

EXPERIENCES FROM THE YEAR ABROAD 2018/2019

GERMANY

Written by students for students!!

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** Subject to change due to Brexit

Everything was written in 2019 based on our Year Abroads in 2018/2019

Hi everyone,

Whether you are going on a year abroad next year, have it ahead of you in two years time or are just curious as to what your MML friends get up to on that year they're not at Oxford, hopefully this guide will shed some light on it! Going on a year abroad may seem quite daunting but it is also an incredibly exciting opportunity and the more you know, the more your mind can be put at rest before you go! We decided to put this guide together to try and use the wisdom we have gained on our year abroads, to try and answer all those questions in hindsight about the year abroad which everyone is asking and nobody seems to have the answers to. We've included tips and accounts from year abroaders who have done a variety of things, from British Council to Erasmus to internships, to give as broad a perspective on the YA as possible. We hope you find this useful, and that this is an idea which will be built upon in the years to come to help as many year abroaders as possible!

Charlotte and Polly xxx

GENERAL ADVICE

Flixbus and trains

- Flixbus operates across Europe offering really cheap bus travel
- Deutsche Bahn tends to be very expensive so Flixbus is often a good alternative! If you do take the train then leave plenty of time for connections as the trains are always delayed!



Health

- By law everyone living in Germany has to have health insurance
- At the moment the EHIC card covers health insurance in Germany**
- The German health system works very differently to the British health system
- They are very specialised so you are advised to find a doctor who specialises in your complaint. For example, if you have a problem with your ear you would visit a Hals-Nasen-Ohren-Klinik rather than a GP
- A good starting point is the Hausarzt (GP) and if you need to be referred to a specialist this is quicker with a letter of referral from them
- With the British Council, the PAD will give you health insurance which allows you to claim back money online and covers a wide range of stuff
- Universities (from experience) just needed you to take your passport and EHIC with you and fill out some forms
- Paracetamol and ibuprofen are harder to get hold of and more expensive than in the UK - you have to go to an actual pharmacy to buy it so bring some with you if you don't want to get ripped off !
- If you have regular prescriptions in the UK, it's worth taking plenty with you and getting some more when you come home at Christmas

Pfandsystem

- You probably learnt about this back in the deep dark depths of GCSE but this very much still exists in Germany
- Any plastic bottle or drinks can can be taken back to the supermarket and put into a machine which then gives you a coupon for money off your shop
- If you have a party you can collect all the bottles afterwards and make back quite a lot of money!!

Phone

- You shouldn't need to get a German SIM card - your provider may threaten to cut you off but we've never heard of this actually happening
- If you do want to get one, Aldi are a cheap provider which offer a monthly based contract

Registration

- Everyone has to register with the Town Hall/ Einwohnermelderamt upon arrival in Germany (just google to find out where you need to go)
- You just need to take your passport and address to the Rathaus/ Einwohnermelderamt
- When you leave you have to deregister (otherwise they will chase you up!)

Rundfunkbeitrag

- By law every flat has to pay a TV and Radio licence
- This is 17,50 euros a month!!
- You only have to pay it once per flat so you can split it with your flatmates
- At some point in the first few months you'll get a letter telling you that you need to pay and you can sign up online for this
- Make sure to check with your flatmates whether they're already signed up so that you don't pay twice by accident. If they are then all you need to do is enter their number online

Sundays and Bank Holidays

- Everything is closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays so remember that you can't do things like going to a supermarket - the Germans take this much more seriously than we do in the UK!! (This goes for everything apart from shops at the Hbf!)

Finance

- If you need to get a bank account Sparkasse is a good option
- Student bank accounts there are free (you are usually charged to keep an account open) and you can just close it on the day that you leave
- Try to pick a bank that has lots of cashpoints in your area as you can often only get cash out of a cashpoint associated with your bank
- If they ask for your tax number, I found that your British National Insurance number was sufficient (in Sparkasse)
- Get used to carrying cash around with you all the time as a lot of places don't accept card!

- Revolut/ Monzo cards are a good option if you don't want to open a German bank account (but check with your employer if they require German bank details to pay you)

Accommodation

- If you can live with Germans that will be great for your language skills but don't let it stress you out too much - better to be living somewhere you love with English speakers than somewhere you hate
- It's much easier to sort out a place to live when you're actually there as they tend to prefer people who can view the WGs rather than doing Skype calls
- If you know where you'll be working then you can filter WG-Gesucht (THE website for finding somewhere to live!) for locations which is helpful
- Be prepared to send loads of messages (30+) if using WG-Gesucht
- When you're in the moment the flat search can be quite draining but hold on to hope!
- Don't sign any contracts out of desperation - make sure you're happy with the place and the contract/landlord
- *Unbefristet* contracts tend to be better, meaning you can get out of a lease if it turns out the place is less than ideal
- Remember there's no such thing as the perfect place so try to figure out what aspects of living you'd be willing and not willing to compromise on

Supermarkets

- You obviously have your standard Aldi and Lidl (like in the UK)
- Edeka is a bit like M&S
- Rewe is somewhere between M&S and Tesco
- Real is like your Tesco Superstore
- … and Norma, Penny and Netto are at the bottom of the food chain in terms of range and quality

Insurance

- You'll obviously need insurance during your year abroad
- It's worth taking out the Oxford Uni Insurance or looking for a company that offers a specific package for year abroad students
- Make sure this covers Personal Liability Insurance too

General Advice

- It can be hard sometimes but hopefully you'll have lots of people around you who can support you and you can always get in touch with people in years above who have done a year abroad before
- People at home will find it hard to understand quite what you're going through but that's not their fault - talk to people who are also on year abroads!
- People back home will constantly ask if you're fluent but there's no expectation that you become fluent within just one year so don't get disheartened by always hearing this
- Don't let it become normal - even after 6 months, still appreciate that you're doing a great job and even though you've been abroad a while that doesn't diminish the achievement of living life in another country
- Don't constantly stress about having to speak German all the time - it will come and you'll be getting better even if you don't realise it!
- Don't be scared of making friends with English people just because they're not speaking German
- The start will be exhausting so be prepared for that (speaking another language 24/7 is believe it or not mentally draining)
- If you can live with Germans definitely do
- Don't be offended if people start to speak to you in English - it's not that your German is bad but more that they want to practise their English
- Don't be shy about speaking German and don't be scared of making mistakes - people will support you rather than laugh at you and will appreciate that you're making the effort
- At the end of lectures and meetings, Germans will vigorously knock on the tables (don't be the kid like us who got caught out clapping)
- As much as stereotypes often aren't true, the one of "German bluntness" vs. "British politeness" very much is. If a German offers you a slice of cake, don't politely refuse the offer the first time as that means you definitely won't be getting any
- It turns out it's really rude to start eating without saying something like "Guten Appetit"/"Lass es dir schmecken" to the point where colleagues will shout it across the canteen at you if you so much as look like you're going to pick up a knife and fork
- The German sense of humour is different and that is something you've just got to accept and not fight against (fyi sarcasm does not translate particularly well)….so expect a reasonable amount of dark humour and long anecdotes
- You can't get tap water in restaurants (even if you ask 1000 times, the answer will still be no)


HEIDELBERG
UNIVERSITY

I'm Polly and I study History and German at Worcester College. I spent the entire year living and studying in Heidelberg.

