

Travel Report

Stockholm University – Business School

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Exchange in Stockholm University

After assessing various possibilities that LUT provides, I decided to apply to have my second exchange in Stockholm University (SU). LUT has two under/post-graduate places for its students in SU per semester. Although it is called NOREK exchange instead of Erasmus, application process and other things follow each other. In this report, I write about practical issues in SU, Stockholm Business School (SBS) and Stockholm, more about application process can be read in uni.lut.fi.

Orientation Week

SBS organizes two different orientation weeks, one for exchange students and another for program students. During the orientation week SU have its own day where information about healthcare, university account, insurance etc. is given. SBS have its own lecture about practices of Business department. Orientation week includes also arrival services from Arlanda and Skavsta airports, IKEA tour, library and campus tour and city tour by bus.

The student union of SBS, Föreningen Ekonormerna arranges its own orientation program (Faderriet) for exchange students and program students. This six-week long program starts at the same time with official orientation week and includes lot of events organized by other students. Attending to orientation week and Faderriet is highly recommended. During the first week, you will have excess time to organize practical things and get to know people before actual studies begin.

Language Course

SU organizes different level language courses for its students. During the orientation week, students can register for the beginners' course, or a test that allocates students to other more advanced courses. The test takes place in the beginning of the first period and, at least for Finnish students, is relatively easy. SU have up to seven Swedish courses that you may enroll after the test. Language courses account for different amount of credits depending on length and workload.

Academic Calendar

Academic year in SU follows quite well Finnish academic calendar. Autumn semester in 2016 started on 29th of August and lasted until 15th of January 2017. Semester is divided into four periods that last about four weeks each. In SBS, students are supposed to take one course with 100% workload or two courses with 50% workload per period. Examination takes place in the end of each period, or later if the course lasts longer. During the autumn, we did not have holidays except on Christmas. Depending on course schedule, students may have spare days after the course ends, I had almost a

week off after the first period, but not after second or third one. I had my last exam on 21th of December, but some courses had examination in January.

Courses

Courses that SBS offer are shown in their website. As a surprise, after the acceptance, when actual course selection had to be done, some of my previously picked courses were not offered for exchange students so I had to change my initial selection. During the semester I did the following courses. Each of them accounted for 7,5 ECTS.

Production Management and Service Delivery

First course I did was about production management and service delivery. It included basic concepts of operations management in both service and manufacturing industries. During four-five weeks we had seven lectures, seven seminars and an exam. Couple of the lectures were taught by guest lecturers. Seminars were kept in smaller groups and we had to read articles and case studies and prepare handouts for the teacher before the group meeting. Two of the seminars were done as a group assignment with presentations but without handouts. Seminars weren't mandatory but covered 50% of the final grade. Exam was a short written exam and the course had 100% workload in total.

Business Analytics Data, Models and Decisions

Second course dealt with data analytics including statistical methods, decision making and data visualization. Course could be described as middle-level statistic course with basic concepts like distributions, probabilities and regressions. More advanced and interesting part included simulations and different kind of optimizations. During one period we had seven lectures (two guest lecturers), seven seminars and an exam. In seminars, we did things learned in lectures in practice mostly with Excel. Answers had to be returned before the next seminar and last seminar was larger group work with presentation. Seminars weren't mandatory but covered 40% of the final grade. Written exam contained different calculative and written questions and the workload of the course was 100%.

Financial Institutions Management

Last course I had was about banking industry, central banks and related topics. Course discussed about bank specific financial statement issues, the most important risk and return measures on the industry and managing them. Tools learned included GAP management, duration gap, futures and forward agreements. Deposit insurance and banks capital management had its own sections. Course had eleven lectures (one quest lecture), optional calculation exercises, two short quizzes, a computer lab with written report, a group work with presentation and an exam. Course last over periods three and four and accounted 50% of one period workload. Examination was written exam with calculation and written questions.

Practical Issues

Applying to study in Stockholm is easy for Scandinavian students. The process is clear and LUT and SU provide clear instructions and help if needed. There are things that you still must take care of yourself like housing and travelling when heading for an exchange.

Preparation

After getting an acceptance and doing course selection, it's time to arrange practicalities. Students from Finland don't need any permission to move to Sweden. For under half a year staying, you won't get a Swedish social security number. Swedish government provide insurance for university students, but travelling insurance may be good to have. Swedish bank account could be cheaper way to pay your bills like rent because Finnish banks charge extra for foreign currency payments. Without local personal number it can be hard to get one but SU probably have some offer for exchange students. NOREK provide scholarships for exchange students from LUT to SU. In autumn 2016 the grant was 900 euros.

Travelling to Stockholm is easy and cheap by plane or ferry. Public transportation in Stockholm works well and is almost mandatory if you don't own a bike. Monthly card for public transport card for a student costs 550 crowns and includes all vehicles.

Housing

Housing market in Stockholm is tight and finding a place can be tricky. Students of SU can apply student housing before the semester. I applied a room from student dormitory but could not get one. On Facebook, there are some groups where people search and offer rooms and apartments for rent (look listing in the end). A popular site for finding a place is Blocket.se (local tori.fi), but you

need to be careful with frauds. Quality and price of rooms and apartments differ a lot, a room may cost 3500-6000 crowns, depending on the location, equipment etc. One option is to try finding a larger apartment and rent it with fellow students. I got place from Gubbängen which was 35 minutes away from main campus Frescati by metro and 45 minutes away from Business department's campus Kräftriket by metro and bus.

Activities

Students in SU have different associations for with various activities that student can join for free of for a charge. Joining the main student union allows you to get one of the official student cards that gives you benefits in public transportation and stores. The union organize also activities like going to local football and ice hockey matches. Student union also has its own buddy program that new students can apply to join. The union informs how to apply and get a buddy during the first weeks of the semester. I had a buddy and two fellow new students in my group, the program starts during the first period and lasts officially about a month. The program is unofficial and it depend on you and your group how much you want to do together. Erasmus network ESN organizes events in Stockholm like in most of the university cities.

Useful links

University: <http://www.su.se/english/>

Business department: <http://www.sbs.su.se/english/>

Housing: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/839604019397588/>

ESN Stockholm: <https://www.facebook.com/esnstockholm/?fref=ts>

Stockholm University: <https://www.facebook.com/stockholmsuniversitet/?fref=ts>

Stockholm University Student Union:

<https://www.facebook.com/stockholmuniversitystudentunion/?fref=ts>

Föreningen Ekonomerna vid Stockholm University <https://www.facebook.com/Festhlm/?fref=ts>