

7

Most Frequently Asked Questions



Arrival in Santander

1. What is the ORI?
2. When is the ORI open to the public?
3. When should I arrive in Santander?

Accommodation

4. Who will help me finding accommodation?
5. How do I find out the address of my accommodation?
6. Are there any rules that I should follow regards my accommodation?
7. If I do not like the flat found, can I change?

Subjects and Registration

8. Will I be given guidance in the ORI as to what subjects I should choose?
9. When should I register?
10. Where can I get the registration form?
11. Can the Learning Agreement be used as a registration form?
12. Where should I register for my courses?
13. Can I change the courses I have registered for?
14. Once I have completed my registration, do I have to go back to the ORI?

Spanish Course

15. What is the CIUC?
16. Is the Spanish course compulsory?
17. Do I have to pay to attend the Spanish course?

Orientation Programme

18. Should I attend the Orientation Programme?
19. How should I go about paying for the Orientation Programme excursions?
20. What is a UC mentor?
21. Are the times of the Orientation Programme activities going to coincide with that of my Spanish Course?

While at the University

22. Where can I find a computer room?
23. What is the TUI?
24. When will I get my TUI?
25. Is it necessary to open an e-mail account at the UC?
26. What do I have to do to be able to use my account?
27. How do I find out where the subjects I have registered for are to be held?
28. When and where are the exams?
29. Is it necessary to open a bank account?

End of your stay

30. Can I stay longer in Santander?
31. Do I have to do any paperwork in the ORI before I leave?
32. What is the Attendance Certificate?
33. Where should I go to get my Transcript of Records?

Arrival in Santander

1. What is the ORI?

ORI stands for International Relations Office and it is the reference point for all exchange students or visitors that come to the University of Cantabria. Its offices are on the first floor of the building for the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Law, directly above the bank offices.

2. When is the ORI open to the public?

The ORI is open from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. You should keep this fact in mind if you plan to arrive in Santander in the afternoon or at the weekend.

3. When should I arrive in Santander?

Although the official start of the academic year appears in the UC calendar, all students should attend the Welcome and Orientation sessions that are usually held a few days prior to this (you can find this information on our Web page). Some students usually come at the beginning of September to attend the Spanish courses.

Accommodation

4. Who will help me finding accommodation?

Bearing in mind what the city of Santander is like, the accommodation that we offer is in private flats shared with other exchange students. The ORI can find you your first accommodation. If that is what you want, you should send us, sufficiently in advance, the accommodation reservation form that you will find on our Webpage, indicating that you wish to share a flat with other students. The fact these flats are private means that the ORI cannot be held responsible for any discrepancy that may arise between the flat owners and the students. For all other kinds of information (Halls of Residence, host families, etc,...) it is up to the student to make his/her own reservations.

5. How do I find out the address of my accommodation?

The ORI sends out to those students that have requested shared accommodation with other students an e-mail giving the address of the flat, the date from when it will be available and the personal details of the flat owner. Students should get in direct touch with the flat owner for whatever questions they may wish to ask.

6. Are there any rules that I should follow regards my accommodation?

The student is usually obliged to pay the flat owner a deposit (this is usually one month's rent in advance) to cover two kinds of contingencies: either the student leaves the flat before the period of time established in the contract expires, or because there have been damages or breakages in the flat. In these cases the flat owner is within his rights to refuse to return the deposit and the ORI cannot force him to do so under any circumstances. It is extremely important that, prior to the signing of the lease, the student be quite clear in his/her decision to stay in the said flat for the stipulated period of time. It should be remembered that the rent does not usually cover utility costs (gas, electricity, water, telephone etc.)

7. If I do not like the flat found, can I change?

Yes, but we always give priority to those students who are looking for a flat for the first time. Only if there are flats still available once the above condition has been met, we can help you. Anyway, the ORI does not generally undertake to find other flats after that moment because the number of flats is limited. If you decide to look for a flat by yourself, please do not forget to give us the new address so that we can get in touch with you if need be.

