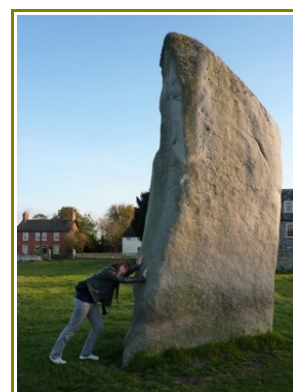


My Erasmus Experience in the UK

Since the very first day at HTW I was convinced of the Erasmus movement and had already decided to go abroad myself. Getting to know a foreign country, meeting culturally diverse people, studying in a different language while having a marvellous time—that's about how I imagined it to be. I was not disappointed by my choice to spend the second year of my tourism studies in Southampton, a moderate city in the South of England, only a 70min train ride from the capital London.

Southampton Solent University is located in the city centre next to a perfect English Botanic park. The university itself is the second established one in the city and is very open towards international students and the contact is friendly and organised. The support of issues concerning HTW and Solent Uni was handled professionally from both sites. I studied tourism management in the second year (Level 7) and took units like Responsible Tourism or Tour Operations. As it is a university, differences to the education system of HTW was tremendously noticeable from the very start. Not only did I have sole 15 hours of class attendance, but also did my work tasks rely more on individual information processing and reproduction. Meaning that I mainly had to write assignments in which we had to discuss a topic related question. Thus I will certainly profit from the gained writing skills when writing the Bachelor thesis at the end of the 6th semester. Furthermore, I enjoyed being able to manage my schedule independently between the work loads which also meant lots of spare time for activities in between uni-deadlines.

For activities, especially sport, Southampton is a place to be. Solent Uni is very engaged and I am sure there is a team for everybody! However, I have to add my little anecdote: I tried myself in sailing. Dreamt of sailing the Solent (name of the water channel which connects Southampton with the open sea) being highly motivated and ambitious... However, soon I had to realise that I was the only beginner. After my first (and only) training I understood that I was sailing with world champions. Yet, I truly



enjoyed this experience but turned to yoga and swimming afterwards which was definitely easier to participate in.

Southampton is a student city and hence has all the facilities we need. The city had, in times of the big wars, the second important harbour. For this reason it was also victim of the Second World War when major parts of the historic town were destroyed. At present times, war and heavy industry are part of Southampton's history and the council has recently started various urbanisation projects to make public space more enjoyable. For example next to the Solent University a modern nautical centre is being built, which will also enclose the new Titanic museum. (Yes, Titanic first left Southampton docks before crashing the iceberg).

In the end, however, Southampton to me is all about the friendships I was able to form during my stay. It is because of them that I have already booked a plane ticket back to visit my friends again this summer. Studying abroad makes you feel how the world can be a global village, and you are right at its pulse. This international environment and understanding is something I would not want to miss: A reason why I could broaden my horizon further and expand my own ideas. An exchange is like growing on a different level, which you might not in your home country. For this reason, I could never have just a trifle of doubt about recommending such an experience.



