

REINVENT ENGINEERING



STUDENT GUIDE BOOK : BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL

2024-2025

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BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL: GETTING READY TO COME TO FRANCE

I. FORMALITIES

1. VISA

A visa is a conditional authorization granted by a territory to a foreigner, allowing them to enter, remain within, or to leave that territory and that usually limits the duration of the foreigner's stay. A visa states the areas within the country they may enter, the dates they may enter, the number of permitted visits or an individual's right to work in the country in question.

Your visa is essential to complete your formalities in France: bank account, residence formalities, etc.

Most non-European citizens need a visa to study in France.

Not sure whether you need a visa? Check here: <https://france-visas.gouv.fr/en/web/france-visas>

If you have a European nationality from one of the Schengen Area countries, you do not need a visa to study in France, your ID is enough (national ID or passport).

2. DOCUMENTS

- **Birth Certificate**

It is necessary to **bring your birth certificate in France** and its translation (to English or French) because it will be needed for many administrative procedures. It may be obtained from the Mayor Office at the place of birth. Ask the possibility of translating it in French, some countries offer this possibility. Otherwise, you will have to find a private French translator. Official English translations (done by a professional translator) are also accepted by most French administrations. The translation needs to be done by a certified translator; any other translations will not be accepted.

- **Other documents**

A copy of your transcripts and your degree (it can be a digital copy)

For special case, check [here](#). (disability, student with an employer, etc.)

3. EUROPEAN HEALTH INSURANCE CARD (FOR EU STUDENTS ONLY)

To be eligible for this card, you must be insured or covered by a state social security system in any state of the European Union.

You can obtain a card by contacting the health insurance institution where you are insured and which is therefore responsible for assuming your healthcare costs. The process for generating the *European Health Insurance Card* may take some weeks, so you will have to start the procedure quite early if you want to avoid sending the card via the post office.

4. ID

- ***Non Europeans students***

If possible, make sure your passport will be valid during your whole stay in France. If it expires while in France, you will still be able to get a new one from the Embassy.

- ***Europeans students***

If you have a European Nationality from the Schengen Area, your national identity card can be presented for all the formalities instead of a passport. If you are not from the Schengen Area, you will need a valid passport.

5. CVEC

In order to finish your registration with Centrale Nantes, you will need to pay for the [CVEC \(Contribution Vie Étudiante et de Campus\)](#). It is a national tax, mandatory for all students in France. Without it, you cannot be fully registered and will not be able to obtain your degree.

The CVEC costs €103.

- ***Who has to demand it?***

CVEC DOES NOT apply to students who do not pay tuition fees directly to Centrale Nantes, like exchange students. If the CVEC does not apply to you, it is often easier to first pay it, and then ask for a refund (the process is very easy and detailed on their website) rather than wait for your file to be reviewed by the CVEC administration.

If you have any doubts, whether you should pay it or not, refer to the DRI (International Relations Office e-mail international@ec-nantes.fr).

- **Process**

- (1) Log in / Create an account on the following link:
https://cvec.etudiant.gouv.fr/?_locale=en
- (2) Indicate « NANTES » as your city of study
- (3) Pay your CVEC contribution
- (4) Receive proof of payment
- (5) Learn more: cvec.etudiant.gouv.fr or [CVEC FAQ](#)

6. OBTAIN A NATIONAL STUDENT ID NUMBER (INE NUMBER)

- Create an account on [messervicesetudiant.gouv](https://messervicesetudiant.gouv.fr)
- Collect the created INE number
- Send an email to Student Affairs (ideally with a screen shot of the site) with the number
- This number will be added to your Onboard profile.

7. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

In Centrale Nantes, we have a [Disability Policy](#) to help the students with special needs. In case you are concerned, we highly advise you to get in touch with our nurse on: infirmierie@ec-nantes.fr

Please note that exams can be adapted to cater for disabilities and special arrangements can be put in place from the outset to ensure that students with disabilities receive the care they need.

Don't be afraid to get in touch with the nurse, everything you tell her is confidential.

We also have a disability coordinator - Emmanuel Rozière: referent.handicap@ec-nantes.fr

8. STUDENT INSURANCE (ERASMUS+ STUDENTS)

Student insurance is mandatory in order to have the Erasmus + scholarship. Typically, it only covers the following costs: guarantees of medical assistance abroad, guarantee of travel assistance abroad and guarantees for incidents of travel or in-flight.

