Campus France will guide you through your first steps in France and exploring La Rochelle, your new home.

WELCOME TO LA ROCHELLE
Welcome for students enrolled at La Rochelle Université

At La Rochelle Université, a small university, your main point of contact is the Direction des Relations Internationales, the International Relations Department (DRI) which will help you complete essential administrative procedures. A personalized welcome service has been set up for all new international students with a support team of mentors to help them find accommodation, complete their enrollment and obtain residence permits.

Address: La Rochelle Université, International Relations Department (DRI), Technoforum building, ground-floor, 23 avenue Albert Einstein, 17000 La Rochelle.

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:45am to 12:30pm and 1.30pm to 4.45pm (except Wednesday afternoons).

Contact: 05 46 45 87 47 or dri@univ-lr.fr

Learn more:
- check the University web pages for international students, whether exchange students or free-movers (regular admission): https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > International > Venir étudier à l’université.
- view the welcome videos for young international students on the La Rochelle CIDJ website: http://www.infojeunesse17.com > Mobilité internationale > Bienvenue à La Rochelle

Buddy System
ADRIEM Association. Meet with local families and spend time together.

Contact: ADRIEM (Association pour le Développement des Relations Internationales avec les Etudiants du Monde), 07 82 83 14 32 or adriem17000@gmail.com

Site: https://www.agglo-larochelle.fr/-ils-accueillent-les-etudiants-du-monde

Welcome and orientation in other institutions

If you are enrolled in another institution, please consult the Campus France website for orientation. The site presents a series of Information Sheets covering the different higher learning institutions: https://www.campusfrance.org > Students > Documentary resources > Practical information for students and researchers > Reception arrangements in institutions

If you cannot find your school in this list, then go directly to their website.

National Services
- students: www.etudiant.gouv.fr
- doctoral students, researchers: http://www.euraxess.fr/fr

Housing in La Rochelle:

In La Rochelle, there are numerous solutions for finding lodging: Student-only accommodation managed by the CROUS, student and private residences, and housing in private homes. What's most important is to take care of this as early as possible, before your arrival.

- The Student Guide published by the University (see above) provides a number of tips and addresses. You can also check out the accommodation pages on the University website: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Vie pratique > Logement étudiant.
- The Association Rochelaise d'Hébergement Pour les Etudiants et les Jeunes (ARHPEJ, formerly known as ARPAE), is an association for student and youth housing. Working in partnership with the City of La Rochelle and La Rochelle Université, it manages over 640 units: https://arpae.fr/
The Comité Local pour le Logement Autonome des Jeunes (CLLAJ), a local committee for youth housing, publishes classified ad on its site for housing: https://www.cllaj.asso.fr/

The La Rochelle CDIJ (Centre Départemental d’Information Jeunesse), the youth information center, gives advice on its site as well as a housing guide (Guide Logement) published by the Nouvelle-Aquitaine CRIJ. Download here: http://www.infojeunesse17.com > Vie pratique > Le logement.

A FEW TIPS

◆ Short-term housing:
  • La Rochelle youth hostel, at the Minimes marina. Address and phone number: avenue des Minimes, 17000 La Rochelle, 05 46 44 43 11. Website: https://www.aj-larochelle.fr/hostel/ or by telephone on +33 (0)5 46 44 43 11

  • For any other types of temporary accommodation, please use the search engine on the Tourist Office website: https://www.larochelle-tourisme.com > Séjourner > Hébergements.

◆ Long-term housing
  • CLOUS student housing, the La Rochelle Centre Local des Œuvres Universitaires, the regional center for university services, is a CROUS Poitiers satellite office. Address: Cité Antinéa, 15, rue de Vaux de Foletier, Les Minimes, 17000 La Rochelle. Hours: Monday to Friday, 8am to 12pm and 1pm to 5:40pm. Contact: 05 46 28 21 30. Poitiers CROUS site: https://www.crous-poitiers.fr/ Trouver un Logement site: https://trouverunlogement.lescrous.fr/

On campus, the CROUS is also responsible for all low-cost food services (university restaurant, cafeterias, food-trucks).

◆ Private Housing Platforms
Other offers for student lodging, managed by private organisms, are also available in La Rochelle Try these sites:
  - https://www.estudines.com
  - https://www.appartcity.com
  - https://www.adele.org
  - https://www.immojeune.com
  - https://housinganywhere.com

◆ There is also a site managed by the CROUS, Lokaviz, which includes a listing of student accommodation in private homes: https://www.lokaviz.fr/

◆ Shared Leases: consult La Carte des Colocs, a national site for shared leases that’s free and simple to use: https://www.lacartedescolocs.fr/

◆ Other solutions available on the Campus France site: www.campusfrance.org > Getting Organized > Accommodation.

