Universidad de Alcalá de Henares
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The University

The University dates from the end of the 13th century (1293), when King Sancho IV of Castille founded the Studium Generale at the request of the Archbishop of Toledo and Lord Mayor of Alcalá. The Complutense University was formally created by Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros in 1499, and it became the humanist centre of the Spanish Renaissance in the 16th century. After a period of decline in the 18th century, the university was transferred to Madrid in the 19th century. It was not until the academic year 1975-1976 that the University was opened again and re-established in 1979. Gradually it revived the brilliant university tradition of Alcalá de Henares. Alcalá University has even been chosen for the annual Cervantes Prize ceremony, presented by the King and Queen of Spain in the Paraninfo.

The Rectorate is located in the Colegio Mayor de San Ildefonso, an architectural jewel of the Spanish Renaissance. The Faculties of Arts, Economic and Business Administration Studies, and Law are housed in historic buildings in the old part of the town (Colegio de Málaga, Colegio de Mínimos, and Colegio de la Compañía de Jesús respectively). The Faculty of Library and Information Sciences, the Centres for European and North American Studies, the Institute of Education, the Institute of Business Management, the Institute of Sephardic and Andalusian Studies, the Foreign Language Studies Centre, together with the Centre of Cooperation for Development, Saint-Patrick or Irish College and the Unesco Chair of Afro-Ibero-American Studies, and the Teacher Training School, Cardenal Cisneros, are housed in modern facilities.

Other facilities such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Sciences, Ecology, the Polytechnic School, as well as the Nursing and Physiotherapy School are all situated on a campus 3km from the city centre. The campus is a modern complex which includes a large hospital, Príncipe de Asturias University Hospital, and some other centres such as the National Geographic Institute, the Document Supply Centre of the National Library and the university residences.

The University has also undertaken the restoration of the most representative historic building in Alcalá de Henares, which will house centres such as the Central Humanities Library. During the next few years, a major expansion will be occurring. This will include the creation of one of the largest European botanical gardens, the Royal Botanical Garden Juan Carlos I, and a Scientific and Technology Park.
Vice Rectorate of International Relations

The Vice Rectorate of International Relations is the equivalent to UCC’s International Education Office. Their job is to help international students with any enquiries they may have. Please go there if you need any assistance.

Vice Rectorate of International Relations
Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso
Plaza San Diego s/n
28801 Alcalá de Henares
Madrid

Vice Chancellor of International Relations and University Extension:
Hon Mrs Dña. MŚ Jose Toro Nozal

Secretary:
Silvia Alvarez Marin
Phone: +34 91 885 4085 / 4087
Fax: +34 91 885 4130
Mail: silvia.alvarez@uah.es

Head of International Relations Section:
Pilar Rodriguez Lopez
Phone: +34 91 885 4155
Mail: pilar.rodriguezl@uah.es

Economic management:
Julia Diaz del Consuelo
Phone: +34 91 885 4149
Mail: julia.diaz@uah.es
Students Contact Office

You are welcome to come meet any of the staff at the Student Contact Office located in the Vice Rectorate of International Relation. Opening Hours are Monday-Friday, 9.00am to 2.00pm.

Erasmus programme
Beatriz Avila / Cristina Madueno
Phone: +34 91 885 4088
Mail: programa.socrates@uah.es / internacional@uah.es

Erasmus practices
Jorge Alba
Phone: +34 91 885 40 88
Mail: becas.leonardo@uah.es
Mailing address:
Colegio Mayor de San Ildefonso
Plaza de San Diego s / n
28801 Alcala de Henares (Madrid)
Fax: +34 91 885 41 30

Departmental Contacts

In each faculty or study centre you will find an Erasmus Officer who will provide you with any academic information about subjects, study programmes, and exams you may need.