Accommodation

- Try to get student accommodation as it's the easiest and cheapest option
- If you don't get into the student accommodation, ask the university for a list of landlords which they will happily give you as this is the easiest way to find private accommodation
- WG-Gesucht proved really difficult in Heidelberg as they often want to meet you in person and there is so much competition for housing that it goes really quickly
- Cleaning is really important in the student accommodation and the German students take this really seriously so you will have to do your bit! Creating a Putzplan when you arrive is a really good idea
- Don't necessarily expect to be best friends with your flatmates - in Germany they don't have the same concept of making friends with a flatmate as we have in England and so sometimes they can seem unfriendly when they don't mean to be. This isn't usually the case but just something to bear in mind

Buying things when you arrive

- It's quite hard to get hold of things like pillows, duvets and bedding in Heidelberg
- You'll be advised to go to Galeria Kaufhof but that is pretty expensive so I'd recommend having a look in Hema, TK Maxx, Butlers and Depot
- There isn't an Ikea in Heidelberg and the nearest one is a long way away. ESN do run a trip there but the problem is trying to carry everything you've bought all the way home on multiple trams and buses
- Check what is already in your kitchen as very often previous international students have left things behind which you can use

Cycling

- Cycling in Heidelberg really helps - it's bigger than Oxford and if you don't live in the Altstadt then you're going to have to travel to get to your classes
- There is a Facebook page for selling used bikes but from experience these tend to be really bad so I wouldn't rush into trying to buy the first thing you see
- Swapfiets is a really good service where you can rent a bike for the time you're in Heidelberg. They're really good bikes, you can call the team out to fix them and you don't have to try and sell them when you leave. The shop is just off Untere Straße https://swapfiets.de/offer/heidelberg

- If you do want to buy a new or used bike in good condition I would recommend Ruprecht Rides and they also offer to buy the bike back for 50% of the cost at the end of your year if it's still in good condition
- The Germans will tell you that there's lots of bike theft but that's not true at all - it's very safe to leave your bike anywhere, as long as you lock it up
- If you have guests visiting, Nextbike is a really good idea as you can use the app to rent a bike for as long as you want it and then drop it off at another station when you're finished. If you sign up using your student account you can get the first half an hour free every time you use one

ESN

- ESN is the Erasmus Student Network and I would highly recommend going to some of their events
- They run events every night in the first two weeks of the semester and you can go along to these to meet other Erasmus and international students
- They have a Facebook page where they post about all the upcoming events
- They run trips throughout the Semester and this is a great way to get to know other people and have a trip to another part of Germany without having to organise it for yourself!

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

Finances

- The Studierendenwerk require that you pay your rent from a German bank account
- If you live in student accommodation you'll need money on your student card for washing and you'll need money on the card if you want to eat in the Mensa. You can top it up using machines in the Mensa buildings or online here https://www.stw.uni-heidelberg.de/de/home

General

- Everything is sent by post not by email so check your postbox!
- Expect to have to do lots of paperwork all the time
- Heidelberg is so beautiful so remember to appreciate this as much as you can!

- Behind Im Neuenheimer Feld there are some lovely allotments and fields that you can walk through
- The Thingstätte is an old Nazi rally ground further up than the Philosophenweg and definitely worth walking up to
- You can take the funicular up to the castle for free with a semester ticket
- Know that it's going to be hard and feel stressful at times but also know that you'll make it through that and have some incredible experiences
- Heidelberger Herbst happens in Autumn and is a really fun weekend of stalls along the whole Hauptstraße
- The Christmas Market is beautiful so make time to wander around and buy some Glühwein - each German city makes its own Glühwein mugs specific to that year and quite a few people visited lots of cities to collect them
- There are castle fireworks three times a year in June, July and September and well worth going to
- Societies don't really exist so don't expect to find them like we have in England but there are lots of sports teams (one friend plays Canoe Polo!!) as well as choirs and orchestras (I had an amazing time singing with the Anglistenchor)
- They're quite technologically behind! You sometimes can't use cards to pay, everything is posted, they use blackboards in classes and light projectors instead of interactive whiteboards
- Reach out to others if you're finding things hard because they're probably finding it the same - they just don't want to admit it
- It's not the same as freshers so you have to make an active effort to meet people
- Go into lectures, sit next to people and start chatting to them - that's the best way to make friends with Germans and to speak some more German. You have nothing to lose - either they don't want to talk to you which is fine because you don't know them anyway or they turn out to be lovely and you'll make a new friend
- We love Hans Im Glück and would highly recommend it for a meal out and the cocktail bar next door does take away cocktails for only 4 euros!
- Heidelberg isn't great for shopping but Mannheim is only 15 minutes away on the train and is great for shops
- There's no wifi in most of the student accommodation so I'd recommend buying a portable router from Saturn

Health

- Heidelberg has one of the largest numbers of doctor's practices in Germany so you shouldn't struggle to find someone for your complaint
- If you need a general blood test or have a general complaint there are also some GPs such as Praxis Arends
- You simply phone up to book in an appointment

Language Course

- I would highly recommend doing the Language Course that's offered for September/ March
- It was the perfect way to get used to speaking German on a daily basis and there was no pressure because everyone else in the class was an international student too
- There is a placement test that you have to sit which involves some grammar and a writing task but you don't need to prepare in advanced
- The course starts the day after you sit the test not the next week!
- It tends to just be mornings and they run other activities in the afternoons such as film screenings
- This counts for 8 LPs
- It was definitely worth the money for the amount of intense German practice you get
- You'll meet so many lovely people there and it means you start the semester with friends already made
- It keeps you busy when you're trying to adjust to a new place

Mensa

- Student canteens in Germany are called Mensas
- There are three Mensas in Heidelberg - Marstall, Triplex and Zentral
- The Zentral Mensa is in Im Neuenheimer Feld (across the river from the Altstadt) and only serves food at lunch time
- There are lots of options including a big buffet every day and you pay using your university card
- They're a really good place to meet friends, especially in the evening as the Marstall Mensa has a bar which serves cheap alcohol

Modules

- Navigating the module options is so complicated in Heidelberg and no one explains them!
- You can find a list of modules here https://lsf.uni-heidelberg.de/qisserver/rds?state=wtree&search=1&category=veranstaltung.browse&navigationPosition=lectures%2Clectureindex&breadcrumb=lectureindex&topitem=lectures&subitem=lectureindex (Make sure to check that the top right hand corner says the correct semester!)
- The German courses are under the Neuphilosophische Fakultät but you're also allowed to attend classes that aren't part of the German department, for example history or even biology!