The fee is unique and varies depending on the company but it usually costs around €100 for European countries.

If you are an Erasmus Mundus Master student, contact your program coordinator to know whether the insurance is included in your participation costs.

9. ACCOMMODATION INSURANCE

To enter your accommodation in Nantes and get the keys, you will need to provide an accommodation insurance. **No insurance = no keys.**

Be careful, you will probably need to terminate your contract when you leave your accommodation because it can be renewed automatically (check if it is written “*contrat à reconduction tacite*”). If you are not sure, always contact your insurance provider to let them know that you want to put a stop to the contract.

You can use the following insurance providers:

- ✓ MAAF – <https://bit.ly/3eBOsOu>
- ✓ MAE - <https://bit.ly/3eNb92B>
- ✓ Studyassur - <https://studyassur.com/en>
- ✓ Lovys - <https://lovys.com/fr/assurance/habitation>
- ✓ MAIF <https://www.maif.fr/habitation/assurance-habitation-etudiants-jeunes>
- ✓ SMERRA <https://smerra.fr/4-assurances/7-assurance-logement>
- ✓ SMENO <https://www.smeno.com/assurances/assurance-habitation/>
- ✓ BNP - nantes-50otages@bnpparibas.com
(they can offer free accommodation insurance if you open a bank account with them)

Everything can be done online - prices depend on the size of the accommodation. **Make sure you contact these providers at least 15 days prior to your arrival.**

Required documents:

- ✓ Copy of your Passport
- ✓ Exact date of arrival in Nantes
- ✓ Copy of residence booking confirmation
- ✓ Centrale Nantes acceptance letter

10. BANK ACCOUNT

The sooner you create your French bank account, the easier your life in France will be. It takes one week at most for the account to be opened and about two more weeks before you receive your card and the card pin because they come separately.

Some banks, such as the BNP Paribas, allow you to start the creation of your account from your country of origin so that you can finish opening the account faster when you arrive. In that way, you should inform your bank of the details of your arrival and go there when you arrive in Nantes to finish the process.

Centrale Nantes has a partnership with BNP Paribas, with the following advantages:

- **€80** at the opening of your bank account credited
- **Free of charge** – with “*Esprit Libre*” including a visa card for withdrawals and payments, insurance for theft or loss of your card.
- **€0** housing insurance for students under 27.

BNP Agency address: NANTES 50 Otages - 3, Allée Jean Bart - 44 000 Nantes

Contact: nantes-50otages@bnpparibas.com

Other banks:

- Crédit Mutuel - <https://www.creditmutuel.fr/home/index.html>
- LCL - <https://www.lcl.fr/>
- Banque Populaire - <https://www.banquepopulaire.fr/portailinternet/Pages/default.aspx>

- **RIB**

A RIB is what we call the bank information document in France.

On it, you can find your bank account number, the IBAN number as well as the BIC/SWIFT on the same document.

It will also feature your full name and the bank address.

Relevé d'identité bancaire

Titulaire du compte : MME XXX
Domiciliation bancaire : Nom de votre banque, de l'agence et la ville où elle se situe



RIB	Code banque 12345	Code Guichet 00300	N de compte 09876543210	Clé RIB 19
IBAN	FR12345003000987654321019			
BIC/SWIFT	BNPSFRTTOSA			

A French bank detail document also includes:

- **Code banque** = Bank code (code for the brand of the bank) (5 numbers)
- **Code Guichet** = code for your local bank agency (5 numbers)
- **Numéro de compte** = bank account number (11 numbers)
- **Clé RIB** = key of the RIB (2 numbers)

All those number form the IBAN.

II. WHAT TO PUT IN YOUR BAG

1. MONEY

We recommend you to bring a bit of cash with you, in case you have trouble using the credit card you use in your home country in France (be careful, you may have to pay extra fees for using it in France, you might want to check with your bank). Avoid using €100, €200 and €500 bills, people are reluctant to accept them in France and may ask for your ID or even refuse payment with those banknotes.

Most places do not accept payment by check anymore or will ask for a proof of ID.

