

2012-2013

University Attended- University: St Gallen, Switzerland

FEEDBACK 1

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

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

The orientation programme involved a weeks long schedule of events including German language lessons (depending on your skill level) The 'buddy system' then arranged evening events such as bar crawls, bowling and cheese fondue. Giving us a great opportunity to meet other exchange students and become fully integrated. Information sessions were also given throughout this week regarding ICT skills and information on living in Switzerland

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

The lectures in St Gallen are much smaller classes than in Manchester (similar to a seminar size) Furthermore, you only have 'lectures' and rarely a supporting seminar. The classes conducted in English are generally well presented but fewer 'regular' students take part in these. It was very easy to find acceptable courses to transfer the credits back to Manchester.

St Gallen also offer 'semester break block classes' whereby you attend classes everyday for 5/6 days during the break and sit the exam at the end with the courses finished and credits received. Exchange Students take 'de-central' exams meaning all exams are completed by December and May for both semesters.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Quick and helpful at responding to questions both in Manchester and when I was away.

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Information given was all useful and relevant.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Limited opening hours but extremely helpful/informative when open! Easy to find as it is all situated up at the University on campus. All English Speaking

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

Coming from the UK, as an EU citizen you do not have to pay extra for health insurance. Either the UoM policy covers it or the European Health Insurance card is sufficient.

INFORMATION ON ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS

The additional costs I had to pay were for registration at the city hall (approx 60 franks) Students from outside of the EU also had to pay additional fees however this did not apply to me. Switzerland is generally quite expensive in comparison to other European countries, so additional costs are quite likely in many everyday things!

ACCOMMODATION

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

I found accommodation through the university housing office. Everything went smooth from my arrival/collecting keys and moving in. I stayed at Blumenaustrasse 32, Ideal location close to both Uni and town- I lived with 13 other students. Accommodation located near to town is generally preferred over uni close accommodation (more

social). However, it is just as easy to find accommodation privately (often nicer and cheaper) through Facebook groups such as 'St Gallen Caring is Sharing.'

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

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

St. Gallen is a fairly small city. It is very pretty and typically Swiss, set in a valley. The University is at the top of the hill (a steep walk) and the town lies beneath. The night life is limited but still good, with 3 or 4 regular places that most students go. I strongly recommend joining the Buddy System. It is a great organisation that integrates all the exchange students- organises trips, parties and events throughout the semester. The best way to meet people seeing as the regular students often keep to themselves. Local students tend to stay separate from exchange, but this does not seem to be an issue. Local residents (particularly the older people) speak very little English- but you can get by with a small amount of German. Swiss German is extremely different to 'Hoch Deutsch' so it is difficult to pick up a vast amount of knowledge- even with prior experience.

St Gallen offers an incredible opportunity to travel around Europe. During my stay I visited Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Mallorca and Prague. Cheap rail cards are available and student discounts too.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

Life Changing, Eye opening experience that everybody should have the opportunity to do; I have made friends for life in St Gallen

FEEDBACK 2

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

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

The orientation program was very useful and lasted for about two weeks until we were fully integrated into Swiss life. The integration involved a lot of information on the city and Switzerland and we were given all the information needed to start our university experience abroad.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

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

The St Gallen bidding process is quite complicated, although when you read all the information you begin to understand it quickly. The style of teaching varies according to which course you sign up for. The courses were varied and you had access to a variety of Management and finance courses that can be beneficial for future life.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Level of support, additional information that could have been useful

The MBS team were great and responded to all my emails and queries.

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Any additional information that you feel could have been provided

The meetings were very informative and all the information was provided on the university process.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

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

The St Gallen international office were very friendly and answered and solved any queries that I may have.

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

The Manchester Insurance Policy covered the costs of health insurance. However there were other costs such as the residency permit which were around 60CHF. There were a few other costs involved however these were not too expensive.

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.

Books are quite expensive at St Gallen, although they usually provide the information needed on their StudyNet. A one month bus ticket is 60CHF (with your HalfTax). I would suggest buying Half Tax card if you are staying for a year as this gives you half price on all transportation in Switzerland, very beneficial if you are thinking of travelling. Food/drinks and restaurants are expensive in St Gallen, there are a couple of supermarkets that are cheaper such as Denner.

ACCOMMODATION

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

I would recommend to stay at Blumenhaustrasse 32 if you are looking to have a good time and meet lots of people as this is where many of the parties are organized. Do not stay at Rutzitstrasse and Paradistrasse as friends did not have a good living experience at these places (unless you pay a reasonable amount). I stayed at Rosenbergstrasse 74 and this was clean, although I paid a very high amount for quite small accommodation. In my second semester I moved into a apartment that I rented with a friend which was much larger and at a lower cost, I would recommend doing this to save money if you can organize living with some friends. You could ask these kind of questions by going onto the Sharing Is Caring St Gallen Facebook page.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

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

Overall I had a great time and there was always things going. The nightlife is limited as there are only one or two places to go out, however everyone usually congregates at these places. Integrating with local students can be difficult but I would definitely suggest doing this as soon as possible as the international students will end up leaving after the first semester and the locals will be around the entire time. 100% join the BuddySystem as they are a great bunch of guys and will make sure you have a great time.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

St. Gallen was full of great and new experiences, travelling and meeting friends for life on the way – damn that's cheesy but true!