- As well as Germanistik, there are also really good classes in the Deutsch Als Fremdsprachenphilologie department and if you click on this section you'll find some courses for Kurzzeitstudierende which are run specifically for Erasmus students (these are really oversubscribed though so don't rely on them!)
- The Übersetzungs- und Dolmetschwissenschaft department also runs some great classes
- Classes tend to be either a Vorlesung, Proseminar or Hauptseminar. A Vorlesung is a lecture but these do sometimes involve participation and an exam at the end to get the credits - check the description to see what you have to do. Proseminars are for students in their first or second semester and are probably at the level of Erasmus students, especially if they are literature seminars as a Hauptseminar would require a lot of reading. Hauptseminars are for the students nearing the end of their studies
- Oxford don't always require that you sit the exams so check with your tutor whether they are expecting you to sit exams or not! If you are expected to do exams check for Hausarbeit and try to avoid this as you will have to write between 10 and 12 sides of A4 for a Proseminar in German during your semester break! The tutors are all very lenient with Erasmus students so if you're struggling just talk to them and they'll usually adjust the work load
- Each module has a certain number of Leistungspunkte (LPs) which are written on the description of the module. You'll need to add these up for the Learning Agreement and you're expected to do around 30 per semester but Oxford aren't strict on this so I think most people probably aim for around 25
- You don't have to choose any modules online before you start. In the first week simply turn up at every class that you're interested in and you can then decide if you want to go back or not

Nights Out

- Heidelberg isn't massive on nights out but you can find them if you want to
- There are lots of bars on Untere Straße
- Expect parties in the student canteens which are a quintessential part of Heidelberg life but also very strange the first time you go
- Halle 02 is the only club and it's behind the train station
- They dress more conservatively for nights out than we do in the UK - you don't really need to dress up at all
- The Erasmus Opening Night Parties each semester are also really good fun



















Semesters

- Each German university year consists of 2 Semesters which are each 16 weeks long
- They run from the middle of October until early February and the middle of April until the end of July
- Bear in mind that you'll finish right at the end of July so much later than you're used to
- There is only 2 weeks of holiday at Christmas
- You get a whole 8 week break during February and March and you don't have to stay in Heidelberg for it - I spent a month travelling and a month at home in England and most of the British people went home during this time

Sport

- There are so many sports offered by the uni
- Most of the exercise classes are free if you have a university card which is amazing
- You can find a list of sports here http://www.hochschulsport.issw-hd.de
- You have to bring a pair of indoor shoes (basically clean trainers) to the classes and usually have to show them before you can enter

Travelling to Heidelberg

- The best airport to fly into is Frankfurt Main
- I would recommend getting the Shuttle Bus the first time you arrive as it is really punctual and efficient and it's easy to find https://frankfurt-airport-shuttles.palisis.com
- You can also get the Flixbus between Frankfurt airport and Heidelberg

Travel within Heidelberg

- You can buy a Semester ticket for around 180 euros which covers all transport in Heidelberg but also stretches further in Baden-Württemberg for a whole semester
- I would really recommend this for the winter semester as you'll definitely be needing to get on the bus and it is really worth it as a single bus journey costs 2,60 euros
- Bikes are great in the summer but it does get very cold in the winter
- Bismarckplatz is the central hub for buses and trams
- Get the VRN app as this tells you when the buses and trams are coming
- The Baden-Württemberg ticket is really great as you can travel within the whole of Baden-Württemberg on a 5 person ticket for 9 euros each (remember that Baden-Württemberg is 1.5 times the size of Wales so that's a pretty big place to travel within!)
- You get free transport on the weekends, bank holidays and after 7pm every day with your student ID



BRITISH COUNCIL - NUREMBERG

Hey I'm Charlotte. I'm studying German at LMH and I spent 9 months doing British Council in two different Realschules in Nuremberg. I also did a semester on the side as a Gasthörer at the Uni (FAU Nürnberg-Erlangen) and managed to do lots of travelling in between!

My Teaching Experience

- I taught in two schools with my time split equally between them. I found it changes from school to school and even teacher to teacher, as to how much they expect you to take the lead in lessons
- In general, I would say I played an active role in preparing and delivering lessons. I had speaking classes where I worked with pupils 2-on-1, and regularly took part in full lessons for a class of up to 30 pupils. After a few months, I mostly led classes on my own (with a teacher in the room) and on a few occasions, I also took lessons on my own, e.g. if a teacher was ill, which was quite daunting at first but became quite manageable when I knew the pupils better and had a better idea of what made a good lesson!

Advice for incoming assistants

- **PAD Training:** Before you're thrown into the schools you'll get a few days of "training" with a load of other language assistants. This is less about learning what it takes to be a good teacher and more about meeting lots of other language assistants who are also going to be spending the year in Germany, especially in your area! (I ended up becoming really good friends with people I met on the course and we travelled together during school holidays)
- **Observe some lessons:** Very useful to ask to do at the start just to get a handle on the standard of the classes, the difference between the age groups, and even how the curriculum is structured
- **Reuse as many lessons as you can!** I taught four 8th grade classes and would repeat my lessons across all classes which minimises work load!
- **Prepare a few ideas before you start the job but don't go overboard:** Maybe think about a plan for a lesson on your hometown, British stereotypes, or school uniform to get you started, but teachers will (hopefully) help you with lesson ideas as they know the class and the curriculum
- **Make friends with your colleagues!** Yes, some of them will be a good 30 years older than you, but some of my closest friends ended up being from work, so don't rule it out from the getgo!

- **It's only 12 hours a week:** The chances are, you won't have a perfect timetable and will have gaps between lessons so you will end up being at school for more than 12 hours a week. It is completely ok to ask for a day off (I asked for Fridays so I could travel at weekends) and it means you have time for other things e.g. I did a semester at the university and babysat for a family
- **Structuring a Lesson:** Once you've done a few, you'll fall into your own pattern, but as a general rule, for every lesson (of 35-45 minutes) I loosely developed this structure: Step 1: a 5 minute introduction, whether that be a cartoon to discuss or talking with a partner for 3 minutes about a certain topic etc. to warm the pupils up. Then Step 2 'giving information', Step 3 'a/some 'task(s)'. e.g. reading a text together then answering questions, showing a powerpoint then asking them to discuss some questions etc. before Step 4, concluding the lesson with some questions
- **Don't be afraid to use the textbook:** all my teachers relied on it heavily!
- **Get involved with things outside of class:** I ended up helping out with several school trips, parents evenings, school events and even ended up helping out with a circus week which helped me integrate into school life
- **Go in at the start trying to speak German:** As it turned out, my colleagues were expecting me to speak nearly 0 German and were pleasantly surprised that I was able to hold a conversation with them. Sure, there will be teachers/ colleagues who will insist on speaking English with you, but as a general rule, if you start speaking German that will set the expectation for the whole time you are there

Positives

- Few working hours means you have lots of free time to do other things such as travelling
- Automatic structure and social network to get involved in
- You have the opportunity to take some responsibility and feel like you're really making a difference

It's obviously not all positive….