Subjects and Registration**8. Will I be given guidance in the ORI as to what subjects I should choose?**

To be given academic guidance you should get in touch with your International Relations coordinator. When you arrive you will be given an information table with details on how to contact your coordinator.

9. When should I register?

There is a timetable for registration, which must be respected by students, based on the first letter of their family name or the study programme to which they belong. This timetable will be given to students when they arrive in Santander. Even so, the registration will not begin until the Welcome and Orientation Sessions have finished. It is possible to go to classes for some days before registering.

10. Where can I get the registration form?

The form will be given to students only by the ORI staff.

11. Can the Learning Agreement be used as a registration form?

Those students who have to use a Learning Agreement because it is a requirement of the exchange programme that they belong to, may easily confuse the two forms due to their similarity in appearance. However, the registration form does not require the coordinator's signature, whereas the Learning Agreement does. Each of these forms is for a different purpose.

12. Where should I register for my courses?

In the ORI, within the periods stipulated on the registration timetable. Make sure about the number of ECTS credits that each subject gives, since this figure does not always coincide with that of the UC credits. Only our

ECTS Guide (on our Webpage) will provide you with reliable information on the number of ECTS credits.

13. Can I change the courses I have registered for?

Yes, during the period for change of subject that appears on the registration. It is necessary to fill out a specific form if you wish to do so.

14. Once I have completed my registration, do I have to go back to the ORI?

Yes, you must go back to pick up your registration receipt and your student accreditation. The registration receipt is necessary for you to be able to check which courses you have registered for (registration code and subject) and to detect any possible problems in the registration; the student accreditation is a document which you will need whenever you need to prove that you are an exchange student at the University of Cantabria.

Spanish Course

15. What is the CIUC?

CIUC (Centro de Idiomas de la Universidad de Cantabria) means "University of Cantabria Language Centre" and it is the department that organises the Spanish courses. The Centre is on the lower first (-1) floor of the building housing the Economics and Law faculties. It is open to the public Monday to Friday from 10:30 to 13.30 and Monday to Thursday from 16:00 to 18:00.

16. Is the Spanish course compulsory?

No, but it is highly recommended because of its highly practical nature and content. Although it is possible to attend a Spanish course in the month of September, the CIUC offers courses at the start of each semester.

17. Do I have to pay to attend for the Spanish course?

The Spanish course does cost money, but those students coming to study at the UC via an exchange programme can get a discount if they go to the ORI to pick up the enrolment form for the Spanish course with the office stamp on it. Two different courses are offered (one of 40 hours and the other of 60), for which there are two different prices.

Orientation Programme

18. Should I attend the Orientation Programme?

The Orientation Programme includes two types of activities: some are free and open to all students, and others are only available to you if you have previously paid the fee and handed in the corresponding enrolment form for the activity. The activities that are free are: Welcome Session, Introducing you to your Mentors, University Tour, Apéritif and Conferences. Those activities for which you have to pay are the excursions to different parts of Santander and Cantabria. We here at the ORI feel that these activities are a wonderful opportunity for all the students and the mentors to get to know one another.

19. How should I go about paying for the Orientation Programme excursions?

The fee for these activities is made in one single payment. Bear in mind that the amount to pay will not change no matter how many excursions you actually go on in the end. Also, once you have made your payment, no refunds will be given. You should not pay before you have actually arrived at the UC because, in order to carry out this step properly, you need first to go to the ORI to pick up the corresponding form. The right to enjoy to the Orientation Programme paying activities is personal and cannot be passed to anyone else.

20. What is a UC mentor?

A mentor is a Spanish student who has already been on an exchange that we will introduce to you at the Welcome Session so that he/she can accompany you on the University Tour and all the other Welcome and Orientation Session activities and who will help you to communicate in Spanish for anything you need to do related with your arrival at the UC.

