

2012-2013

University Attended: Bocconi University

FEEDBACK 1

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

There is the opportunity to have a tour around campus and Milano as well as other meetings, they are all very useful in terms of getting you accustomed to the city and the style of the University. I would highly recommend taking the Language Crash Course, not only is it invaluable to giving you the language skills to get around on a day to day basis but it is an excellent way to make friends and a good way of seeing and exploring the University.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

The lecturers are all very helpful and willing to offer their time, it is in many ways a similar style to the University of Manchester. I would highly recommend taking some different electives to what you usually study; I took a Fashion Management course and being in Milan with guest speakers from Gucci, Prada, Ray Ban etc it was a really good experience and the best place to learn from the best! I haven't had a problem getting onto any courses but they are run by a first come first serve basis and I had a lot of difficulty finding courses that all fit, I would recommend having a list of about 7-8 which you like the sound of and just being flexible and open-minded when trying to make it fit into your timetable.

In terms of marking systems, you have to get a 18/30 to pass, I have found that here, if you do your revision they will mark you with a very good grade.

The business lecturers are some of the best in Europe, they are all very passionate about their work and teaching at Bocconi, always willing to help if you email them and generally their English is very good.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Good. I have had no major problems but they have been helpful when needed!

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

The International student desk are very helpful, friendly and supportive no matter how small your problem is, they are all young staff and most have been abroad for a semester too so know all the questions and concerns to expect! The international office also has the best map of Milan, better than any sold in the shops as it has the tram, bus and metro lines covered, I think I have been back to get at least 8 of these maps for free!

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

Waived by having the University of Manchester Insurance Policy

ACCOMMODATION

I was recommended to spend the first semester in halls and the second in an apartment once I had found some suitable housemates. However, this was a terrible decision for me. The main accommodation place (600 euros p/m) is so far South it is not even on a big map of Milan, it takes about 40 mins by tram to get to University and an hour to the Center, which is ridiculous as Milan is quite a small city. Additionally, it is 90% Americans who stay in these halls, from my experience they tend not to be so interested in Italy but with Europe, so every weekend they

go and travel elsewhere and the Halls are like a ghost town, as well as the fact most have them, up until now, not been able to drink legally in bars and clubs, so they tend to go crazy and from the ones who I knew didn't embrace the Italian culture or get to know Milan at all. Since the halls are so far away and taxis are so expensive it is very difficult to get home at night, sometimes I used to cycle but it is also quite a dodgy area with large groups of males hanging close by at night. There are no shops, bars or a sociable area anywhere near the Halls, they are really out in the middle of nowhere and to get to the nearest lively, sociable place is approx. 25 minutes so that's another reason why the people staying there tend to miss out on the true Italian lifestyle experience, favouring sitting in the communal kitchen playing 'flip cup'! The biggest problem with the halls is you are not allowed people to stay, but since this is a new contract rule as of last year I didn't know, many of my friends took advantage of Ryanair cheap return flights (~£36 from Manchester) thinking they could have a cheap weekend in Milan but in the end they had to pay for either expensive hostels/hotels, it was very frustrating not being able to stay with friends when they were over and it sort of put a damper on the holiday a bit at times.

What most of my friends did was book a hostel for the first week in Milan and arrange apartment viewings through websites such as: <http://www.easystanza.it>, <http://www.kijiji.it/> and the bocconi (Bocconi Rents/ Bocconi Exchange) and ESN facebook groups.

It may seem a little daunting but all of my friends found nice apartments in the end! The areas which are closest to Bocconi and nice are Naviligi, Porta Ticinese and Porta Romana. Rent tends to average at about 550 euros p/m so quite a lot more than Manchester. I managed to find a lovely, spacious apartment (flat share with 3 other people) for 450 euros, by tram it can take between 30-40mins to Bocconi but is only a 10 minute walk away from the city center! My landlady owns lots of apartments in this area, her email address is Grazia Parrino - graziaparrino@alice.it if anybody would like to get in touch and find out if she has any rooms spare.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Transport in Milan is excellent, you can get a travel card which is 17 euros a month and it includes all buses, trams and metros so it is really good value for money. I actually decided to get a bike as the city is so small and flat. It was a really good way to get to know the city and would highly recommend getting one, especially if students decide halls is the best option for them.

