

2013-2014

University Attended: IESEG School of Management, Lille

FEEDBACK 1

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

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

The introductory programme was varied with a mix of information meetings in the day and social activities at night, which provided a great opportunity to meet other exchange students. The international committee of students at the school is extremely active in organising events and ensures maximum opportunities to socialise and meet people. The programme lasted a week and I would highly recommend being there for it. The information provided was extremely useful too.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

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

I chose the 'intensive' system, which means I had a different module each week with an exam every Friday. I normally also had presentations on the Thursday of each week and sometimes a project to be handed in a few weeks after. Although this sounds like a lot of work, it is manageable. There are weeks where you have a lot of work given, but others which are a bit easier. There are also more weeks in the year than credits required, so the 'intensive' system means there are several weeks you can choose not to take a module. This is a great opportunity to travel around Europe, especially as it's not in school holiday periods.

The teaching support varied as I had a different lecturer each week, but overall the support was great. Seeing the same lecturer in classes of about 30 for 4 hours a day means you can develop a good relationship with them. This is important as a lot of the assessment is participative based. I would highly recommend the 'intensive' system as it gives a really varied choice of modules. It also gives you the opportunity to try modules which may be of interest for final year. Furthermore, it means there are no big exams at the end of the semester, so you can finish university much earlier than other people and use the time to travel.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Level of support, additional information that could have been useful

The MBS international team was extremely helpful! The support was always available throughout the whole application process and the exchange itself. There is no way I could have organised everything or experienced such a smooth transition without the help and support of the MBS international team!

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Any additional information that you feel could have been provided

I decided to find a private apartment for the year. More information and help could have been provided from IESEG, if not Manchester. Also, I was not informed of just how difficult the admin system is in France. It took me 6 weeks to get a bank account, which also postponed my ability to get a phone or internet contract. This kind of information could be provided, just to let future students know they will need to be patient.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

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

The support from the international team was excellent. They are always available to help with any questions. They also offered to help with language difficulties with my banking or rent admin. However, it was the student international team that gives real support. They were incredibly friendly and organised so many events for the international students. I made many close friends within this team, which was important to me as I wanted to meet a lot of French people.

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

Being in Europe, I did not require any further health insurance above or beyond that offered through my European Health Card. I did not need any medical assistance throughout my year in Lille.

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.

No extra fees were incurred at all.

ACCOMMODATION

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

There are several student residences in Lille. However, I decided to move into a private rented apartment with another Manchester student. This process was relatively easy. We did not look for any apartments online before arriving. We simply found an apartment through an estate agent and moved in the next day. I was, however, told this was an exception. Apparently it is normally very difficult to move into an apartment. The estate agent told me that my two day process of moving in normally takes 6 weeks. I had many friends who had to live in a hostel for the first month or two.

I chose to live privately because I wanted to be in Vieux-Lille. This is by far the most beautiful part of the city and I would highly recommend doing the same thing. It was a 15 to 20 minute walk to university everyday and a 10 minute walk to the centre of town. It was slightly further from the main 'student' area, but this is a sacrifice easily made when living somewhere so beautiful.

My friends in the residences generally disliked living there. They were extremely expensive for a one room studio. They spent the majority of their time at my apartment as it was much bigger and nicer, in a far better location and I paid much less than they did.

There are several Facebook groups to help students find accommodation which many of the friends I met had done and were very successful.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

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

The social life in Lille is incredible. It is 'the' student city of France, with a huge amount of students. There is a main student area, with literally hundreds of bars and clubs. However, I spent the majority of my social life in Vieux-Lille, where there are lots of great bars, but with a more relaxed atmosphere. The university offers many social and nightlife activities, as well as non-university groups in Lille, bringing students from all the universities together (as a warning, these can be pretty messy!!).

The integration with local students wasn't on a large scale. The international committee at IESEG is great, and I made many French friends through them. However, in general the international students tend to stick together.

Transport in Lille is good. In general, you don't really need to use it. The city is small enough to walk everywhere, and I was living in the centre. If you live in a residence outside the centre, there is an underground metro, some trams, buses and a very good bike share system which everyone uses unless you have your own bike.

