

Study Abroad Experience Report

I am happy for my experience report to be viewed by other students interested in studying abroad, as detailed in the guidelines **(please tick to confirm)**

Name:	Lorraine(Just my first name please)
Degree Programme	MSc International Business
Host Institution(s) and country:	Aarhus University
Academic Year of Exchange	2019

When did you go on your exchange? (please tick)

International Business Part B Semester 2

Part I (full year)

Part I (6+6)

MSc International Business Semester 2

Please sum up your overall experience in a couple of sentences:

Fun , surprising and unforgettable .

Spending my semester abroad in Aarhus, Denmark was an opportunity which I will forever be grateful to Loughborough university for providing me with. Searching for studying abroad at postgraduate level is not an easy task because most institutions do not provide this so this was a very big selling point when I applied for my international business course at Loughborough university. Studying abroad has been an unforgettable experience because I have made new lifelong friends, I grew a lot as a person, and I got to explore my city and Scandinavia .

I shall now give an overview of my experience covering various aspects such as my academic experience, life in Aarhus ,travel experiences and survival tips.

Academic experience

Attending a prestigious university such as Aarhus was wonderful. The university was very organised and admin staff were very helpful. Lectures at Aarhus start as early as 8am but unlike the UK ,they apply travel time which means that classes actually start at quarter past as travel time is taken into consideration. As an International business student, I tried to pick modules which were similar to the ones that I would have taken if I stayed back at Loughborough, but I soon realised after several classes ,that the modules I had chosen were quite IT based which made it quite difficult to engage with the course. This was a shame because the lecturers seemed nice and were very helpful and attentive. Learning from my experience I would advise anyone thinking of taking a study abroad program in Aarhus to :

- read and re-read their module outline to ensure that you choose the right modules for you.
- Bring a functional laptop because all exams and coursework are done using your own computers .
- Familiarise yourself with your exam rooms before the date .
- Familiarise yourself with oral exams as they are quite popular in Denmark.
- Enjoy the landscape at the university park
- Do not worry if you can't speak Danish as all classes are taught in English unless you specifically apply for classes in Danish.

- Befriend classmates (Trust me, you will need this friend when you oversleep and miss your Monday morning lecture due to your weekend getaway 😊)

- Study in library (apart from the educational benefits, the cafeteria offers great food and there is a ping pong table ,a sleep tent and massage chairs in case you get bored which you will at some point)

Life in Aarhus

Aarhus is a beautiful city in Jutland which was named one of the happiest cities in the world. It is the second largest city in Denmark and provides a great mixture of sea side and country side landscapes .

Living in Aarhus was a dream true. I know this sentence is often cliché but as a person who loves travelling the opportunity of embracing a new country and culture was one, I couldn't pass up.

Observations and tips

- The locals are very friendly, helpful and spoke English fluently
- Public transport is very punctual and efficient
- Aarhus and Denmark have a very big bike culture .Everyone from children to grandparents owned and rode bikes .One survey revealed there are more bikes than people in Denmark so it will be very useful to rent or buy a bike when you arrive (also the cheapest mode of transport).
- The Danes are a very healthy bunch and love to be physically active so if you love a morning jog or going for a run you will have many opportunities to do so even if its raining or snowing (Yikes!)
- The Danes love their ryebread(rugbrød) ,beer, remoulade ,pickled herring, liquorice(taste with caution) ,cinnamon rolls and hot dogs. I would advise you to try all these local dishes because when in Rome, do as the Romans do.
- Danish is a hard language to learn, so if learning Danish is a priority then there are free classes offered in the Studenterhus (Swap language classes) and cafes around the city .This is a great opportunity because you don't want to end up knowing less Danish leaving than when you arrived (speaking from personal experience 😞).Also the Danes are very keen on practising their English, a skill which they learnt since second grade so if you want to practise your Danish ,politely ask them to switch to Danish after a while.
- Making local friends is not an easy feat as the Danish are said to be reasonably reserved. In my case, I was lucky enough to meet my Danish friend in Loughborough (coincidentally ,she was here for own study abroad from Aarhus) .Through her, I got the opportunity to immerse myself in Danish culture such as birthday traditions(If it's your 25th birthday ,RUN!) , meeting more local friends and tasting local cuisines. All hope is not lost if you don't have a Danish friend because Aarhus university provides a mentor programme with Danish students which provides you with the opportunity of experiencing Danish culture as well as meeting your fellow Erasmus students.