2. CLOTHES

Nantes and France in general is a country where you will find all four seasons. Nantes has an oceanic climate. We can have below zero temperatures during the winter as well as some heat wave in the summer (but it may be less frequent than in other region in France)

Winter in Nantes is not extremely cold, but even so you must be prepared to face negative temperatures on the coldest days.

The “canicule” (heat wave) is a recurring phenomenon in France. In that way, do not forget to bring some light clothing for the hotter days.

Observation: it rains a lot in Nantes, so if you still have some space in your luggage, do not hesitate to bring a raincoat or an umbrella. If you do not have room in your suitcase, do not worry there are plenty of stores in Nantes where you can purchase one.

III. TRANSPORTATION

1. AIRPORT

Nantes has an international airport (Nantes Atlantique Aéroport) close to the city. You have direct flights from/to the main European countries and flights connecting from/to Paris.

Take into account the price of the luggage. Most of these companies also charge extra if you want to checked luggage, as the plane ticket only allows you to bring one cabin luggage. Think about it while booking your tickets, it can get more expensive if you book your luggage later.

- **Flying via European cities:**

- (a) If you are coming from “East” (India for example)**

You can consider flying through Germany or The Netherlands to land in Nantes with Lufthansa (for example). This might be the cheapest option.

- (b) If you are coming from “West” (South America for example)**

You can consider flying through Spain (Madrid) to land in Nantes. It might be cheaper than flying via Paris.

- (c) If you are flying from a European country**

If you are flying from a European country close to France like Spain, Italy or Germany, you can check the following low cost airlines: Ryanair, Easyjet, Transavia, Vueling or Volotea. Volotea is a low cost airline that usually offers the lowest fares but be careful because the company is well known for its delays.

- ***How to reach Centrale Nantes from Nantes airport:***

- (a) Shuttle bus**

You can take the **Shuttle bus** (*navette*) directly to the city center and stop at “Hôtel Dieu”, Then, the **tram 2** (direction Orvault Grand Val) brings you to the school (get off at the tram stop “**Ecole Centrale-Audencia**”). The shuttle fee is **€10 (weekend including)**, you can use the same ticket for further bus and tramway connections.

- (b) Bus 38 - Tram 2**

Once you are at the airport, take the **Bus 38** and stop at “**Pirmil**”. Then take tram **2** (direction Orvault Grand Val) and stop at “**Ecole Centrale-Audencia**”. (Price of one bus/tram ticket: **€1,80** - you can use the same ticket for the bus and the tram).

You need to buy the bus ticket at the self-service ticket machine. You can also buy a ticket directly on the Naolib app ([here](#) for Android and [here](#) for IOS) and pay with your credit/debit card.

2. TRAIN

SNCF is the major train company in France. You can book train tickets for all train stations in France as well as check the train times.

Nantes has a big train station with connecting trains to main cities in France and direct trains from/to the Roissy Charles de Gaulle airport (be careful to select a train going to *Aéroport Charles de Gaulle 2 Tgv* when booking and not another train station).

It is highly recommended to download the app SNCF Connect on your phone. You will find all the information concerning your train on it (time/delay/train change/platform).

- ***How to book a train ticket***

You can use the [SNCF CONNECT](#) website.

You can also purchase train tickets directly at the train stations, where you can pay by credit card or cash.

However, for your arrival, getting a train ticket beforehand might help relieve some stress.

- ***How to reach Centrale Nantes from the train station***

When you arrive at the train station, go down the platform and take the exit "**Sortie Nord**" (the other exit leads to another part of the city). Take the **tramway 1** (direction "François Mitterrand") and stop at "**Commerce**".

Then take the **tram 2** (direction "Orvault Grand Val") and stop at "**Ecole Centrale-Audencia**".