- Colleagues will probably forget on a regular basis to tell you when lessons are cancelled
- Sometimes you'll just feel like a walking dictionary
- Some of your timetable means you have to hang around school a lot….but being proactive and taking initiative is the best way to combat that!

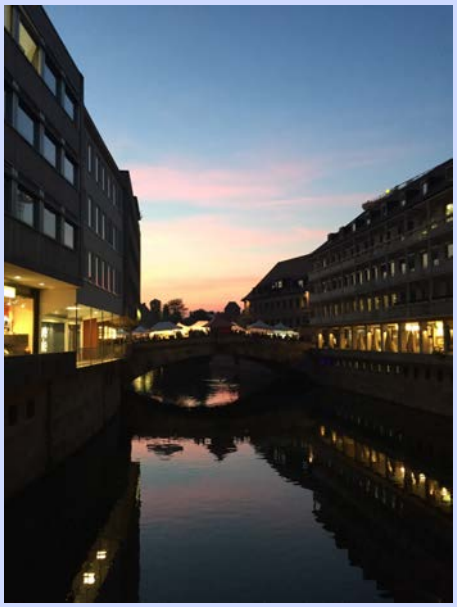
Gasthörer At University

- **What is a Gasthörer?** Being a Gasthörer at university basically means that you can stay matriculated at the university you're at (i.e. Oxford) but can attend seminars and lectures at another university without having to sit exams (best of both worlds right?)
- **How do you register?** Typical of Germany, I found the whole process to be a bit of an admin headache. First of all if you're interested, I'd check if this is offered at a uni near where you will be on their website. If so, read through what the requirements are!! Chances are the uni will want you to sit a language test (requirement for me was C1, and this wasn't through just any language test but though their own one or a Goethe Institute one). There will also probably be a specific registration period before the start of the semester when you have to go to uni and sign up.They'll probably need documents like your A-Level and GCSE results, certificate of enrolment for Oxford (which you can print off on student self service online) and other things like a passport. Some unis may even want the ORIGINAL documents of your A Level results (like mine did), so bear that in mind when you are packing
- **What's available?** You pay by the number of hours you take, so I took 4 hours per week and paid a couple of hundred euros for the whole winter semester (it puts UK unis to shame). I managed to find 2 courses in medieval German which married up pretty well with what I'd been doing in Oxford, and it was a great way to keep my mind ticking and just to be exposed to a different way of teaching and some new discussions. All the courses were available online for me to look through beforehand through a kind of web learn system
- **Lectures or Seminars?** If you're going to do it, I'd 100% go for seminars. In both my seminars, there were only 12-15 people (because you know, medieval German is always oversubscribed), but it meant that I got a lot more out the classes, as the small number meant we did group activities, had discussions, and I got to ask lots of questions. Seminars are much better for breaking into the German uni culture as there's much more chance to chat than in a lecture
- **Teaching Style:** The teaching style was different in that every student (apart from me) in the class had to hold a "Referat" which they were assessed on. So after the professor had done the first few lectures, the limelight was handed over to the students. Maybe think of it as verbally presenting a tutorial essay with some questions for debate and a few passages to read and analyse together

















Nuremberg

- Nuremberg is a great place to be!
- It's really student-y and as a way of explaining why I liked it over the year, I found myself saying more and more "it's not too big but not too small" which I think describes it pretty well
- There's always stuff going on, but you don't feel like it's impossible to meet people and that you're constantly getting lost in a huge city
- It has contrasting areas: the Altstadt, the North which is quite residential with the city parks (where I lived) and the South includes areas like Gostenhof which is quite "edgy" and often compared to Berlin
- The Christkindlesmarkt in Nuremberg is a must and is a great time to have people to visit. However, the city is overrun by tourists the entire month, so unless you're going to the market, avoiding the city centre is quite wise
- In the summer, Volksfest is basically a mini Oktoberfest in the South of the city which is a great way to while away time in summer months

Travelling to and around Nuremberg

- Nuremberg has its own airport (I literately lived 10 minutes away) making weekends away in Germany and Europe extremely accessible
- Cycling is possible and cycle routes are well marked, once you get used to cycling on the "wrong" side of the road…..
- U-Bahn monthly passes are relatively steep at 80 euros a month but are well worth it if you work on the other side of the city
- Unfortunately as a Gasthörer you're not eligible for the Student Semesterticket
- Bayernticket lets you travel with up to 5 people for approx 50 euros anywhere in Bavaria and back

Student life

- Nuremberg has a lot of great bars and restaurants (I slowly ate my way around the city)
- I went to some great student parties/events run by the uni
- In general it's definitely more of a bar than club place
- Studentenwohnheim parties are also quite popular! Effectively house parties put on by student halls, it's a great way to go out with a load of students and go somewhere a bit different to a club. But be prepared to have to pay entry and have to pay for drinks inside (!)

Accommodation

- I used WG-Gesucht to find my accommodation
- To be honest it's a long process and I must have sent over 30 applications and only got a handful of replies
- Be aware, Germans take the process of finding a flatmate relatively seriously. I got away with just a Skype call, but usually they will invite you round to the flat a few times to see if you fit in and give you a kind of interview
- I couldn't have been happier where I ended up! I was living in a 7 person WG in the north of the city
- I paid 400 euros (warm) per month which is a little more on the expensive side for Nuremberg but was worth it for the location and spacious flat
- My flatmates are definitely one of the reasons why I had such a good year. All 6 of my flatmates were German and were either students or new grads working. Living with Germans was one of the best things I could have done for my German and it meant I immediately had a base of friends, and through them I met a lot of other people in other WGs and other students at the uni

If I could give my pre-year abroad self 3 pieces of advice….

- **It is completely ok to have English speaking friends, in fact sometimes you really need them.** Like a lot of people, I set out on the year abroad determined to only speak German but having British friends to chat to and complain to about things if everything gets a bit much is a great safety net
- **Live in a WG with GERMANS!**
- **Travel as much as you can!** Treat it like the gap year you never had (or did have and want to do again) and DO as much as you can! Visit other year abroaders in different cities, make use of the school holidays and enjoy the free time that you don't get at Oxford, instead of trying to continue to live at 100mph



BRITISH COUNCIL - BERLIN

I'm Fatima. I study German and Linguistics at St Hugh's and I was in Berlin from September until May (9 months) doing British Council and then I came back for the summer to do an internship (6 weeks July to August)

How did the Year Abroad meet my expectations?