Travelling

During my semester abroad ,I explored Denmark as well other parts of Europe. First, I went on a trip to Lapland organised by Scanbalt experiences. The Studenterhaus posted it on their Facebook page (which should join) and I had such an amazing experience. I got to feed reindeers, ride and pet huskies on my sledge ride, meet the indigenous Sami people and share a meal in their Lavvu (Sami house structure).

We also got to see the northern lights ,the ice castle , the beautiful Norwegian fjords ,taste whale burgers and meet other study abroad students which widened my friendship network.

I also visited Stockholm and Copenhagen which meant that I checked my bucket list wish of touring Scandinavia 😊 .Travelling in Aarhus is very convenient as you can get on a flix bus ,board a flight or take a ferry to several European destinations.

Accommodation and welfare

Aarhus University was very efficient in providing accommodation which would have been is a difficult pursuit if I had to search for one independently .I was very impressed because most of my fellow Erasmus students in other countries had to find accommodation, so I was glad I was spared .

My accommodation was in a quiet neighbourhood with numerous transport links to and from the university .There were also many supermarkets nearby, so my accommodation was very convenient.

We also had a floor manager who ensured that we were cared for as well as cleaners, fully furnished bedrooms, laundry rooms, a dishwasher and a stocked kitchen(so I didn't have to buy plates, pans or cutlery)

Top tips

- Do make friends with your housemates because these are the people you will probably spend most of your time with (plus they will be your Friday night squad)
- Bring ingredients to make local dishes from your home country as international dinners are customary and you will want to contribute (trust me, everyone else will)

Practical advice

- Denmark is a very trusting society so when taking public transport (bus) ,even though tickets are not checked regularly, buy a ticket because on the rare occasion that you are checked and caught without a ticket ,you will be fined heavily.
- Download the Midttrafik app for your bus pass
- When offered accommodation from the university, accept it because flying solo will cause you unnecessary stress
- Volunteer at the Studenterhaus because you get to meet lots of new people and make new friends .Plus, you get free food and drinks 😊
- Don't walk on the bike lane without looking .Its dangerous for everyone involved
- The Danes have a lot of public holidays so use your three-day weekends wisely
- The Danes really know how to party (I'll leave it at that)
- Denmark's weather is as unpredictable as the UK with more wind ,so a rain jacket and layers is key to survival. As the Danish saying goes

'In Denmark ,there is no bad weather ,only bad clothing '

- Aarhus is a very safe city
- Denmark is expensive, so spend wisely
- Second-hand clothing and items are a popular alternative
- Online shopping is a big don't (trust me, I learnt this the hard way)
- Do attend kapsejlad(annual boat race) and Friday bars (mentally prepare yourself if you decide to go to the medicine bar)
- Before you go, start a new playlist filled with Disney soundtracks (especially High school musical, The lion king and Mulan) ,1990s and 2000s music. I know it seems random now, but you will appreciate this
- Three words Kushtall , a nail and a hammer (Need I say more)
- I know it's hard but try to embrace your new host country and avoid making comparisons
- Denmark is basically a cashless society, so you can always make card payments even on taxis
- Do smile at strangers (it's not London)
- Netto and Fakta are affordable supermarkets
- Bring Tea !
- You must do the study part of study abroad(strange right ?)
- Do make the first move (i.e. talk to locals, they don't bite)
- You will have a very social student life
- Explore Europe

- You will have time at first but as the semester progresses things will get busy so plan your time.

Photos



Snowscape, Sleigh rides and the time I almost adopted a Huskie (@Kiruna .Sweden)



Deep in the Swedish Lapland , I had such a surreal experiences meeting the indigenous Sami tribe and enjoying a traditional meal in their lavvo(Sami tent)



Enjoying the views and scenery of the Norwegian Fjords is an opportunity of a lifetime (@Narvik, Norway)



A silent moment just to enjoy the still waters (@Stockholm Sweden)



Moose meat balls ,yes please .Opening our taste buds by experiencing new Scandinavian dishes



Treasuring new found friendships whilst glistening like stars in the night sky (@ARoS Art Museum Aarhus, Denmark)