- ***Arriving from Paris***

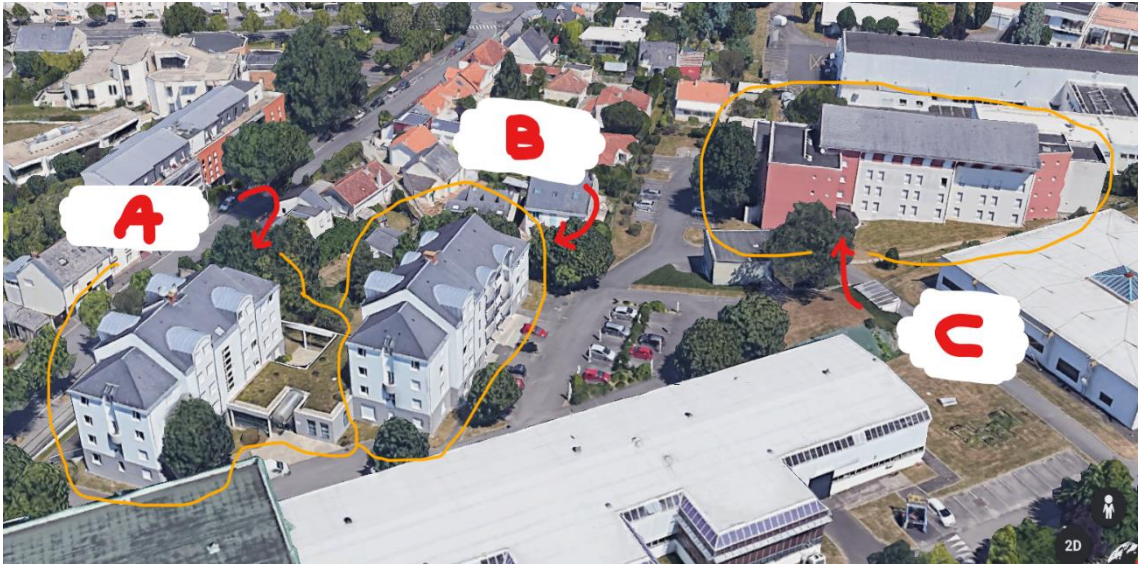
The **Roissy Charles de Gaulle TGV Train station** is located inside Terminal 2 of the airport. Check while booking your train ticket that you are taking a direct train to Nantes. The journey is about 3h30 long.

Make sure to leave enough time to collect your luggage and reach the train station: Paris CDG is a huge airport.

IV. ACCOMMODATION

1. MAX SCHMITT RESIDENCE

Building A and B have individual and shared apartments but bigger ones, whereas C building only has individual apartments.



There is one laundry room and one bin storage area for buildings A and B, located in building A and one laundry room and bin storage area in the C building. It is also in the C building that is located Mr. Barlet's office.

You can easily access Centrale Nantes with the badge you will receive at the beginning of the year. For that, you just need to pass your badge on the sensor to unlock the door.

- ***Shared apartments***

If you are assigned a shared apartment, it is very important to talk to your roommates in order to get to know them before your arrival ; but more importantly to contact an electricity company. Only one person has to contact the electricity company for the entire flat.

Mister Barlet will send you an email with the contact information of your future roommates.

Most of the time, you will have a French roommate and a roommate from a different nationality than yours. It is customary for the French roommate to manage the electricity contract, as it is easier for them thanks to their family, but you must speak with them to see if they agree to be responsible for it. Just remember to make clear to your roommate the day you are coming, so that it is possible to start the contract on that day, if you are the first one to arrive.

- **Utilities**

Concerning the utilities: Water fares are included on the monthly rent of Building A and B but not in Building C.

Electricity fares are **NOT** included on the monthly rent for any of the buildings, each person has to pay their part.

- **Getting your keys**

To get your keys from the Residence Max Schmitt you must contact Mr. Barlet at sebastien.BARLET@cdc-habitat.fr. You will have to inform him of the date and time you will be arriving at the residence in order for him to organize the key handover.

Reminder: you will not receive your keys unless you have an accommodation insurance, so make sure to have it as soon as possible.

2. CROUS RESIDENCES

CROUS residences are public and typically, the less expensive option but they are more selective.

Centrale Nantes usually books a room at CROUS residences for incoming non-European students (except double degree engineering students and Erasmus Mundus students under scholarships).

Centrale Nantes helps you book an accommodation for your first year on the campus. If you are staying another year, you will have to leave the CROUS accommodation and find another one.

VISALE is not required because Centrale Nantes acts as your guarantor.

3. OTHER ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

First, take a look on our [website](#), you can find several websites

A very good option is to check regularly on the [Lokaviz web page](#), which offers apartments specifically for students.