21. Are the times of the Orientation Programme activities going to coincide with that of my Spanish Course?

No, the activities are organised in such a way that they are compatible with your Spanish Course.

While at the University**22. Where can I find a computer room?**

In each faculty there is a computer room that you may use only if you have the TUI. Off Campus, the UC also has another building, the University Main Hall, where it is also possible to use the computer service as long as you show your TUI card. If you still do not have your TUI card, you may use the ORI computers provisionally if you put your name down on the reservation list.

23. What is the TUI?

TUI stands for “Tarjeta Universitaria Inteligente” (University Student Card). It is a card that identifies you as a member of the university community and contains a chip that makes it possible to carry out a number of important functions: applying for an e-mail account, checking your grades, use of computers, access to certain areas...etc. The card can also be used to take out library books or to get discounts in certain shops.

24. When will I get my TUI?

As long as you have sent the ORI all the papers that we

have asked you for in order to formally give you a place at the UC early enough (at least one month before your arrival here), you will be able to pick your TUI card up in the ORI. Remember that the later you submit your papers, the longer you will have to wait to get your card.

25. Is it necessary to open an e-mail account at the UC?

Yes, it is vital. Any communication with you will be made via this system. Once you have registered at the UC, we will no longer use your previous personal e-mail address.

26. What do I have to do to be able to use my account?

You have to insert your TUI card in the self-service terminals that you will find in all the UC buildings and then simply follow the procedure to request an e-mail account. You will straight away receive a receipt with the details of your user name and key code. As a rule, it will take a couple of days from the moment you request the account for it to become activated.

27. How do I find out where the subjects I have registered for are to be held?

The easiest way is to ask your mentor for help. Even so, amongst the papers that we give you at the Welcome Session you will find a map of the campus on which you can locate your faculty. At the porters' office in each faculty you can get information as to how the lecture rooms are set out. Generally, this lay-out corresponds to the year of the degree that the subject belongs to.

28. When and where are the exams?

The dates for all exams are published in the study plan guides that are available in the photocopying services. However, once you have registered and you have your TUI, you may look up these dates on the Virtual Campus (Internet). Approximately two weeks before the date of an exam, details of this particular convocation will be placed

on the faculty notice boards, stating the time and the room where the exam will take place.

29. Is it necessary to open a bank account?

We do recommend that you do this, because rent and utility expenses etc. are normally paid in Spain by direct debit from your account. While the paperwork to legalise your being in Spain is going through, it is possible to open a provisional account at either of the banks located immediately below the ORI Office.

End of your stay

30. Can I stay longer in Santander?

Yes, you can, as long as there is an academic justification, authorised by your own university and for which it sends us this authorisation by mail, fax or e-mail. Remember, though, that during the months of July, August and September there is no regular teaching activity at the university.

31. Do I have to do any paperwork in the ORI before I leave?

If your own university asks you for an Attendance Certificate, we can prepare one for you (using the dates for arrival and departure that you put on your form at the

beginning of your stay here), which will show officially that you have completed your stay at the UC. Except for this document, we do not require you to do anything else.

32. What is the Attendance Certificate?

This is a document which justifies a student's stay at the UC. The maximum length of this period is from September to June/July. Certificates will not include the month of August, since there is no academic activity during the summer, unless the student has received express written authorisation to stay during this period and which document is duly signed by the issuing university.

33. Where should I go to get my Transcript of Records?

The ORI automatically sends off your academic results, so it is not necessary for you to ask for them. These certificates are sent out in duplicate, one copy going to your home address and the other to your own university. Those students who are at the UC only for the first semester may go to the ORI to request that the Transcript of Records be sent during the month of March. In all other cases, remember that, due to the way in which the grade lists are sent in at the UC, your grades will not reach your university before the month of August. Your university should keep in mind the fact that, because of the above, no claims of any kind can be dealt with during the month of July.