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
Phone: +34 91 885 4254
Mail: cedec@uah.es

Faculty of Law
Phone: +34 91 885 4359
Mail: socrates.derecho@uah.es

Higher Technical School of Architecture
Phone: +34 91 885 4254
Mail: socrates.arquitectur@uah.es

Environmental Science, Pharmacy, Chemical and Biological Sciences
Phone: +34 91 885 4843
Mail: socrates.farmacia@uah.es / ambientales.socrates@uah.es
Faculty of Arts  
Phone: +34 91 885 4426  
Mail: oficina.erasmus@uah.es

Faculty of Medicine / Nursing and Physiotherapy / Polytechnic / Sport:  
Phone: +34 91 885 4843  
Mail: socrates.medicina@uah.es / socrates.politécnica@uah.es

University Schools of Tourism, Business Studies and Teaching (Guadalajara)  
Phone: +34 949 20 96 51  
Mail: socrates.guadalajara@uah.es

School Magisterio (Guadalajara)  
Phone: +34 949 20 97 35  
Mail: socrates.magisterio@uah.es
The origins of Alcalá go back to the foundation of the Roman town Complutum. In the four centuries it existed, Complutum attained a splendour and importance which it would retain throughout the period of the Visigoths. It was under the rule of the Moors that a city was built which in time came to be known as Al-kla-Nahar ("The castle of the Henares"), a name which survives in the modern form, Alcalá de Henares. Unfortunately, there are few remains from this period, and those that do survive are in a very poor state of preservation.

The Christian conquest brought with it another rebuilding on what was to be thenceforth the city's definitive site, in the area of what is today the Magisterial Cathedral. Nevertheless, it wasn't until the end of the fifteenth century that the city would enter another period of splendour. In 1499 Cardinal Cisneros founded the University, an event which gave rise to a process of urban renewal that transformed Alcalá into a university city built in accordance with the canons of classical architecture.

Another event that marked Alcalá's history was the birth of Miguel de Cervantes, writer of El Quijote. Cervantes is not the only illustrious son of Alcalá. Other major figures in the fields of culture or politics were Juan Ruiz, Arcipreste de Hita, Catherine of Aragon, Ferdinand I of Bohemia, the architect Pedro Gumiel, and Manuel Azaña.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the city fell into decline as its university was removed to Madrid in 1836, and the successive sales of church land led to the closure of several convents, thus submerging Alcalá further into cultural decadence.

Today, after the reopening of the University in 1977, the industrial growth of the last few decades, and UNESCO's recognition of Alcalá as a World Heritage Site, the city is
enjoying a period of growth in terms of its economy, tourism and culture. It may face the future with optimism while remaining in touch with its unique past.

For more information please go to: http://www.ayto-alcaladehenares.es/

Travel

Arrival

Presently you can only fly directly from Ireland to Madrid from Dublin. However, there are three airline carries that offer this service: Iberia, Ryan Air, and Aer Lingus. Madrid Barajas Airport is located 20km from Alcalá de Henares.

How to get to Alcalá de Henares

Alcalá de Henares can be reached easily from Madrid by train.

From the airport (Barajas Madrid international airport) using subway and train:

Madrid’s Barajas Airport has a Metro station in Terminal T2. Trains leave every 5 minutes from 6.00am to 2.00am. It is located just in the middle of Terminal T2. You must follow the metro logo:

The subway station is called Aeropuerto. You can find it in the map below; it is the second stop in line 8 (pink line), which connects Barajas town to Nuevos Ministerios. The price of a one-way ticket is about €1.10. There is a train every 4-7 minutes from 6:05 to 22:00 and every 15 minutes from 22:00 to 2:00. You can find more information (in English) at the web page http://www.metromadrid.es/default.asp?id=147.
Nuevos Ministerios is also a train station, where you must take the RENFE urban train ("CERCANÍAS") to Alcalá de Henares. You just have to follow the logotype:

Below you can find a map of the urban train ("CERCANÍAS") network. As you can see there are three lines connecting Nuevos Ministerios with Alcalá de Henares (lines C-1, C-2 and C-7).
The price of a one-way ticket is about €2.65. There is a train every 10 or 12 minutes from 5:35 to 23:10. You can find more information (in English) at the Renfe: Commuters Madrid web page.