Another option but less adapted to international students is [Leboncoin](#). It is a French platform where people sell second-hand goods (furniture, clothes). It has a specific section for housing. People as well as estate companies share available apartments. However, if you choose to search an apartment online, be careful with frauds.

Usual signs of housing frauds are:

- "Landlords" that might ask too much information,
- Asking you to pay the security deposit with cash

- Individuals stating their private situation is complicated (such as one of my family members is sick/had an accident); if they share too much information about themselves, it is most likely a scam.

You can also look into <https://www.lacartedescolocs.fr/> for shared accommodations.

More options are the platforms [studapart](#) and [adele](#), where you will find accommodation more specifically for students.

4. ELECTRICITY CONTRACT

For residences like Max Schmitt and the CROUS residence Alice Milliat, you will have to subscribe to an electricity contract.

- **Which company?**

To do so you will have to choose a provider (non-exhaustive list):

- HAPPY-E - <https://www.happ-e.fr/>
- ENGIE - <https://particuliers.engie.fr/>
- Mint energy (Green energy) - <https://www.mint-energie.com/Pages/Accueil/accueil.aspx>

- **How to register?**

To register online, you will need a RIB (bank details), choose if you want a monthly automatic payment (recommended) or half-yearly.

They will ask you for a "*Relevé de compteur*". If you are already at the residence, you will only need to press the "+" button to give them the numbers on the device for "*Heures Creuses*" (HC) and "*Heures Pleines*" (HP).

Otherwise, they will ask you for a "*Numéro de Compteur*". If you have booked at Max Schmitt residence and you want to have access to electricity from the very first day that you arrive, you will have to call the secretary of the residence in order to ask for the "*Numéro de compteur*".


No need to register for gas as most of the accommodations work with electricity only.

Downloading the app of your electricity provider will help you to check your consumption.



5. GUARANTOR

In most instances, student residences or landlords will ask you to provide a guarantor for your rent in France. A guarantor is legally responsible should you default on your rent. They bring financial



security to reassure your landlord: with a guarantor at your side, the landlord trusts your ability to fully pay your rent in due time.

- VISALE acts as a guarantor, free of charge, for students under 30, whose monthly rent is not more than €600/month. More information here in French: <https://www.visale.fr>
- GARANTME is open to French and international students. Reduced fees for Centrale Nantes students via the partnership with Garantme: <https://www.garantme.fr/en/>


- **Daily expenses**

 <p>Baguette €1.10 - €1.50</p>	 <p>Coffee €1.50 - €3.50</p>
 <p>Sandwich €4 - 6€</p>	 <p>Meal at the RU €1 - €3</p>
 <p>Croissant €1 - €1.50</p>	 <p>Beer 50cl €5 - €8</p>
 <p>Cinema € 11.30</p>	 <p>Petit port's pool € 2.90</p>

NB: some cinemas offer different prices, for instance at the "Katorza" cinema tickets cost €6.80 and on Tuesdays for movies that will no longer be showing, prices drop to €5.60.

- **Monthly expenses to expect**

- Rent: €200 to €650 depending on the type of accommodation (you can deduct from that amount the CAF housing aid "APL", that ranges from €80-€180 depending on your situation/rent).
For the first year, you will stay at the CROUS it costs around €250/€350.
For the second year, other residence will cost around €550/€650 per month, take the difference in consideration.
- Housing insurance: usually around €5-€10 per month
- Electricity: about €30 - €60 (more if your heaters are powered by electricity), for some accommodation it is already included in the rent.
- Naolib monthly pass for under 26, depending on your subscription: € 23 - €36
- Mutuelle (complementary health insurance): €20
- Groceries: €100-300 depending on your food habits
- Phone plan : €10-€15



- ***Examples of other expenses***

- Bike rental with velo Campus: €9 per month
- Going to a general doctor's (covered by French social security + mutuelle) : €26 - €30
- Bars: Non-alcoholic beverages cost between 3 and 6€. Cocktails are around 8€ depending on your liking. Beer pints are between 5 and 8€ on average (can drop to 4€ during "happy hours", usually between 6-8pm alcohol beverages are less expensive but not in every bar).