One thing I would absolutely recommend taking advantage of is the language course in Siena in August. It's during the time of Palio which is an amazing experience as it is and you meet so many people who are going to study all over Italy. It's a great way to gain confidence and get comfortable with the culture change!

Milan has so much to offer in terms of social life, there is something for everyone! It can be quite expensive to enter clubs and to go drinking in bars but ESN do some great deals during the week to make it more affordable. However, it is mainly Erasmus students attending these nights so it's not the best way to integrate with the locals. Check the milanozero (<http://milano.zero.eu/>) or Elita <http://www.elita.it/> websites for all the underground or alternative nights and culture events! All the small day festivals and art exhibitions get posted on these websites, they have been my bible whilst living here! It's the best way to meet young locals!

Make the most of all the trips ESN offers, I went on a all inclusive Ski trip for two days for only 110 euros, there are some really great deals!

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

Truly amazing, inspiring and life changing; I have learnt so much, gained so much confidence and enjoyed every single second... É la dolce vita!

FEEDBACK 2

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

What did this involve, how long did it last, was it useful?

I did not attend any events on the orientation programme, I had a very extensive Italian Crash Course and did not have much time for that. However, I received a lot of help in my first days. People working in the university as well as regular students helped me a lot to solve different issues, regarding the overall settling in a completely new academic environment.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Style of teaching, courses, ease of access to courses, methods of assessment, teaching support

The academic experience was amazing. Most of the courses were extremely interesting and useful and pretty much different from all my previous academic experiences. The teaching is of very high quality and most of the professors are showing great interest and passion for the subject they are teaching making students quite excited about the course as well. We were provided with a lot of case discussions, which helped us understand better the content and last but not least we had the opportunity to learn from numerous guest lecturers throughout the year. They provided us with their knowledge and real corporate experience. The assessment was based on partials, general exams and a lot of group projects. The biggest difference with University of Manchester is that instead of individual essays we had a lot of group work to do, which showed a different aspect of business and management to me - team building, trust building, making compromises, distributing tasks and roles etc.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Level of support, additional information that could have been useful

The MBS international team has always been supportive and it has always provided all the information, necessary for us to go through the year without encountering any technical difficulties or problems.

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Any additional information that you feel could have been provided

All the information that could have been provided was actually provided for us. We had meeting where all issues regarding our year abroad were very carefully and extensively discussed, leaving us prepared and well aware of exactly what to expect. Moreover, I believe that the meetings with people who have actually been to those destinations were extremely helpful as well.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Level of support, additional information that could be useful for future students

The people working in the Bocconi International Office have always been extremely supportive, showing sincere concern for me and the problems, whether that be minor or big ones, I have encountered throughout the year. They are available to help with different documents and to give explanations about procedures specific to Bocconi University.

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

Please include any information relating to the purchase of compulsory health insurance ie costs etc. or whether this was waived by having the University of Manchester Insurance Policy

I have the University of Manchester Travel Insurance

INFORMATION ON ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS

This should be information on any extra fees that the University charged but should not include accommodation, books, transport, visa etc.

I did not have any additional costs, apart from charging an insignificant amount of money into my university ID so I could use the printing facilities.

ACCOMMODATION

As much information as possible on what accommodation is recommended or not recommended.

I recommend the university halls because it is a massive cultural experience. They are situated in a close proximity to the university and is really nice to be a part of a closed community such as the Bocconi University students. Moreover, it is safe, which is extremely important. I would also recommend finding other incoming students to live with and finding an apartment close to the university campus. The atmosphere of this area of Milan is amazing and it seems like everything is created so that students can feel comfortable.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Transport, travel, social life, integration with local students, student activity groups

Personally, I used to live very far away from the university, which turned out to be a huge mistake. I had to change three types of transportation to get to Bocconi and it used to take me around an hour. This was really frustrating, also because here you can never rely on accurate timetables and schedules. The fact that I lived so far away really made my experience worse than I expected as it was very difficult and costly to go a specific place to meet with friends. However, local students were really welcoming and they have always tried their best to help me settle and feel comfortable. A positive aspect about my whole experience was the opportunity to travel across Italy and see incredible places. Trains travelling to close destinations, such as Verona, Turin or Como are absolutely affordable and the experience of seeing those memorable Italian places is really worth it.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

Not the best year in my life, but definitely a year of self-awareness and a great preparation for what the future holds.