Summer School: Programming in Python

Princess Hill, *Engineering*

This summer I studied at the VU Amsterdam Summer school for a two-week session completing a programming in Python course. My course was not the only available course, with three sets of sessions with courses ranging from stem cell technology to feeding the millions – here is a link to the available course at the summer school: https://bachelors.vu.amsterdam/en/summer-school/courses/index.aspx . These sessions are open to all students regardless of age and background degree and developed social skills with excursions and other activities whilst still including a lot of learning. During the stay I stayed in university halls with other summer school students, so it was comparable to starting freshers all over again. The rooms were modern and equipped with a minifridge, kettle, coffee machine and had en-suite bathrooms.

This course was extremely valuable for me as it advanced my interpersonal skills and improved my confidence as well as opened up opportunities for me in the world of technology. Learning python as an engineer opens a lot of avenues for career choices with 70% of stem careers now involving software. When taking part on a course like programming it teaches you persistence to keep trying until the problem is fixed. Furthermore, it teaches you to remain calm when dealing with stressful situations in the workplace as well as promoting a feeling of pride in your work when completed to the best of your ability, ultimately ending with a unique code that solves the assigned problem.

Studying in Amsterdam is also beneficial as a central hub for travelling Europe, with affordable trains to Berlin, Paris and many other major cities. Whilst in the city in our free time the days were spent living how the Dutch do, cycling to commute to the university, the city centre or to a variety of lakes and canals where in the 35-degree heat majority of the student spend the afternoon swimming.

I highly recommend this summer school as it provides the opportunity to explore a new and modern subject, developing skills valuable for your future career and therefore increasing career prospects whilst allowing you to make a new group of friends in the culturally diverse city of Amsterdam.