotel Jansen for all other locations.

**Session 2, Sunday 16 July:** all are invited at Hotel Jansen for the welcome event.

The first Monday of the course will be **introduction day**. We will meet for our official opening + campus tour before class and have our welcome pubquiz in the afternoon.

ARRIVAL DAYS: SATURDAY 1 and SUNDAY 16 JULY	
13.00-16.00	A summer school team member will be available at every accommodation location.
From 17:00-19:00	Welcome event

INTRODUCTION DAYS: MONDAYS 3 JULY and 17 JULY	
08.30- 09:30	Official Opening in KC07, main building De Boelelaan 1105
09.30 -09.45	Campus tour
09.45-10.00	Students will be guided to their classrooms
15.30 - 17.30	Pubquiz at the Basket on campus square

# ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES

Canvas is a so-called digital learning environment', a protected website which lecturers use to post assignments and course materials per module and where students can consult each other online. It is also possible to submit assignments on Canvas. VU Amsterdam Summer School will also publish general information and announcements there. Internet allows you to work with Canvas whenever you want, wherever you want.

More information about your VUnetID and Canvas will be shared by email.

## TIMETABLES

The timetables will be published on Canvas. You will have classes from Monday to Friday and you will usually attend seminars/ lectures during the morning and have excursions/ self-study during the afternoon.





## COST OF LIVING

We can give you an indication of cost of living in Amsterdam during your summer course, but of course, it is totally up to your living standards of how much you will spend. Some students manage to spend less, but this of course depends on your own lifestyle. Buying food in the supermarket is cheaper than going out for dinner. Grocery shopping at Aldi or Lidl tends to be cheaper than Albert Heijn for example. Trains are more expensive than public busses, etc. An indication of likely expenses is given in this table:

EXPENDITURES	COSTS IN € EURO
Food	€200
Insurance	€20
Public transport	€50
Miscellaneous	€100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€370 PER TWO WEEKS</b>





## Lunch

SANDWICHES 4,75  
GRILLED CHICKEN 4,75  
CROQUE MONSIEUR 6,50  
LUNCH DISHES: 4,  
SOUP-DAY 9,95  
BREAD CRUST 5,75

ORDER HERE

## DINNER

EVERY DAY 5:30PM-9:30PM  
DISHES  
PASTA'S - 100% COTTAGE CHEESE & FRESH HERBS  
PIZZA'S -  
SIDE

## Week PASTA:

Salsas, Tomatoes  
6,50

## Week PASTA:

Salsas, Tomatoes  
6,50

Cookie 8,50

# EATING AND DINING

There is a restaurant on the VU campus, which is open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. For a delicious cappuccino, lunch or dinner you can also visit our campus café The Basket or Cafe Boele. There are two coffee bars in the main building and one on the campus square called Doppio. You will find grocery stores both at the campus (Spar) and at the housing area.

## VU Main Building

### **Restaurant Foodplaza**

Located in the main building of the university, the restaurant provides hot meals at lunchtime and in the late afternoon/early evening.

### **MainStreet**

You can pick up a coffee to-go at Rendez VU in the entrance hall of the Main Building. Pastries and light snacks are also available.

## New University building

### **Coffee Corner LOKL (Atrium)**

coffee to-go, sandwiches and pastries during the weekdays from 08:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Campus square

### **The Spar**

A small market, with snacks and light lunch options such as sandwiches and salads.

### **The Basket**

A Grand Café with a terrace.

## UNIVERSITY CAMPUS DE BOELELAAN

De Boelelaan is located right next to the university building. For this reason the restaurant facilities of the university are easily accessible. Also nearby is the Amsterdam Zuidas business district with lots of restaurants.

## HOTEL JANSEN

### **Café Jansen Schinkel**

Barista coffee, a leisurely breakfast, a working lunch and sweet pastries during the weekend to sit back, relax, catch up with your friends or enjoy a quiet moment to yourself.

## VIA HOSTEL + Our Domain

Located inside of Via Hostel is their very own restaurant The Dude. The restaurant and bar is the hostel's social element that blends all our interests with all the interesting travellers, students and locals that honour them with a visit. In the area near the station there are also a few places to eat such as Jacob's Kitchen.

## SOCIAL HUB

Restaurants and bars at The Social Hub offer basic options to refuel throughout the day.

# COMMUNICATION

## WiFi

Staying in touch with your family and friends while traveling is easy! There are many options for your short stay here in Amsterdam.

WiFi is widely available throughout the city of Amsterdam.

## Campus-wide wireless network

A wireless network is available throughout the whole VU campus with high bandwidth, including hotspots with extra high bandwidth. You can access this wireless network with your own notebook free of charge.

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam has three wireless internet networks.

If you want to install WiFi on your laptop please visit the IT service desk in the VU main building. If you already have 3G or 4G on your mobile phone you can install WiFi on your mobile phone via [www.vu.nl/draadloos](http://www.vu.nl/draadloos).

At the VU Amsterdam Summer School accommodations complimentary Wi-Fi is available.

## Buying a Sim Card

Fees for international calls can be very expensive and once you are charged you will be responsible for paying your bill. Make sure to contact your cellphone company to see what options there are for international calling. We also recommend buying a prepaid SIM card. In the Netherlands you can get 1 GB of data for only 10 euros.

We will be handing out free simcards on the arrival day as well.

## Telegram:

Sign up to our Telegram chat group! Become part of our informal messaging group where you will receive updates regarding our social programme, extra activities and more. For course updates we will use email but if you don't want to miss out on the fun and have a channel where to interact with your fellow students, join us! For two-week participants of Session 1: go to this link. For one and two-week participants of Session 2: go to this link.

If you are coming to both Session 1 and 2, join both groups!



# TRAVEL

Travelling within Amsterdam by public transport is straightforward and convenient. The extensive network is operated by GVB and connects the city's neighborhoods by train, tram, metro, bus and ferry.

## Trams

One of the most popular modes of public transportation is the city's tram service. Most of the city's trams terminate in front of Central Station and radiate out towards different neighborhoods and districts. The tram is the easiest way for students to visit many of Amsterdam's museums and shopping centers. The university is connected to the rest of the city with Tram 5 and 24.

## Metro

Amsterdam's metro system radiates from Central Station to the city's outlying districts via four main routes. The University is connected to the rest of the city with Metro 52.

## Trains (Sprinter/Intercity)

Many people travelling to or from Amsterdam will often make use of the train, which not only provides a superb connection with Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, but also different parts of the city, other Dutch towns and cities, plus direct connections with Belgium, France and Germany.

## Buses

Amsterdam's bus network is extensive, connecting all neighborhoods with other city areas and extending outwards into the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. Students can take the buses to get to areas typically unreachable by Tram or Metro. The city is also connected to the rest of Europe through an extensive bus network operated by, among others, Eurolines and Flixbus.

## Bicycles

Biking in Amsterdam is safe and easy, thanks to the flat landscape and multitude of wide bike paths. Planning to cycle yourself! We recommend Swapfiets or Donkey Republic. Both have various memberships options. You pay a monthly subscription and get a brand new bike and free repair service. You can subscribe and then terminate your account when you leave. Please search via a search engine for more information.



A diverse group of young adults, including men and women of various ethnicities, are posing joyfully in front of a modern building with large glass windows. They are smiling, waving, and some have their arms raised in excitement. The building's glass reflects the sky and clouds. The scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a positive and welcoming atmosphere.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU HERE!**