- If anything, the year abroad absolutely exceeded my expectations. I went in incredibly anxious that I would struggle being away from home, but the experience has really allowed me to gain so much more independence and confidence than I would have expected
- That's not to say everything was completely plain sailing and there were definitely challenges to overcome, for example, struggling to have my voice heard at work, issues with my living situation and feeling isolated at times, but I do feel like a lot of these emotional peaks and troughs are completely natural and ultimately, you'll come out of it having learned and matured a lot

What I enjoyed most

- I loved having so much freedom and autonomy in my life. It was massively beneficial for my confidence and really showed me the possibilities of what life can look like after university
- Living in Berlin was a dream (so much so that I had to come back again for the summer) and having the opportunity to travel so much because of school holidays was something I'm very grateful for

What I would do differently if I could do it again

- I would probably have made more of an effort to get involved in a local community. Berlin being such a large city, means it's quite easy to get isolated and also to stick to meeting only other expats/English speakers. I joined a French class at the beginning of the year with the Volkshochschule which was brilliant but I didn't really bother trying to make friends with any of the people in the course, even though looking back this could have been a great opportunity to meet more people

Did I meet my aims of the Year Abroad?

- My aims really were to just improve my linguistic skills and to have more confidence for my finals next year (pretty boring I'm aware)

- I'd say in Berlin, it's completely possible to go by without speaking any German, which can be problematic. I spent the first four months in a WG with 3 other German speakers and this did wonders for my language skills. On the flipside, it can be super exhausting having to be on all the time
- I ended up living on my own for the last 5 months and found that I was barely speaking German at that point, except for briefly at work with colleagues
- Overall though, my linguistic skills have massively improved, and if anything, I gained so much more than just linguistic ability on the year abroad

Accommodation

- I got an Airbnb for the first 2 weeks in Berlin which gave me plenty of time to sort out flat viewings and meet with landlords/future flatmates and this was about 2-3 weeks before the job started so it was plenty of time to get settled
- Kreuzberg and Prenzlauer Berg tend to be popular locations but somewhat more expensive, whilst Wedding and Neukölln/Friedrichshain are a bit cheaper
- I lived closer to my job, in Charlottenburg in the west but that's generally pretty expensive and not quite as much happening
- My main advice is be prepared to send a lot a lot of messages and also be prepared for disappointment and frustration
- When you're in the moment the flat search can be quite draining but just hold on to hope and don't sign contracts out of desperation!
- I lived in Charlottenburg for my first two places and in hindsight I realise that they were quite expensive in comparison to the rest of Berlin - I paid 630 euros a month for the first place, 500 euros a month for the second and 550 euros a month for the third
- Try not to pay any higher than 600€ on a place and make sure everything is included in the rent!

Travelling around Berlin

- Berlin is a good cycling city but I did end up using public transport all the time
- Berlin has a massive public transport system but be aware that it's not always super reliable and some areas which might seem well connected might not be in reality
- There's a reduced student ticket for those studying at university in Berlin
- There's also a reduced ticket for those doing a Praktikum but doing British Council I was unable to get it

Travelling to Berlin

- Both airports in Berlin are tragic but I ended up hating Schönefeld more than Tegel
- Public transport is pretty decent for getting to the airports but be aware that Schönefeld is in Zone C so you'll need to get a single ticket which covers Zone C
- If you already have a monthly ticket for Zones AB and need to get to Schönefeld you can just buy an extension Zone C ticket for a fraction of the price of a normal ticket
- I nearly always had my ticket checked on transport to and from airports

Language Skills

- Living with Germans was the main thing that helped me improve my language skills as you end up using it as second nature
- In Berlin you have to make a massive effort to speak German as lots of people speak English

Lessons for British Council

- I was put in a range of lessons from Year 7 to the Oberstufe but ended up mainly being with Abitur classes
- I was used more as a classroom assistant rather than running my own lessons although with the Year 7 classes, I was often used as a conversation partner, taking 2-3 students at a time to practice outside the classroom
- I wasn't expected to do much for myself but this was one of the most frustrating parts of the job, because there were times I definitely felt like nothing more than a human dictionary
- I didn't get to lead a lot of lessons independently, but I really pushed for more collaboration with my colleagues and ended up playing a more active role in some classes than other, depending on the willingness of the teacher who was leading the class. At the end of the day, a lot of it has to do with the individual teachers and how much they feel they need/want you





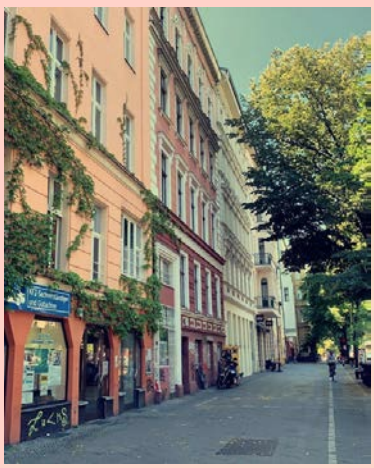
Organisation

- I found communication with both my mentor teacher and some of my other colleagues highly frustrating. For example, there were countless times I would come into school (which for me was a long commute) to find out my lessons for the day had been cancelled. It was things like this that could be easily communicated in a text/email that really began to grate on me by the time I left and which I ended up having to complain to my mentor teacher about
- On the other hand, other members of staff were much more open to working with me and it was in these classes where I got on most with the students. I even got to help organize and go on a trip to London with the A Level classes which was super fun and I essentially got paid to go home and see family and friends too!
- My advice is always ask to be involved in everything! Really push for a more active role as much as you can! And if eventually you've done all you can, stop giving any effort and attention where you're not getting it back! Case in point, I ended up changing my timetable so I wasn't working with teachers who essentially would play movies for the entire lesson (meaning I was essentially travelling all the way into school to watch Netflix – not ideal)

Would I recommend British Council?

- Overall though, I completely recommend doing British Council
- There are definitely some big drawbacks but there are more pros than cons
- Depending on your school, it can be a complete non-job but honestly the free time you get and that being paired with the generous salary is pretty unbeatable
- I only had to work Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and even then sometimes only 1-2 lessons a day so I had boundless amounts of time to do whatever I wanted in Berlin!
- I got to travels so much in the holidays and met some incredible friends through the training course at the beginning of the year









BRITISH COUNCIL - FRANKFURT

I'm Madeleine and I study French and German at Teddy Hall. I did a British Council placement in Frankfurt am Main and also attended uni part time whilst I was there.

