

Rotterdam School of Management
2012 Semester 1
Master in Business Administration (MBA)

Erasmus University

The reason I chose Rotterdam school of management is because of the reputation the school has built in Europe. Having studied in Germany 5 years ago and having travelled Europe before, I felt my graduate studies (MBA) would benefit if I choose a school with high international rankings and reputation.

I also chose this destination because believing it would provide both the perfect environment and challenges I sought in completing my graduate studies internationally. As an MBA student from Otago University I was only allowed to partake in Master level courses (BKMME), which admittedly are far more simplistic and basic than what I was used to at Otago. First, there was a big age difference between myself and most students, many who with no prior professional experiences. Secondly, the work load was much less than what I had been accustomed at Otago and while many would see this as an actual benefit, I can't say that the teachings and courses were as mentally stimulating as I had hoped.

On the positive side, the reputation of the school and involvement of several large companies makes it interesting for individuals willing to partake in activities or classes where live cases are offered. As an example, during one of my papers, we had to work in teams to come up with a solution to a problem given to us by Philips. This problem was a current issue the company faced and for which they asked us to come up with potential solution. Our presentation was held at the Philips campus in Eindhoven, where upwards of 20 individuals from Philips, ranging from VPs to researchers attended.

The University also organizes a lot of events and competitions, where students can participate, even exchange students. There is however one caveat. I didn't feel these events were very practical unless you spoke Dutch or were of Dutch residency. I often felt they were limited and while this wasn't always the case, it did reduce my interest in participating in them.

In the end I'm still quite content with my choice and I would still recommend Erasmus University, especially if what you seek is to gain access to a school with such credentials and reputation. Since I plan to apply in Europe, now that I'm over with my graduate degree, I'm certain that my time in Erasmus will have a positive impact on my application process, where the European reputation of the school is highly regarded in the field of business, where I'm applying for.

The Netherlands & Europe

For those who have been to Europe already, you probably won't find Rotterdam to be a major party city, not compared to cities like Berlin, Barcelona or London for that matter. This however, doesn't mean that

nightlife or great venues are inexistent. Obviously there are always the student managed events which are plentiful, but there is also a great experience to be had for those willing to step outside the traditional paths.

Buy a bike! Seriously, it might come as a stereotype that Dutch people bike everywhere and rightfully so. You can literally go everywhere by bike and by far it is the cheapest way to travel in Rotterdam. I cannot remember (literally) how many times I've biked back home from a late night out.

The Netherlands are a great place to study, and a great place to visit or begin your European travels from. It was quite easy to visit the country from Rotterdam. Train services easily connected the city to most destinations in less than 3 hours. In addition, with the close proximity of Germany, Belgium, France and England, it was fairly easy to venture far enough to forget about the Dutch weather. If you've been to that part of Europe, you know that it rains a lot. Nevertheless, depending on how you manage the courses you've selected during your exchange, there will be plenty of time to travel and with cheap flights available from Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Eindhoven you can always travel quickly and relatively cheaply.

Quick breakdown of my costs

	Monthly	Note
Rent	200 €	Normal prices would range between 350€ to 550€, I was privileged and found this place through a friend.
Groceries	250-300 €	I found that I was spending less than in NZ (when buying the same things)
Mobile Phone	20 €	T-Mobile 10€ for 1gb monthly data
Transport(city)	100 €	Buy a bike and use it!
Social activities	360 €	This really depends of you off course!