**From the airport (Barajas Madrid international airport) using taxi:**
You can also take a taxi from the airport to Alcalá; the price should not exceed €40 and it will take you 30 minutes to get there, which is less than half of the time you will need by train.

**From Chamartin station:**
You must take the RENFE urban train (“CERCANÍAS”) to Alcalá de Henares. Above you can find a map of the urban train (“CERCANÍAS”) network. As you can see there are three lines connecting Chamartin with Alcalá de Henares (lines C-1, C-2 and C-7). The price of a one-way ticket is about €2.50. There is a train every 10 or 12 minutes from 5:35 to 23:10. You can find more information (in English) at the Renfe: Commuters Madrid web page.

**From Alcalá de Henares (downtown) to Polytechnic School**
The Polytechnic School is in the University Campus outside the town. If you are accommodated in a hotel in the city centre, you must take a bus (be sure to take line number 2 to Polytechnic School, not to Science Faculty!). The first stop of the bus is in the Cervantes Square (Plaza de Cervantes) and the last stop is the Polytechnic School. Intermediate stops include Plaza de Cuatro Caños.

**Accommodation**

The University of Alcalá has a university hall of residence on its Alcalá de Henares University Campus, just outside the city (approximately 3km). To obtain a place, you should contact CRUSA, the body that runs it. CRUSA’s address is:

**Residencias Universitarias (C.R.U.S.A.)**
Carretera de Madrid-Barcelona, km 33.600
Alcalá de Henares 28805
Telephone (information): +34 91 880 98 95
Telephone (reservations): +34 91 880 99 95
Web: [www.cru-sa.es](http://www.cru-sa.es)
E-mail: [infor@cru-sa.es](mailto:infor@cru-sa.es)
Cost of Living

As a rough guide, the monthly cost of living for a student in Alcalá is as follows:

**Accommodation**: between about €150 and €250
**Transport**: approximately €60 (dependent on the amount of travelling you tend to do)
**Other**: (food, other bills, socialising, incidentals, etc.) : €200

This following shows the approximate average prices for some everyday items:

- A loaf of bread: €0.40
- One litre of milk: €0.80
- Cup of coffee in a café: €1
- Can of soft drink in a supermarket: €0.37
- Half kilogram of spaghetti: €0.60
- A restaurant set-menu: €9
- A hamburger at McDonalds: €2
- A spirit or liquor in a night-club: €5
- A cinema ticket: €5
- A ticket for the Prado Museum: €3.10

Admissions Procedures

Registration

On arrival in Alcalá de Henares, exchange students must report to the Vice Rectorate of International Relations (address as above).

You are required to be able to produce a certificate of attendance from your home university, showing arrival and departure dates at/from the University of Alcalá and signed and sealed by the coordinator of your home University, as well as 4 passport-sized pictures.
Academics

Grading System
Grades are awarded on a scale from 1-10, as follows:

10 Matrícula de Honor (Distinction) (limited to 5%)
9-10 Sobresaliente (outstanding)
7-8.5 Notable (credit)
5-6.5 Aprobado (pass)
0-4.5 Suspenso (fail)

Libraries
The University of Alcalá has a variety of libraries to offer, since each study centre has its own library. It is also possible to order books from other Spanish universities. For further information on library services please go to: http://biblio.uah.es

Computer Labs
Exchange students have free Internet access at the computer labs which are located in the different study centres.