  • If you need a guarantor to secure your lodging Visale is a new and free guarantor system: www.visale.fr

  • If you want to make an application for public housing funding (the APL “Aide Personnalisée au Logement”), the CAF (Caisse des Allocations Familiales) can check your eligibility: 08.10.29.29.29 or www.caf.fr

  • For accommodations adapted to your special needs, contact the CROUS Service Social which will work with your host institution.

Some institutions have specialized services for special-needs students (housing assistance and also transportation and tuition).

GETTING AROUND IN LA ROCHELLE

If travelling to La Rochelle from Paris, take the train (around 3 hours by TGV - the high-speed train): https://www.oui.sncf

For travelling in and around the town you can use public transport (buses and sea-buses!) run by the Yélo network which manages transport in and around La Rochelle: https://yelo.agglo-larochelle.fr (special rates for students aged under 26 and a single travel-card for all types of transport).

There are Nouvelle-Aquitaine regional trains for getting around the region: https://www.ter.sncf.com/nouvelle-aquitaine or https://transports.nouvelle-aquitaine.fr Buses are also an option for low-cost travel: https://fr.ouibus.com/ or https://www.flixbus.fr/

For ride-sharing, refer to the collaborative websites
  - national site: https://www.blablacar.fr/

For a bit more independence, you can rent a bike from Yélo which also runs a self-service bike system: https://yelo.agglo-larochelle.fr > Vélo.
At La Rochelle Université there is a Relais Handicap for disabled and special needs students. This service was put in place to promote smooth progress and success in their studies: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Etudiants en situation de handicap.

FIRST THINGS FIRST /

ENROLLMENT IN YOUR INSTITUTION

♦ CVEC
Before you can enroll in your institution, you must download proof of payment of the Contribution Vie Etudiante et de Campus (CVEC)
- Connect to: https://cvec.etudiant.gouv.fr/
- For additional information and special cases: https://www.campusfrance.org > Getting Organized > CVEC.

♦ Confirm Registration
Take note! Even if you have a pre-registration letter, you are not officially enrolled. You must confirm your enrollment with the institution’s Service de la Scolarité (Admissions) as soon as you arrive.

RESIDENCE PERMIT (TITRE DE SÉJOUR)

♦ Information
- La Rochelle Université students should contact the International Relations Service. Address: International Relations Service (SRI), Technoforum building, ground-floor, 23 avenue Albert Einstein, 17000 La Rochelle.
- Students attending other institutions should contact Service de la Vie Étudiante (student services) or Service des Relations Internationales.
- At the Préfecture for Charente-Maritime in La Rochelle. The Service des Etrangers: by appointment only. Address: Cité Duperré, 5 place des Cordeliers, 17000 La Rochelle. Contact: 05 46 27 43 00 or pref-etrangers@charente-maritime.gouv.fr Website: http://www.charente-maritime.gouv.fr > Préfecture – Titre de séjour.
- Learn more about your rights and obligations: www.service-public.fr > Etranger > Titre de séjour et document de circulation

GOOD TO KNOW

♦ If you arrive in France with a VLS-TS long-term student visa: You must validate it online within three months of arrival: https://administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr

♦ If you are an Algerian national or a student with a “concours” (tests) visa or a “mineur scolarisé” (enrolled minor) visa or a visa with the indication “carte à solliciter dans les deux mois” (residence permit to be requested within 2 months of entry): Depending on your campus, your residence permit application is made at the Préfecture or with the Service des Relations Internationales at your campus.

Take note: To renew your residence permit, you must apply within two months prior to its expiration date.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION /

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

If you stay in France for more than 3 months, it will be much easier day-to-day if you open a bank account, online or in one of the 60 bank agencies located in La Rochelle.

In France, opening a bank account is a right: https://www.service-public.fr > Argent > Comptes bancaires (droit au compte).

HEALTHCARE

In France, receiving medical treatment is practically free but you must be insured. Accordingly, signing up for medical insurance is mandatory.

Login to the site: https://etudiant-etranger.ameli.fr site to register, to understand your rights, and to take the necessary steps.

Learn more: https://www.campusfrance.org > Getting Organized > Health
As a student, you can also take advantage of the university medical services. In these health centers where consultations are free, you will be greeted by a team of doctors and nurses who can give personalized advice about health and prevention.

That’s the case in La Rochelle with the Service de Santé Universitaire, the university health center: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Le service social et de santé. Address: Service de Santé Universitaire (SDSU), 42-44 avenue Albert Einstein, 17000 La Rochelle Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm. Contact: 05 46 45 84 46.