Accommodation

- Accommodation in Frankfurt is expensive and a nightmare to find
- I ended up renting a room in a WG that was only available for a month while I searched for something long term once I had arrived and could attend viewings
- They really seem to prioritise those who can attend viewings instead of Skype calls
- Don't be disheartened if the search is difficult - I genuinely believed I'd be homeless but in retrospect that was never going to be the case
- Don't be afraid to let work colleagues know if you're struggling too

Travelling around Frankfurt

- Get a Semester Ticket from the local uni for public transport!! The process of applying for the card is a nightmare but it's totally worth persevering it
- Transport in Frankfurt is amazing - S-Bahn, U-Bahn, trams and buses all in one city
- I bought a BahnCard but rarely used it
- I had a bike which was fairly useful

Finances

- I needed a German bank account for work
- I had a Sparkasse account which worked fine
- Try to go for a bank with a lot of cash points in your area and get used to carrying cash at all times

My experience of British Council

- Coming from hyper-intense Oxford, something I found hardest of all to begin with was the sheer number of hours I had to fill each day as British Council is very far from full time

My experience of Part Time Uni

- I got my Semester Ticket from the uni so that I had a travel pass but then realised this authorised me to attend classes at uni

- In the first week of the semester I attended various different classes to sample what they might be like (I emailed the relevant professors beforehand to make sure I could indeed attend their class) and ended up taking two French classes a week (a C1 language course which was suuuuuuuper useful for my French and an ‘Introduction to French literature’ which was much less useful and generally made me frustrated by the German university system, but at least it filled a few hours)
- Compared to Oxford the workload for these classes was next to nothing and I got certificates at the end for my attendance/exam scores
- NUMBER ONE PIECE OF ADVICE HERE: Persevere with the bureaucratic systems in which no one understands who you are and what you’re doing, be assertive (politely so) and make things work for you

Social Life in Frankfurt

- I got a lot out of ESN Frankfurt - you DO NOT have to be studying to attend Erasmus events
- Main advice is to be a massive yes-man, you’ll end up doing things you never imagined you’d do, sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse, but this is the best way to meet new people, find new events/gatherings etc







BRITISH COUNCIL - WANGEN IM ALLGÄU

I’m Chiara and I study French and German at LMH. I did British Council at a Gymnasium in a town called Wangen im Allgäu in Baden Württemberg for 6 months September - February

Wangen

- Wangen is a medieval town of about 27,000 inhabitants near Lake Constance
- In the area there aren’t many big cities, which meant that even though Wangen is small, it was still a hub for the smaller villages surrounding it - which meant it had many more activities and services etc. than I was expecting for a town that size

General Advice for a small town

- Do your research before you arrive!
- In a town with only one museum which is closed in winter because they don’t heat it, you need to be self-motivated to avoid spending hours at home
- I bought a walking map, joined a choir, went to church(es), helped with confirmation classes, had violin lessons, did some French classes and said yes to any lunch/tea/coffee invitation I was given
- In a small town it’s knowing people that really matters - there aren't events put on to help people meet others as they all know each other already!
- You have to force yourself into their social circles by getting involved in things you enjoy
- People are interested in you because you may well be the only English person in your town!
- Make the most of your time there, but also be prepared to deal with time alone - go to coffee shops, go on walks, do things that work for you

British Council Lessons

- The school I was at, Rupert-Neß Gymnasium, was the only Gymnasium in the town, with around 800 students, but one of several secondary schools
- I was given a fixed timetable for my first two weeks in order to meet a load of different teachers, but afterwards was left to arrange things with individual teachers by myself, once I’d seen their classes/teaching style/how they incorporated me into the lesson. This worked to an extent, with the teachers who are keen and experienced and have ideas of how to use you in a lesson, but there was nonetheless a period where I really was not doing even the 12 hours we are meant to

- There are always going to be teachers who don't really know how to use you/don't want to use you, and that's fine – but there are also a load of teachers who think you're far too busy!
- It's hard but going up to colleagues, even via other colleagues, and asking if they can fit you in is so worth it – more likely than not they'll be so appreciative to have an extra native hand
- I found that they weren't expecting me to leave halfway through the year, but once I explained that, they were more keen to use me while I was there – rather than wait until they were preparing the speaking exam etc.
- I did a lot of conversation/discussion groups, some textbook work with the whole class (this is good because you are given the basis for the lesson, but you can kind of do it however you like) and some completely free lessons, which are much harder!
- Always ask for clarification if you need it – it can be difficult to keep track of what level all the classes are at if you're with several, so ask for textbook pages as a guide
- In Baden-Württemberg the textbooks are excellent, and paired with a native speaker they're even better!
- With sixth form classes they had a module on the United Kingdom, so I did a lot of lessons on Brexit, the Royal Family, regional accents, social class etc., which is really fun to do (as long as you're not repeating the same stuff all the time!)
- I also started an English lunch club with the older students, after asking my mentor teacher – every week I and four or five students met in a small classroom with our lunch and chatted about life, in English. It became a highlight of my week – and I think they enjoyed it too!

Accommodation

- I wanted to stay with a family because there's no university/young professionals in Wangen and so not really much opportunity for a house share and I didn't want to live alone
- I asked my mentor teachers if they could find something and they put an ad in the school newsletter and got a few replies
- I chose one which suited and paid 300 euros a month
- I lived with a recently single mum, two pre-teen girls and a peaceful dog and overall had a good time
- Of course living with a family is always complicated, especially if they're not like yours - there are things that need negotiating!

- I definitely had enough independence - I think it helps that I was paying, because that makes the relationship more formal (but it depends on the people), while still having someone to check in with regularly and speaking a lot of German!
- I would recommend it in a small town like Wangen - though you might want to meet the family before you commit to a contract, because you never know

Finances

- British Council only pays you if you have a German bank account
- I had a Sparkasse one but had to pay for it because I foolishly told them I was only there for a few months so they wouldn't let me have a student one even though I am a student
- It wasn’t ideal but only 3 euros a month
- Because my accommodation was on the cheaper side and there was nothing to do in the town, I lived quite comfortably on the British Council salary
- I spent about 150 € a month on travel (I got a BahnCard25) but hardly ever ate out, apart from when away

Travelling in and around Wangen

- Bike was ideal
- I got a bike from the Bauhof which is a municipal site, which collect abandoned bikes and sell them in a big sale once a year
- A teacher came with me and I was able to borrow a bike for my time in Wangen for free
- Otherwise you can ask the people you’re living with/work colleagues
- If you're in a place that’s likely to get snow, don’t cycle when the temperature’s below 0 degrees and otherwise follow the habits of the locals
- There were buses but reasonably infrequently and I only got them in the winter when snow made it impossible to ride
- Fresh snow on the roads is alright to cycle on, it’s when it's a few days old and icy that you need to be careful
- Wangen has a small station so I would often visit nearby places by train
- Regional trains are quite reliable and even if you have several changes with only a few minutes’ changeover time, they wait for each other which is friendly
- ICE trains (the long-distance ones) are much less reliable so watch out – out of three or four I took, only one wasn’t delayed by at least half an hour

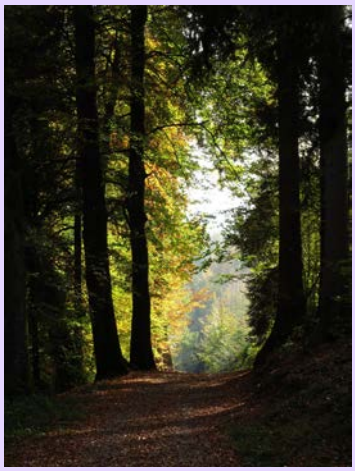
- I probably travelled elsewhere about half my weekends
- I wanted to leave some free time to do stuff with friends and colleagues in the town, but I also wanted to make the most of all my free time!
- 12 hours a week is not a lot, and I was able to negotiate days off reasonably easily, as I was responsible for making sure I got the hours in. I spent lots of time visiting other UK friends, but also if you get the chance to explore somewhere with a local, don’t say no!



