

Erasmus Exchange Semester: Experience Report

Arrival:

We are four students from Turkey and France, who finished our spring semester 2015 as a semester abroad at the University of Applied Sciences Wedel. In the beginning of April, we arrived in Hamburg to start our semester. Before the semester started, our tutors organized a small appointment where we could meet each other and get an overview of the university. The tutors were very helpful and it was much easier to organize the semester start. So, they helped us to get all the required documents to start the spring semester as an exchange student and they were always available to answer questions. This was especially helpful because our English was not so good and it was difficult for us to communicate with our professors or other contacts such as the health insurance, bank institution, and the registration office. However, over time our English became better and better and we were able to fend for ourselves.



Classes:

Most of the lectures are offered in German, but there are some possibilities to attend lectures in English. H el ene, the student from France, attended three lectures a week: Sectoral Analysis, Category Management, and Commercial English. In addition, she did a big case study in marketing and finished projects in a business seminar and process management. The students from Istanbul were able to attend some lectures in their mayor "industrial engineering". Enver is one of the students from Turkey and finished a German course in Munich before the beginning of the spring semester. As a result, he was able to attend some German lectures and was integrated in a big project, which is called "Produktionstechnisches Praktikum". In this project, the students should apply their theoretical knowledge from business and technical lectures. Furthermore, the university highly recommends that the incomings join a language class to improve their German. Therefore, also advanced speakers of German are advised to enroll in these classes. The University of Applied Sciences, Wedel, offers German language classes at the Volkshochschule Wedel, which is near by the university. Students are taught individually and will obtain a certificate when completing the course successfully.



Sylt-Trip:

At the beginning of July we did a trip to a beautiful German island called Sylt. Together with our four tutors, we took the train at nine in the morning from Hamburg. After the three hour train ride we were welcomed by blue sky, bright sunshine and warm temperatures. First, we rented some bikes and fought our way against the wind up to the very north of Sylt. There we enjoyed the white sandy beaches and took a very refreshing bath in the North Sea (so cold!!). With renewed power we got back on our bikes and driven by upcoming appetite we soon ended up at a fish restaurant in List.

The trip was absolutely amazing. Big thanks to our tutors for organizing it!



Accommodation:

When studying at the FH Wedel you have either the option to live in Wedel or in the close by Hamburg. Both options have advantages and disadvantages. Some of us lived in the student's accommodation close to the university and others rented an apartment in Hamburg. When living at the student's accommodation you have the chance to easily



get in touch with other students and make new local friends. You also have a short way to the university which makes studying very comfortable. The international office was very helpful organizing the accommodation at the dormitory for us. The dormitories are completely furnished and it is much easier to get in contact with other students. A dormitory room costs 210,99 € a month and we have to pay an additional deposit of 250 €, which we got back at the end of the contract. So, the dormitories are chosen just right if the incomings are searching for party or contacts with other students and it is very cheap to live close to Hamburg. In this case, we could improve our English skills and met some new friends.

Staying in Hamburg is quite the opposite from the quiet Wedel. Hamburg is a very lively city with lots of things to do. Moreover, it is very comfortable to live in the city and to have short distances to all the beautiful places and tourist attractions. However, it can be very hard to find a nice apartment in Hamburg since it's very popular and the distance to the university is an essential disadvantage because it is difficult to get in contact with other students of our university.

Welcome Dinner:

The Welcome dinner was very nice and very friendly, but the date was a little late (two months after our arrival). It was held at the "Elbe 1" restaurant next to the river Elbe. Sharing this moment with other students but also teachers will be one of our great memories from our semester in Wedel.



Summary:

In conclusion, it was an awesome spring semester which we would highly recommend. It was a good choice to do our semester abroad in Wedel and we met a lot of new friends. If there are a few more lectures in English, it would be even better to improve the English skills and it is much easier to get in touch with other students. But by being close to Hamburg and with all the friendly people at the university and the accommodation, it was the best choice to do an exchange semester in Wedel.

Thank you very much!

