

Study Abroad:

University of Sussex, Brighton, GB

Brighton, England: The lively city on the beautiful south coast of England not only offers various places and sights that are worth visiting, but it is also home to the University of Sussex. After having spent both the autumn and spring term (10 weeks each, which was six months in total) at the university, I can definitely recommend studying abroad. As I know that not everybody who would like to go abroad can be successful when applying for a place at one of our University's partner institutions, I am writing this report in order to tell you something about my experience of making an individual application. It was a positive experience, and I think that organising everything privately is not much more difficult than going as an Erasmus student.

Once I had decided to go abroad and study at the [University of Sussex](#), I found the application process comparably easy. This was certainly due to the university's well-organised procedures regarding international students. The university website gave helpful first information. I received further details very quickly via e-mail or post with relatively clear instructions which helped me during the application process. Furthermore, I was instructed to choose my courses from an enclosed prospectus and to look for accommodation. The university opened a personal account for me, and I then paid for my study fees using a credit card and a special website on the internet (currently, fees are £1200 for the autumn and spring term each, and £600 for the summer term). Having a credit card is very useful, especially if you want to book flights etc. from the UK to Germany while staying there. I did not open a bank account but withdrew money with my German cash card. Nevertheless, opening an account might be advantageous if you are staying for longer, as you do not have to pay fees (about 5€ to your German bank) when you use British cash machines. Some German banks do not charge their customers abroad, and opening accounts with them is normally quick and easy.

As I did not stay (and pay) for the examination term, which is usually the summer term, I was told that I would not be able to live on campus. Thus, I chose to live with a host family instead of renting privately. Living in a private flat is not impossible, but it can be

difficult to find landlords if you are only staying for a short period. I enjoyed staying with the family, which provided me with breakfast and evening meals, but there are both advantages and disadvantages with whatever kind of accommodation you choose (closeness to campus, to town, what you are provided with etc.). The prices are almost the same, and you need about £500 a month (accommodation, meals, books, travel etc.). Applying for [Auslands-Bafög](#) or to the *FreeMover-Program* can help to partly cover the costs, but official decisions may take time and you need to make sure that you have enough money available to pay for everything.

The university itself is situated in a beautiful landscape, and if you are not living on campus you will probably need a bus pass or a bike. The normal workload is considered to be four seminars or lectures a week, which is a total of approximately eight hours. However, presentations and essays are very often due during term time, so that a lot of work needs to be done at home. As I did not stay for the examination period, special arrangements were made for early leavers like me. Thus, I had to submit essays before I left, or my assessment was based on other pieces of coursework. I took both second and third year courses and found that the level depended entirely on the courses and lecturers themselves, and that the year did not always matter. Apart from the classes I attended, the university offered a lot of activities for both British and international students. It is possible to join various clubs, but there are also trips to other cities (London, Cambridge, Oxford, Bath, Stratford-upon-Avon, ...), coffee mornings, or parties and dinners. All this made it easy to find friends.

What I especially appreciated was the fact that I was able to gain various insights into British culture. Staying abroad and studying at a different university means much more than just improving one's language or study skills, and it is an experience I could now not imagine missing out on. The six months went by very quickly, and I found that there is so much to learn and see that I definitely have to go there again! Finally, I should add that the reason why I chose Sussex is that I wanted to be somewhere near the sea as well as near London. I searched the internet using various universities' websites and rankings and then decided for Brighton. But wherever you want to go and whichever university you choose – it is definitely worth it, and things are not as complicated as they may seem at first.

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