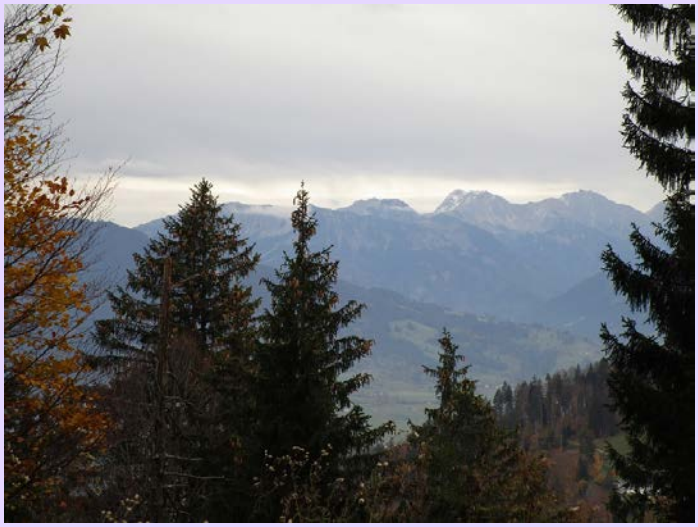














INTERNSHIP - BERLIN

I'm Tara and study French and German at Lincoln. I split my year abroad into 4 parts. In Germany I did an internship with the U.S. Commercial Service at the U.S. Embassy and Consulate in Berlin (mid November to early February) and did an internship at the European Program of the German Marshall Fund, also in Berlin (end of February to the end of May)

Did the Year Abroad meet my expectations?

- The year abroad definitely exceeded my expectations in terms of having completely new (and, in the best possible sense, crazy) experiences, both in the world of work and otherwise. The only thing I didn't expect was how late everything came together, and how plans continued to change over the course of the year. I loved stepping outside the university bubble - Oxford is great, but very small, and I really loved getting to experience a real 9-5 where the work/life balance is a lot more regular

Did I meet my aims for the Year Abroad?

- I really just wanted to use it as a chance to try things that I'd never normally get the chance to, hence the random assortment of fields I ended up working in (i.e. jam making and modern art in France, and U.S. trade policy and European politics in Germany….) I tried to find internships and summer jobs that interested me as opposed to being just another line on the CV

General Advice

- I enjoyed doing 4 shorter 2-3 month placements as it helped me in terms of pacing myself through the year. Before starting each one, it was nice knowing that if worst came to worst, I'd only have to stick it out for a few months since I hadn't committed myself for the whole 6 months or year - although ultimately I always ended up wanting to stay longer!

Accommodation

- In Berlin I stayed with a former Oxford student during my first week and used WG-Gesucht to find the WG I then moved into until the end of my stay
- You have to be ready to send tons of messages on WG-Gesucht without getting any replies back and you'll end up going to viewings all over the place

- It is a great website for finding cheap-ish accommodation in an actual WG
- I'd recommend trying to work out the things you absolutely can't compromise on beforehand (size of WG, location, price etc.) and what you're more flexible about (size of room, washing machine etc.)
- I loved my WG although it was a little basic and there were a few teething problems with the landlords
- I got on really well with my flatmate (N.B. he moved in after I did and I had no warning about it, so it was pretty lucky we got on so well - definitely worth checking how long your flatemate(s) will be in the WG for and whether you get any say over replacements!)
- It cost €550 per month

Travelling around Berlin

- I didn't cycle but I had friends who travelled to work every day by bike
- Berlin is an amazing city for public transport
- You can get a Monatskarte which is discounted if you have proof that you're studying in Berlin or doing an internship and this enables you to use buses/trams/U-Bahn/S-Bahn as much as you like
- The Monatskarte usually costs around €80 per month but the reduced rate is €55-€60

What to do in Berlin

- This is pretty much an impossible question - anything and everything!!
- As boring as it sounds, I would recommend getting a Jahreskarte for all the museums and galleries - with a student discount, it's only €25 for the whole year, and really worth it on a rainy weekend
- Most Berlin cafes, bars, restaurants etc. are, much like the rest of Germany, apparently allergic to credit cards - so try and get into the habit of having cash on you to avoid frantically searching for the nearest cash point

Nightlife

- Exploring the (weird and) wonderful bars is an absolute must, as are the notorious clubs, whatever your feelings on techno are
- Probably doesn't need saying but Berlin clubbing hours are veeeery different from Oxford ones, so expect to arrive at 3 or 4am and get home at 7 or 8am….

Travelling to Berlin

- I always flew into and out of Tegel, which is a bit of a nightmare, but apparently better than Schönefeld
- It was generally pretty easy and check-in takes way less time than at home
- Unless you have really heavy bags and can't manage them on a bus/train, you definitely don't need a taxi - there are really good bus links from the airport to lots of the main stations, and it's all part of the monthly public transport ticket

Organising the Internship

- For the job at the U.S. embassy, I was reading old year abroad reports and found one from ages ago that mentioned the internship with the Commercial Service. I got in touch with the girl who did it, who pointed me in the right direction of the application process. I sent off my CV and then had to do a telephone interview and pass a security check before I could start - it took about 4 months for all the documents to go through, and I had to have an interview at the embassy before I was cleared
- For the internship at the German Marshall Fund, I'd emailed a lot of the embassies in Berlin asking if they had internship programmes and the Canadian embassy emailed back to say theirs was only for Canadian citizens, but that they shared a building with GMF and they had a lot of interns. I found the application details online and sent a cover letter and CV. I had to do a (pretty intense) 40 minute Skype interview

What the placements involved

- For the U.S. Embassy I was working at the consulate for the U.S. Commercial Service, which mainly involved market research, preparing market analysis reports, helping colleagues with various presentations and speaker/guest bios for events, updating the Commercial Service website, shadowing colleagues to meetings/trade fairs, and inputting/formatting data
- At the German Marshal Fund, I was an intern in the Europe Program, which involved research on various foreign policy issues, logistical support in the organisation of events, budget management, administrative assistance, data analysis and database training, and an individually researched and presented research project



INTERNSHIP - DÜSSELDORF

I’m Julia (studying German sole at New) and I was in Düsseldorf from February until the end of July. During my time there I worked for the British Government (Department for International Trade) at the Consulate. I LOVED my time in Düsseldorf - I didn't really expect much because people always talk about Köln, but it’s a really nice city. It wasn’t too overwhelming and there's a really big art scene there. Before doing my internship in Düsseldorf I did an internship at the University of Innsbruck in Austria where I helped to teach undergraduate and masters students in the translation faculty.