Practical Matters

Health and Insurance
Foreign students in Alcalá University must have health care cover. For this reason, it is essential for them to have the European Health Insurance Card. The card gives the holder the right to medical treatment, taking into account the duration of their planned stay and the type of treatment needed, while they are in any EU country. Make sure your European Health Insurance Card is current before you leave Ireland. The health care received will be the same as that received by nationals of the country visited.
Student Matters

Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
ESN is a student-led organisation which tries to facilitate international students’ integration into Spanish life. ESN organises different cultural activities and recreation programmes such as trips to other Spanish cities, parties, cultural events, etc.

Erasmus Student Network
Rectorado Building Rectorship Building
Pza San Diego Pza San Diego
Erasmus Office Erasmus Office.
Office hours: Tuesday 17-20 h., Wednesday 16-19 h., Friday 16-18 h.
Tel: 918854088 /637709025
Mail: esn@uah.es
Web: http://www.esnuah.es.vg

Sports Facilities
To support health, fitness, and enjoyment, the University has an array of sports complexes both on and off campus that all exchange students may make use of, as well as sports teams, clubs, and events. For more information please go to: http://www.uah.es/agenda/mostrar.asp?id=2&Offset=0

Orientation Week
All exchange students are invited to participate in an orientation week offered just before the beginning of the first term. This week includes a guided tour of Alcalá de Henares, an excursion to another town close to Madrid, a Spanish buffet (which will be attended by our Vice-Rector), as well as basic practical information.

Spanish Language and Cultural Courses
All Erasmus students who have returned their application forms on time will be allowed to take part in the intensive Spanish Language and Culture Course free of charge.

Student Information Centre
The University Information Centre at the University of Alcalá will answer any questions about the University Community. It was one of the first Information Centres implemented at a Spanish university and is now recognised as an essential service.

Centre de Información Universitaria
Antiguo Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo
Plaza de San Diego s/n
E-28801 Alcalá de Henares Madrid
Tel: +34 91 885 40 21/ +34 91 885 40 03
Fax: +34 91 885 40 95
Mail: ciu@uah.es
Student Tips

Erasmus is full of excitement and adventure, but also uncertainty and nerves. Although the International Education Office in UCC and the Vice Rectorate of International Relation in Alcalá will help you as much as possible, nothing can beat the experience of being in your shoes. So here are some tips and tricks from UCC students who have studied in Alcalá.

Academic Matters:
- Take the chance to learn new things.
- Try and take some courses that allow you to learn more about Spanish life, culture, history, or literature. You’ll never have quite the same opportunity in Ireland.
- Contact the Erasmus officers in your subject area if you have any questions about academics.
- Be aware that you are entering a new education system with different administration, course, and exam structures.
- Keep up with your reading.

Accommodation:
- Be aware that university residences are located outside the city centre. It’s a good idea to find the location of your faculty before securing accommodation.
- Find out whether bed linen is included or if you have to buy it on arrival.
- When booking accommodation, ask about the times you will be able to collect your keys and access your residence so you can either arrive during these times or make alternative accommodation arrangements for the first night.
- Bring pictures of home to put on the walls.
- Bring a 2-pin plug for your Irish electrical products.

Travel:
- Remember generally the earlier you book the flights, the cheaper they are.
- Some clubs organise really cheap day and overnight trips.
- If you are coming home for Christmas, it is a good time to bring back excess luggage.

Bureaucracy:
- Bring multiple photocopies of any documentation you might need.
- EU citizens do not need a Residence Permit.
- It is a good idea to carry some sort of ID with you at all times.

Social:
- Buy local newspapers and magazine, and listen to local TV, radio, and music.
- Immerse yourself in the culture.
- Try to interact with Spanish students and the local community.
General:

- Bring a good Spanish dictionary
- Unlock your mobile phone before you leave Ireland if you want to put a Spanish SIM card in it.
- Brings some books in English. Although you can buy some English-language books in Spain, they can be expensive, and it is handy to have some for travelling and for when you first arrive.
- Look into phone cards – they are one of the cheapest ways to phone home.
- If you have a laptop and internet access in your accommodation, look into getting Skype or other internet phone packages.