Students enrolled at any other establishment should contact the Service de la Vie étudiante at their place of study.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE

You can also sign up for top-up insurance which will cover all health expenses not covered by the free and compulsory health insurance.

Take note: The plans and coverage levels differ from one company to another. To choose a top-up insurance policy which meets your needs and your budget, you can compare student health insurance plans on the Internet.

HOUSING INSURANCE

In France, housing insurance is mandatory. You can sign up for housing insurance called “garantie risques locatifs” - rental risk guarantee - at your bank or a private insurance company. Online subscription is often possible.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

SAMU: Call 15 Emergency Medical Services
Police emergency: Call 17 in the event of violence, theft, robbery.
Fire Department: Call 18 in the event of fire, gas leak, water damage, natural catastrophe, or traffic accident.
Call 112: European emergency services number that’s accessible from anywhere in the European Union in addition to the French numbers above.

LEARNING FRENCH

Learning French is an opportunity that’s not to be missed! Find what works best for you:
- by consulting the Campus France site or the Français Langue Etrangère (FLE) - French as a foreign language - centers and universities which offer courses at all levels year-round http://ecolesdete.campusfrance.org
- by asking in your institution, at city hall, or in your host city’s Maison des Associations - community centers.

FINDING A JOB OR AN INTERNSHIP

Useful websites:
- The La Rochelle CDIJ (Centre Départemental d’Information Jeunesse), the regional youth information center, publishes classified ads on its site: http://jobs.pourlesjeunes.com
You will also find lots of information, advice and tips, and search engines in the Job Guide published by the Nouvelle Aquitaine CRIJ: http://www.infojeunesse17.com > Job Emploi > Guide, Trouver un Job!
- La Rochelle Université recruits a number of students every year to work in its different departments: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Orientation et insertion > Jobs étudiants
- The Jobaviz website, run by the CROUS, can help you find a student job compatible with your studies: https://www.jobaviz.fr/

THINGS TO DO IN LA ROCHELLE /

TAKE UP A SPORT

In your school, you may also have access to sports facilities. Contact your Service des sports.
At La Rochelle Université, the Service Universitaire des Activités Physiques Sportives et d’Expression (SUAPSE) proposes over 40 activities: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Sport.
350 different sports facilities, covering 80 different sports, await you in La Rochelle, which obtained France’s “Active and Sporty City” label: https://www.larochelle.fr > Action municipale > Sport
BE ACTIVE

Attend cultural and sporting events, or join a social or community group, through one of the numerous local or national student clubs and associations. To learn more, check with your school (Service de la vie étudiante, Student Services) or visit the following sites: www.animafac.net or www.letudiant.fr

At La Rochelle Université, the Maison de l’Étudiant has opened a space called Le Salon, where the AFEV network of student volunteers organizes inter-association cafés, debates and other participatory events: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Initiatives étudiantes et en engagement.

GAINING CULTURE AND PARTYING

Movie theaters, concerts, theaters, museums, exhibitions, and festivals are on the program and most of the time, at reduced cost for students: https://www.larochelle.fr > Action municipale > Ville culturelle.

At La Rochelle Université the Maison de l’Etudiant, houses the university cultural service. It promotes culture by organizing multiple disciplines, activities, and outings: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Culture.
La Rochelle Université is part of the Art + University + Culture network, the national network for cultural action in higher learning institutions.

The University offers a free Pass’Culture students with a choice of over 200 shows, concerts and exhibitions in 20 partner cultural venues: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Culture > Pass’culture.

For entertainment or to pick up some culture, you can choose from:
- 4 multi-screen movie theaters (student rates, rewards card), including an arthouse movie theater, CGR Olympia, and La Coursive eclectic programming.
- 4 major municipal museums, including a science museum, the Natural History Museum, which houses archaeological, ethnographical and geological collections: https://museum.larochelle.fr/
Admission to La Rochelle’s museums is free on the first Sunday of the month (except in July and August).
- 1 international space for artistic residency, the Centre Intermondes, a venue for exhibitions and exchange, dedicated to all different forms of artistic creation: http://centre-intermondes.com/
- 4 major municipal museums, including a science museum, the Natural History Museum, which houses archaeological, ethnographical and geological collections: https://museum.larochelle.fr/
Admission to La Rochelle’s museums is free on the first Sunday of the month (except in July and August).
- some dozen bookshops, including two independent bookshops, Les Saisons and Les Rebelles Ordinaires.
- a network of 5 multimedia libraries in and around La Rochelle: http://bibliotheques.agglo-larochelle.fr
In La Rochelle, for going out or staying abreast of events, read the leading regional daily paper, Sud-Ouest, available in news stands or on the Internet: https://www.sudouest.fr/
You can also consult:

