

# Personal Report

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January 16, 2023  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

## **Preparations for the Stay Abroad**

When I first started to look at coming to DHBW in Stuttgart, Germany, I was not aware of the Baden-Württemberg Stipendium. I originally decided to come to Stuttgart because of the location, culture and my school was helping me with scholarships to come study there. While on a zoom call with Asita and Sarina, they told us about the Baden-Württemberg Stipendium and described it in detail. After looking into it, I was told that I would be eligible to receive the scholarship.

While in Stuttgart, there were four other students that I had met who also received the scholarship. During my stay, I ended up travelling to quite a few countries and was not able to participate in any of the events.

## **Studying at the Host University**

During my semester abroad, I went Duale Hochschule Baden Württemberg in Stuttgart, Germany. While I was applying for the exchange program, I had looked at different countries such as Germany, Italy, Sweden, and Austria. I ended up choosing Duale Hochschule Baden Württemberg because it was a sister school to my university back home. This means that the schools were in communication beforehand and my classes that I took in Germany would transfer back to my home university. Another reason I chose Duale Hochschule Baden Württemberg was because of the previous reviews I read on it, the school to life balance, and the classes that were available for me to take.

When I arrived at the school, there were quite a few major differences that I came to realize. At the start, I was unaware of how many different buildings that DHBW owned and the different buildings I could be going to for each class. During the exchange program, all my

classes also consisted of the other exchange students which I was not familiar with. All of us students became close and will have a long-lasting friendship.

To prepare for my stay, I did research about the host university and country, the University of Saskatchewan had sent me resources to read up on, and we had zoom meetings with DHBW representatives and constant contact through emails with any questions we might have. Before I arrived, there was a lot of paperwork that needed to be filled out and figured out. Both my home university and DHBW were supportive with helping me fill these documents out to ensure I was set up for when I arrived. On my own, I learnt about the landscape, culture, and the day-to-day life of people in Germany. Lastly, I reached out to one of my friends who had also studied in Germany just to ask him about any remaining questions that I had.

I would highly recommend studying at DHBW to other students. The school was very professional with highly intelligent teachers. The school would host events for students on weekends for people to get to know one another. Lastly, the school is in an area which is close to the dorms and makes transportation there easy.

### **Life in your host Country**

When I initially moved to Stuttgart, I found the transportation to be quite confusing and difficult to get used to. Being from Canada, I was not used to the trains as being the main way of transportation. Overtime, this became quite easy to navigate as well as being cost and time efficient. I think my biggest surprise was the amount of people that used trains as public transportation since back home, everybody uses cars compared to public transportation.

Advice I would give to other students coming to the host university would be to learn cultural norms, transportation, and the German language. One of my biggest regrets was not learning more of the German language prior to moving to Germany. I would also tell other students to embrace your time in Germany as it truly has changed my view on the world.

## **Personal Conclusion and Outlook**

Moving to Stuttgart for a term abroad, I had the expectations of travelling around Europe, making new friends, learning the German culture, and just to embrace everything I learnt during my time. These expectations were surpassed as I had the opportunity to travel to thirteen different countries, I have made lifelong friends and I learnt more about the German culture than I could have imagined.

In hindsight, I learnt some important lessons that will stay with me for the rest of my life. First thing I learnt was to never take for granted an experience such as this and being able to learn in Germany. You must get out of your comfort zone to experience new things that you will remember for the rest of your life. Secondly, I learnt to travel around Europe. There are so many different countries, cultures and people that will help you to see the world in a different way and truly appreciate new cultures. Lastly, I learnt how important it is to plan. Whether that is going on a trip, planning a life event, or moving to a new country. You should always be prepared.

I would not change the experience I had at DHBW and in Germany for anything. It truly was a life changing time where I was able to grow as a person. I made lifelong friends, and we get to share an experience that many people do not get the opportunity to experience. I will definitely be going back to visit Germany and finding new things to do as soon as I graduate.