

SEMESTER EXCHANGE REPORT

NAME - VANDIT GANDHI
EMAIL ID - vandit.sg@somaiya.edu

**HOME UNIVERSITY - S K SOMAIYA COLLEGE,
SOMAIYA VIDYAVIHAR UNIVERSITY,
MUMBAI, INDIA.**

**HOST UNIVERSITY - DUALE HOCHSCHULE BADEN -
WÜRTTEMBERG UNIVERSITY,
STUTT GART, GERMANY.**

FIELD OF STUDY - BUSINESS STUDIES

DEGREE INTENDED - BACHELOR OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

NUMBER OF SEMESTER - 1

TIME PERIOD - MARCH 2022 - AUGUST 2022

BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG STIPENDIUM

Introduction

I am Vandit Gandhi, a student from S K Somaiya College, Somaiya Vidyavihar University pursuing my Bachelor of Business Management. In my 4th semester I got the opportunity to take part in the semester exchange program and out of many options I chose DHBW, Stuttgart Germany. The reason being it is one of the important financial hubs of Germany. It also accommodates one of the famous automobile companies like Mercedes and Porsche. Germany is one of the biggest economies in Europe and this would help me learn a lot about it.

Preparation of the stay

I started my preparation by learning about German tradition, culture and their way of living. I also started learning a little bit of the German language so that it can help me figure out things the moment I reach. DHBW offered me a buddy to whom I could ask any questions I might have. Talking with him I got to know about the weather and started packing according to it. For example - winter jackets, woollen socks, winter caps and etc. for the month of March and April. I knew that I won't be able to find many Indian vegetarian food options so I started learning to cook in advance and also carried the necessary utensils which really helped me survive. Other than that, DHBW had conducted an online orientation program to solve our queries and they gave us the necessary information regarding the arrangement of our stay, public transport pass, insurance, city registration, opening of bank account and other necessary information we would require. This helped us a lot with the initial preparation and all our other queries were managed by our buddies.

When I reached Stuttgart I was accompanied by my buddy from the train station to my dormitory and he had already done the necessary arrangements like taking the key to my room from the janitor, arranging pillows and quilts etc. The next day, which was the day 1 of our orientation, we were warmly welcomed by the International office and were handed over a bag which had all the necessary documents related to the formalities required and also had other goodies. We were explained in detail about each and every requirement and our queries were answered. They also had prepared some ice breaker activities which would help us introduce ourselves and bond with other exchange students.

Study in the host country

I had taken up 7 courses for my semester and each of them were of different domains. Studying each of them helped me develop a deeper understanding into the working of business in the real world. It gave an overview of all the dynamics involved in running a business. The way of teaching was unique and different which made it easy for me to understand the concepts and gave me practical knowledge regarding the day-to-day working of any company. We were also explained the case studies which gave us an insight of the company and how they faced the situation. German language intensive course was also one of the courses in my list which I had studied in the very beginning. It helped me converse with people, read boards, ingredients of food, public transport announcements etc. which basically helped me and made my stay easier. Other courses were also very interesting and unique in their way. Specially courses like Intercultural Negotiation Training helped me learn some negotiation skills and how to negotiate with people from all over the world. It gave an insight into the traditions and customs of different countries and taught how to negotiate with them. Other course like Business Simulation Game was very interesting and had a different approach. It was very practical in concept and offered a different way of learning them. All other courses were too interesting and helped gain knowledge in their respective fields.

Personal experiences in the host country

DHBW

The semester exchange program in DHBW proved to be very helpful and beneficial for me. I had a great experience, be it in the way of teaching or interacting with the students around. The professors were very kind and helpful and were always ready to listen to our queries and solve them. I liked their way of teaching and their approach towards studies. The international office was also very helpful and supportive throughout the duration of my course and even before I reached there. They were very prompt to answer my queries and also helped me beyond the classes and university. Some activities were also arranged by them for all the exchange students.

Stuttgart -

It is one of the nicest places to live in Germany. It has a very good transportation system, good connectivity to different places and countries and also you'll get to meet a lot of people, especially international students. There are also many public events and activities that take place which are very fun to take part in. Visiting different countries is very convenient from Stuttgart as it is close to many of them. It also has one of the finest libraries where you can sit and learn from a lot of books available. There are also a lot of restaurants, movie theatres, and other venues which you can visit in your leisure time. Grocery stores and other necessities are also covered.

Dormitory -

I had flatmates from different parts of the world and living with them for so many months gave me an insight into their way of living and understanding the customs and traditions they followed, be it in their day to day routine or the food they made. I really enjoyed staying with them and it helped me learn the differences and similarities in our cultures.

Travelling -

I got the opportunity to travel to many countries from Stuttgart. I travelled to almost 12 countries in the exchange program and each of them taught me something new. There I got to learn a lot about different cultures and traditions in different countries. I also learned how to plan and organize my trips which actually made me independent. Travelling to different countries helped me gain a new perspective and the experience was great.

Hands on tips

- Firstly I would suggest everyone to start learning German language as it might help in the initial days.
- For people who are vegetarian might not get many options to eat outside so learn some recipes so that you can cook for yourself.
- Ask your buddy to help you with some formalities before arriving like collecting the keys for your room or arranging some basic necessities so that it might make it a bit easier to settle in the initial days.

- Try exploring each and everything possible. Participate in all the events and activities as possible. There are also many clubs and forums you can join. Joining these types of events and activities will help you meet new people beyond your university and dormitory and by interacting with them you'll learn a lot of new things.

Personal evaluation of the stay at the host university in the host country

There I got the opportunity to meet new people from all over the world and interacting with them was not only limited till my university. Talking about Stuttgart specifically, it is one of the international hubs for students and I got to come across a variety of nationalities, be it my flatmates or people I met in any public events. I personally met a lot of people from different nationalities which helped me develop a new array of vision and opened up a new horizon for me. All in all I would definitely suggest everyone to take part in this semester exchange program and achieve this must have experience and exposure.

I would like to thank S K Somaiya college, Somaiya Vidyavihar University and Duale Hochschule Baden Württemberg (DHBW) university for providing me with this great opportunity which not only made me learn a lot of new things but also gave me a great exposure. Thanks to BW Foundation's stipendium for helping me make the most of my stay in Stuttgart, Germany. I would also like to thank Mrs. Dorte suchting, Ms Asita Rostam and Sarina Mollenhauer from the international office for constantly helping me and solving my queries. I would like to extend my thanks to Prof. Dr. Zeina Matar and other professors and faculty members for guiding me throughout the course.