

Daniel Browne (Amsterdam, 2024–2025)

I am a history and politics student and in the first semester of 2024/25, I was able to have a chance to study abroad at Amsterdam University College. Overall it was a fantastic experience. The college itself was quite small, and lectures were more tutorial based with classes of at most 20 people which gave me the opportunity to meet new people quite easily and I found it to be a much better learning experience as the classes were heavily focused on discussion. It also gave me the opportunity to take classes that would generally not be part of my degree but were related to similar topics I cover in my degree such as being able to take a class in media studies. While there I took a class on decolonisation which was extremely interesting as usually we learn about colonisation from the perspective of Ireland, a colonised country, while in Amsterdam I was able to understand the Dutch perspective of having to deal with their legacy of colonialism.

One of the highlights was that I was able to live in dorms with other students which was a big change for me as in UCD I am commuting from home. The dorms in which I stayed, to put it lightly, were quite grubby, which in a weird way added to the experience, and also meant that rent was extremely cheap. This also meant that the dorms were extremely close to the city which was great, and another upside of Amsterdam was that it is quite similar in size to Dublin and thanks to its much better public transport meant that it was extremely easy to get around, especially because I rented a bike for 15 euro a month. The college was also an international university which meant that most of the other students were from all over the world and this led to me getting to know lots of different people. I had a great time in Amsterdam and unsurprisingly even the weather was better.