Accommodation

- I lived in a WG with two other Germans. I got on really well with my flatmates - it definitely contributed to Düsseldorf being the highlight of my Year Abroad
- I lived close to the Volksgarten in Oberbilk. This is a good area for young people to live in. Flingern would also be a good area.
- I found my flat on WG-Gesucht after sending 30 messages to different people on the website. This was the only response I got!
- I Skyped my flatmates and arranged the flat before I got there
- The flat was great - I had a huge room and there was a balcony
- I paid 450 euros per month

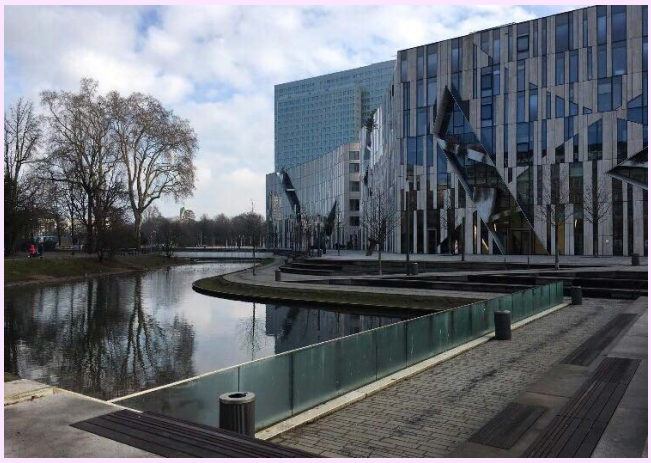
Travelling around Düsseldorf

- The Rhinebahn app tells you the best way to get around the city (which mode of transport to take, timings etc.)
- You can get a monthly travel card which costs 67 euros per month (if you get proof from your work that you are doing an internship) so I only had it for February, March and April because I could walk to work when it got warmer
- It includes transport for most of Nordrhein Westfalen so you can also explore other cities

Internship

- I applied online via the FCO website
- I did a Skype interview and they offered me 6 months. Usually interns can only do 3 months but if you get a letter from Oxford saying that the internship is a compulsory part of your degree you can do 6 months (Pflichtpraktikum)

- I initially only wanted to do 3 months because I wanted to get as much experience as possible doing different jobs but I settled for 5 months in the end. I'm really glad I stayed longer because I really worked my way up - by the end of the internship I was given as much responsibility as some of my colleagues
- My main tasks involved: marketing, stakeholder engagement, consulting, event organisation and research
- Internal meetings were held in English but most of the tasks involved talking to German businesses. I was initially worried that working for the British Government would mean that I would speak a lot of English but I asked my colleagues to speak German to me (most were German natives) and asked to be given lots of German tasks. My German definitely improved!
- The main downside was the pay - I got paid 300 euros a month
- For me the experience of working for the government and having so much responsibility made it worth it though







General Advice

- Look for Facebook groups - I joined a Köln-Düsseldorf netball team which I found through Facebook
- Travel around - there are lots of cheap flights to and from Düsseldorf and there are also good train connections to Amsterdam and Paris

Recommendations for Düsseldorf

- Kunstakademie Rundgang (twice a year the students show their work)
- Karneval (February)
- Japan Tag (May)

Food Recommendations

- Tokyo Lounge (Japanese)
- Green Karma (lunch)
- Hanaro Markt (Korean Supermarket)
- Scaramanga (Vietnamese)
- Bibimcup (Korean)
- Naniwa (Japanese)
- Tsun Gai (Dim Sum)
- Cafe Knulle
- Kassette Bar
- Pozangmatcha (Korean)
- The Paris Club (One to go to if your parents are visiting!)





WORKING - SMALL TOWN EXPERIENCE

I’m Florence and I study German and French at Pembroke. I worked at a private language school, teaching English primarily, but also French and sometimes also maths to refugee children.

Benefits of finding your own employment

- Being in a German speaking work environment is most likely to be the best year abroad option in terms of improving your language skills
- Gives you work experience which makes the prospect of graduating and finding work after uni less daunting
- If the employer is pleased with you, they will probably ask you back in the future
- The regularity gives you a good routine
- You earn money

Job hunting

- There’s a reason the jobs that are advertised on Weblearn are on Weblearn - most of them have had YA students from Oxford before or someone in recruitment is an Oxford alumnus

Pre-Year Abroad Security

- It's worth telling them you will not book travel until you have received your work contract
- Going out to visit the location and the workplace before the YA begins could be very beneficial - to meet the team you’ll be working with, see the workplace before the job officially begins and to have already done the journey from the UK and back once
- I took a long weekend out in early Trinity of second year to do this, which was exhausting but worth every minute. I asked permission from tutors to do so and they were very supportive
- It made going out for the year abroad itself a lot less stressful for me, because I’d done everything once already
- Beware of any employment without a contract and make sure they don’t hurry you to read the contract quickly. They know it’s not your first language and it’s important that you’ve fully understood what you’re signing up for

Finances

- If you’re being paid in cash it may well be that they’re illegally employing you - it’s more than reasonable to expect that if they pay in cash that you sign to say you’ve received the money. Make sure you get a copy of anything you have to sign
- Beware of anyone who uses the language of “giving” rather than “paying" - they might be paying you less than the minimum wage
- Even if they pay you well, you should be able to get an Erasmus grant on top of this - the Erasmus grants only cover work that lasts for 60 days or more (60 days not working days)
- I had no contract and was given money in cash which meant I didn't have to open a German bank account

Living in a Small Town

- I found that not having a car in a small town made travelling around quite difficult
- Few young adults live in villages as most are at university in towns so it took a while to find ways of meeting other people my age

The placement

- I worked in a private language school teaching English and some French and maths
- The experience was brilliant for my German because the working environment was fully in German
- I was teaching all ages (4 to 84!) and levels, either one on one or in small group classes
- I wasn’t given any freedom to plan my own lessons or deliver them in my own way, even after 8 months there - so I didn’t feel emotionally invested in the work
- I worked 2-7pm Monday to Thursday
- Working only four days a week gave me lots of time to travel at weekends to visit new towns, which I loved
- I had no work colleagues apart from my employer

When things get tough

- Keep in touch with other Oxford students on their Year Abroad as they’re the most likely people to understand the challenges of it
- It's important to know when your red lines are and at what point you decide you want to leave early
- Travelling home for family/personal reasons is entirely legitimate

Leaving sooner than expected

- I handed in my notice once I got a job offer for France, leaving after 8 months of work (approximately 2 months early)
- In hindsight I should have left within the first few weeks and found something else but I had been hopeful things would improve
- A contract should include information on how easily you can choose to leave
- Your Erasmus grant will be affected if you leave so speak to the Year Abroad office, Oxford's Erasmus coordinator and your tutor as soon as possible - they really are there to help you
- If you do leave, don't panic! Oxford only requires you to spend 24 weeks abroad, so even if you leave suddenly, you have time to apply for other jobs and start something new a few weeks or even months later
- Job searching in the same town as your previous employment is worth considering and may well be the simplest and most successful option, especially if you have made friends who have possible contacts

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