

ERASMUS/ DEPARTMENTAL EXCHANGE

FACT SHEET 2025-2026

University of Amsterdam
Graduate School of Social Sciences



Research Master Urban Studies

The two-year [Research Master's in Urban Studies](#) deals with questions surrounding the increasing urbanisation of today's world. Cities are characterised by economic, social, political and cultural opportunities, but also carry risks of social problems, inequality and security issues. In this programme, you will learn to research and analyse these challenges.

The Research Master Urban Studies welcomes incoming exchange students in the **first semester (September-January) only**.

Incoming exchange students to the Research Master Urban Studies are required to have a solid academic background (30 ECTS) in disciplines or courses that are relevant to the Urban Studies programme. Relevant backgrounds include Human Geography, Urban and Regional Planning and Urban Sociology, among others. Students are also required to have sufficient background (30 ECTS) in research methodologies, particularly those relevant for the social sciences, with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In addition to this, incoming exchange students to the Research Master Urban Studies are expected to have an independent and pro-active study approach. We expect students to have performed above average in their bachelor's programme and to have the ambition to pursue at least research career in academia or a research-oriented position in relevant professional fields like urban and regional planning, housing, social policy or real estate.

Courses

During their exchange programme in the Research Master Urban Studies incoming exchange students are required to take at least on the two core modules of the programme: either the core module Contemporary Urban Transformations (12 ECTS) or the module Philosophy of Science for Urban and Development Studies (6 ECTS). Students can also take both courses. Please be aware that the Philosophy of Science for Urban and Development Studies is a very advanced course with a fast pace. Students should be well prepared for this when entering the course.

Next to these courses students can choose from a number of thematic electives offered by the masters Human Geography, Urban & Regional Planning and International Development studies (block 1 and 2). Note that placement in these elective courses depends on availability of places and possible additional entrance requirements.

It is not possible for students in the Research Master Urban Studies to attend courses at bachelor's level.

All incoming exchange students are administered in the Exchange Programme - Social and Behavioural Sciences and will be hosted in the Research Master Urban Studies and will participate with the students of this programme in Orientation Meetings and other activities.

Please note that for many courses writing an academic paper or essay is required.

Important websites:

- [Partner website](#)
- [Student website](#)

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

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Nomination deadlines for the 2025-2026 Academic Year

First Semester (1 September 2025 - 30 January 2026): 15 April 2025

Student Application Deadlines for the 2025-2026 Academic Year

First Semester (1 September 2025 - 31 January 2026): 1 May 2025

Admission Requirements:

The Admissions Committee of the Graduate School of Social Sciences handles all applications individually.

We require:

- A GPA of at least a B (ECTS system) or a “very good” (a 7.5 in the Dutch system)
- Non-native speakers of English have to submit one of the following English proficiency tests with the following minimum score:
 - Level C1 in the CEFR: TOEFL (minimum score: , minimum score 100 IBT, with minimum scores reading 24, listening 22, writing 24, speaking 25)
 - IELTS (minimum score 7.0, with a minimum of 6.5 for each test component)
 - Cambridge Examination Scores (C1 advanced 190, C2 proficiency) *sent directly by the testing organization to the Universiteit van Amsterdam (TOEFL reporting number =9011)*

The admissions requirements are included in the Erasmus contract and the Admissions Committee does not exempt students from these requirements.

Application Procedure

- 1) We are using a nomination and application portal. You are kindly requested to nominate your selected students by using the information and the link to the UvA system that has been sent to you by email.
- 2) After having nominated your students, you will receive an email with confirmation of your nomination(s).
- 3) After checking your nomination(s) your students will receive an email with instructions:
- 4) - to activate their University of Amsterdam account.
- 5) - to log in to the University of Amsterdam's application portal and to submit their application.

They will be asked to upload a photocopy of the identity page of their passport, their transcript and – if applicable – their English language test result.

- 6) For non-native speakers of English: the official English test report can come in later (sent to us directly by the testing organization), but at the latest one month before the start of the semester

Students will be informed of their acceptance within 4 weeks after the application deadline.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academic calendar:

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| First semester: | 2 September | - 31 January |
| First Block: | 2 September | - 25 October |
| Second Block: | 30 October | - 20 December |
| Third Block: | 8 January | - 31 January |

Courses

Courses are mainly 6 ECTS (one block, 8 weeks) or 12 ECTS (two blocks, 16 weeks) and are mostly offered in the first two blocks of the semester. Students are expected to take a minimum of 24 ECTS per semester. A maximum of 36 ECTS per semester is allowed but not recommended since this is a very high workload.

- The preliminary course list will be send to admitted students in the course of May. The definite version will be shared on June 1, 2025.

Transcripts will be sent to the home institution within 5 weeks after the end of the semester.

Our grading table is available [here](#).

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

General information for incoming students, including Visa and Insurance information:

<https://www.uva.nl/en/education/other-programmes/exchange/practical-matters/practical-matters.html>

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities are advised to contact the International Office at an early stage in the admission process. [Information on services provided by the UvA is available here](#)

Housing

The *University of Amsterdam housing office* will send students information on the housing procedures by the end of May. The rental periods are always fixed periods. Exchange students will automatically be assigned for the first semester in case they are allotted student housing through the university.

In the past year we experienced a huge shortage in student housing as we were only able to accommodate approximately half of the incoming exchange students. Students are therefore advised to start looking on the private market as soon as possible as they know they are nominated for the UvA. Students who cannot secure accommodation before the start of the semester are advised to withdraw from the programme.

Information package

Accepted students receive an **Information email** from the International Office Social Sciences approximately 2 months before the start of the programme. The email contains:

- Practical information about studying in the Research Master Urban Studies
- Instructions for course registration
- Information about Dutch language courses at the University of Amsterdam.

The Office for International Student Affairs publishes the UvA START Magazine, including practical information on studying in The Netherlands and at the UvA: [click here](#).

Orientation period

The **International Student Network** (ESN) of the Universiteit van Amsterdam organizes an Introduction period previous to the start of the semester: [Home - ESN Amsterdam](#)

The **International Office- Social & Behavioral Sciences** organizes an introduction period for international students including a welcome meeting and drinks, academic meeting, lecture on plagiarism, and library skills workshops.

ERASMUS INFORMATION COLLEGE AND GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

International Office Social & Behavioral Sciences

Exchange Officers:

Jelka Driehuis

Josien Dümmer

Andrea Nauta

Coordinator of the team:

Maurine Carmona Galicia-van Mourik

Teamleader/Departmental Erasmus co-ordinator:

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- Prospective students are kindly asked to contact us by using [the digital contact form](#)

Academic contacts

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Study Advisor & Programme Manager

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