TOP ATTRACTIONS /

- The Vieux Port, with its two medieval towers, the Tour de la Chaîne and Tour St-Nicolas.
- The Tour de la Lanterne, dating back to the late 12th century, the last medieval lighthouse on the Atlantic coast.
- The Porte de la Grosse-Horloge, port-side gateway to the town.
- The old town, with its arcade-lined streets, Rue des Merciers and Rue du Palais in particular, around the Hôtel de Ville.
- The Musée des Beaux-arts, with its classic and contemporary collections.
- La Rochelle Aquarium in the town center, facing the Vieux-Port, one of Europe’s largest private aquariums.
- Parc Charruyer, the city’s green lung located between the town center and the ocean.
- Beaches, such as Plage de la Concurrence on the edge of town, the large Plage des Minimes and nearby Châtelaillon-Plage, an unspoiled seaside resort with a fine sandy beach and “Belle époque” architecture.
- Ile de Ré, accessible by bridge from La Rochelle, with its white houses and hollyhocks, a paradise for cyclists!
For more information, consult the La Rochelle Tourist Office website: https://www.larochelle-tourisme.com/
IMPORTANT
ANNUAL EVENTS /

APRIL
• “Les Etudiants à l'affiche” student festival, a cultural and artistic highlight for students at La Rochelle Université, who present their creations and take to the stage for two weeks.
• Terre & Lettres Festival, bringing together writers and environmentalists.

MAY
• Pint of Science, a European initiative for learning about research in atypical venues.
• La Nuit Européenne des Musées (European Museum Night) offers an opportunity to discover museums and other cultural sites in a new light!
• “Sarabande des filles”, women-only races through the streets of La Rochelle.

JUNE
• Fête de la Musique: Music everywhere in town (free concerts).

JULY - AUGUST
• Francofolies French music festival, a major event, attracting thousands of spectators each year (100 concerts held in several different venues throughout the town).

SEPTEMBER
• Crazy Street, the cultural start to the academic year, organized by La Rochelle Université Maison de l’Etudiant, in partnership with the CLOUS.
• Babysitting Dating, speed-dating for parents looking for babysitters for the school year, coordinated by the La Rochelle CDIJ.

OCTOBER
• La Rochelle Student Bay, series of festive and community-minded events to welcome new students, organized by the town’s higher education establishments, in partnership with La Rochelle town council and local urban authorities.
• Fête de la Science in the University laboratories.
• Ici en Corée Festival, organized by the University (King Sejong Institute). Festival of Korean culture including exhibitions, concerts, films and conferences.

NOVEMBER
• Forum for International Mobility coordinated by the La Rochelle CDIJ.
• Chinese Movies Week, organized by the University (Confucius Institute), films and debate.
• La Rochelle Marathon around the historic town centre and port.
• International Adventure Film and Book Festival, using adventure as an opportunity to explore the world…

To stay informed and attuned to others and the world, to share and dialogue with students, follow social media where Campus France has an especially strong presence!
Remember to sign up on the France Alumni network to take part in discussion groups on various subjects, take advantage of cultural outings, and consult job and internship offers.
LA ROCHELLE
IS THE CAPITAL (PRÉFECTURE) OF THE CHARENTE-MARITIME DÉPARTEMENT, one of 12 départements in the greater Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region

NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE REGION, 7th FRENCH REGION in terms of hosting foreign students (more than 20,000 international students)

LA ROCHELLE RANKED 21ST OUT OF 44 FRENCH UNIVERSITY CITIES WHERE IT’S GOOD TO LIVE AND STUDY, WITH AN EXCELLENT NOTE FOR ITS ATTRACTIVENESS (awarded by L’Étudiant Magazine)

LA ROCHELLE URBAN COMMUNITY
170,000 residents

CITY OF LA ROCHELLE
75,000 residents

14,000 STUDENTS
1st MARINA ON THE ATLANTIC COAST, ONE OF THE SUNNIEST TOWNS IN FRANCE

La Rochelle Université:
8,700 students including
12% foreign students of 102 different nationalities,
10 research laboratories, 1 multidisciplinary doctoral school, 240 doctoral students including 40% international students

Most of the information presented in the Campus France City Information Sheets concerns all international students regardless of their institution.

In France, in each of the host cities, most foreign students study at universities. Accordingly, the City Information Sheets attach great importance to them without overlooking the other higher education institutions even if it is not possible to list them all here with their specific information.

For more information on the institutions’ welcomes and orientations:
https://www.campusfrance.org/fr/recherche/categorie/nouvelle-aquitaine-554