It is incredibly easy and cheap to travel all over Europe from Lille. Trains are very quick in France, and buses run from the city to most other European cities for very cheap prices. The nearest airport in Brussels, which has cheap flights everywhere. If not, Paris is very close too. I visited several different countries in Europe, as well as Morocco.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

The most incredible year at one of Europe's best business schools in one of Europe's best cities, with extensive travel opportunities!

FEEDBACK 2

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

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

The first week was the orientation week. We arrived on the Monday at 8:30 and met other students over a French breakfast. This was a great way to meet new students and the French students on the International committee. We had a lot of presentations on how to open a bank account, what methods of transport to use, housing, applying for CAF, sports teams and general admin.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

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

It was a little difficult using their intranet as it was all in French, but this was easy to adjust to. The majority of my classes were at a Masters level. I also opted into the intensive course system whereby I had weekly courses. The intensity of the courses differed. One week would be very relaxed with just an exam at the end of the week whereas others would require us to do a presentation, project and exam. The exams were also quite easy compared to the exams I have taken in Manchester. They would all be two hours long and none of them required us to reference nor answer in a lot of depth. Some of the lecturers allowed exams to also be open book. I feel because of the format of the courses, I didn't have to revise as intensely as I would in Manchester, but this was taken into account by the lecturers due to the restricted amount of time for the course. In addition, since the courses were only for a week, I found the lecturers would be very hands on and would go out of their way to be in contact with us and offer additional help if needed.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Level of support, additional information that could have been useful

The only problem in France was the difficulty in finding accommodation. Once finding an apartment, we discovered that it was much cheaper to rent a private flat rather than going into halls. Perhaps a link to a French estate agents could have been helpful? Other than that, whenever I needed help it was quickly offered and my query was sorted. *MBS comment: It is not possible for the MBS Team to give guidance on accommodation at every destination. What suits one person may not suit another. Students should be guided by websites, feedback from previous students or from talking to returning students.*

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Any additional information that you feel could have been provided

Again, perhaps help with private accommodation in Lille. Also perhaps a bigger warning concerning the amount of administration that has to happen in France. Unlike the UK also, the French often need to see your passport in a lot of situations, such as setting up a mobile phone, bank processes, using certain transport.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

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

Very good with also helping with translations and they also contacted our estate agents to make sure that I had done all the necessary documents/processes concerning the new lease.

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

Covered through University of Manchester Insurance Policy.

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.

N/a.

ACCOMMODATION

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

As mentioned above, student accommodation is so expensive. They also don't have a common room area.

Student accommodation which is recommended by the university is a studio room which includes a kitchen within the same room. It would be quite difficult to socialise in the halls of residence there since there's no common room. The other student from Manchester and I luckily managed to find a flat in Vieux Lille. I think this made my experience better as the location was fantastic, 20 minute walk from the university and was so French and so wonderful!

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

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

There isn't much public transport. There are barely any taxis (which isn't much of a problem). In addition, as I lived in the old part of the town there were fewer buses. I walked to university everyday so this wasn't much of a problem either. As Lille is on the Eurostar, it was easy to come home for Christmas. There is also a company called ID Bus which ran buses to London, this is cheap but perhaps four hours longer than the Eurostar. I feel like it is much easier to travel in Europe, once out of the UK. The airport in Lille is really small so whenever I travelled, I would fly from either Brussels or Paris. There is a shuttle bus to Brussels and you can catch a bus/train to the Paris airports. In France it is also very popular to use the 'covoiturage' system. This is where people list their car on a site and if they have free seats you can pay to travel with them. All of the French students use this, it is very popular and very safe (they have a rating system on the site).

Concerning integration, I feel like the French students (especially those on the International committee) were hugely proactive to integrate with international students; more than in Manchester. IESEG caters for a huge amount of international students, for example I would sometimes be in classes where there would only be international students. There were lots of trips and nights out planned for the international students too.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

The most wonderful, life changing experience which I will treasure forever.