

Personal Report

Lapland University of Applied Sciences, Wintersemester 2017/18, 1 Semester Business Information Systems, Fachbereich 2, Frankfurt

Language

Which language did you use? How did you communicate with your fellow students?

Working and communication language: English. I learned little bits of Finnish, but mostly during interactions with locals instead of language courses.

Accommodation

Did the host university arrange for accommodation?

Yes, in private accommodations.

How high were your overall monthly costs for accommodation (in Euro)?

300€

How would you describe the quality of your accommodation?

Good.

How well was the accommodation situated? How long did it take you on average to reach the partner university (in minutes)?

Very well situated. 3 minutes to the campus

Which web sites, forums, facebookpages, contacts, etc. can you recommend for looking for accommodation?

None. The host institution did everything related by its own.

Where have you been accommodated (name of dormitory, location, part of town, etc.)? And how would you describe the surroundings of your accommodation (shopping facilities, distance to the city center, nightlife, etc?)

Kirkkokatu: Apartment complex with many students living there. Campus is only one street further. All needed stores, etc. can be found in the nearby mall (~10 min on foot). Nightlife is in the same distance as the stores.

Arrival at the Partner University and Orientation

Which is the best arrival time?

Few days up to a week before lecture start.

How did you organize your arrival? Was the extent of the orientation program sufficient? What activities can you recommend? Were all important questions answered? What did you have to find out yourself? How fast were you able to get in contact with the domestic students? How were the services for exchange students?

Flight was organized privately. Pick up service offered by tutors even at later hours. Orientation program by university staff were thorough and all additional questions were answered immediately. All relevant information was provided and was more than sufficient. Tutors were domestic students and provided help from the very start until the end. Services for exchange students were perfect (getting needed documents, accommodation, orientation, driving to different places)

Living Abroad

Compared to Frankfurt, how high was the cost of living abroad?

Higher, it cost about 150%

What additional expenses did you have during your semester abroad? How far were you able to travel with your semester ticket? How was your student life off-campus? How were the mensas/ student cafeterias? What types of meals were served? How much did the meals cost? How were the libraries? Was their use free? Did the university provide computer workplaces/ computer pools? Was Wi-Fi available on-campus? Were you able to use study rooms? Were you able to rent separate rooms for studying? Did the university provide a sports program? Was this free of charge?

Most of the additional expenses were for travels (accommodation, car rental, activities). I rarely used the semester ticket, since it is only a student card to get discount of transportation with and the public transport was only needed to get out of the town. Free time were mostly pub, bar or meet ups. The town offers activities in sparse amount. Campus cafeteria was cheap and good. Meals were balanced and nothing special (meat, sides, dessert, salads). Library was free and accessible until the afternoon, but if you get a campus card, you can access the building even after closing. Campus offered a wide range of rooms and places for study outside of lectures. Sport program was available and offered many free activities and some paid ones (e.g. school gym).

Studying at the Host University

How would you describe the academic standard of classes compared to Frankfurt?

Similar to Frankfurt.

Did you experience any difference in teaching methods/ class structure? Which were the difference regarding your expectations and your experiences at the partner university? What surprised you, what should newly arriving students know? How were the student services? Was the fact, that you were an exchange student taken into account (by professors or other staff)? If so, how? How were difficulties, which you or other exchange students may have met, handled by the partner university?

In my field of study (BIT), the teaching methods were more hands on. There were no exams, only assignments and projects. The classes were small and the contact to teaching staff was more personal. All tasks were done either individually or as group projects. Teaching staff were always available when questions or problems occurred. Personally, I enjoyed this method of education more compared to Frankfurt due to the fact that many courses i enrolled in at my home institute were still very theoretic instead of practical.

Final Remarks

What should future exchange students know/ do/ avoid? How would you overall rate your exchange experience? In what ways have you benefitted academically, personally, linguistically for your future career?

Future exchange students should mentally prepare for the northern climate, since I noticed several foreign students who weren't well prepared for the Finnish winter. Avoid staying in town, because there are more to see and do in the surrounding area. Buy a second hand car together with other exchange students can be a huge improvement in comfort. Academically, a great improvement in practical skills can be noticed. Projects were realistic (customer requirements, progress presentations, etc.). Linguistically, I noticed a better fluency while communicating due to the repeated use of the language but only slightly compared to my prior stays abroad.