

Exchange Semester: Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen
Semester One 2016
LLB/BA

Firstly congratulations for considering going on exchange, I can promise you now it will be the best decision you've made. Wherever you go will be amazing, the best advice I could give you is just to get out there and do it.



Now to turn more specifically to why you should go to Tübingen. If you enjoy living in Dunedin you're going to love the buzz of Tübi, it's a student town built around the campus with a river through the centre – sound familiar? In those aspects Tübi was a home away from home you couldn't walk anywhere without seeing someone you knew on the street

and being surrounded by so many other students especially others on exchange is makes things super comfortable.

However obviously there is lots of differences from Otago too, instead of the somewhat questionable 70's style buildings which Dunedin offers Tübingen is covered with gorgeous 1700s building. It is so very quintessentially German, the centre of the town is the oldest intact Altstadt in Germany and its just unbelievably cute, interesting and old in a way that no where in New Zealand could be. Every street has a placard listing some famous person who lived or invented something there, the place is steeped in history. There are several castles nearby and old monastery as well as lots of awesome places to go hiking. Despite being old and historical Tübingen is fundamentally a student town, the night life is awesome you can literally go out any night of the week and find at least a few bars packed.



Transport

When I was in Tübi I got around almost everywhere on the bus which was super common as the start of the semester you get a letter with all these

voucher type things on it and one of them gets you a bus pass. It's 80 euro and you can ride any of the buses whenever.

Depending on where you live (which I'll discuss later) you'll probably get one of these however if you live in the Altstadt it might not be entirely worth it especially if you're happy to ride a bike. The bus is free for all students after 7pm anyway



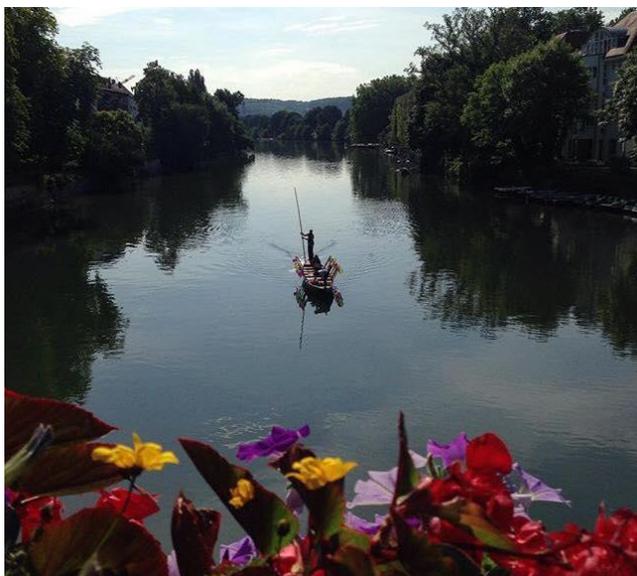
There is also a service called the night taxi for when the buses have stopped running, if you call them they will pick you up from any bus stop and take you to any other bus stop in Tübingen for 3 euros. The number 070713400 – obviously basic German is required for this but there will probably be someone

around to help you if you can't do it yourself.

If you choose to live in WHO you can catch the 2,3,4,,5,6 – the 3 takes a little bit longer and the 5 takes considerably longer so worth trying to stick to even numbers. The best thing way to get around is to download the Naldo app its super easy to use and shows you the next bus all around town

The first week

There are potentially two times you can arrive in Tübingen, a month before the semester starts if you're going to complete the Start language course or a week before the semester begins. I didn't do the Start course so couldn't really comment on it but almost all my friends did and seemed to have really enjoyed it. For lots of universities its actually compulsory to complete this course, it seemed like a really great way to meet lots of people also on exchange and improve your German it was also not too hard either from what I was told. They also help you to complete all your matriculation documents, which would have been awesome.



If you do decide to arrive a week before class starts definitely make sure you get along to all the StudIT events they run meet and greets and advisory course to help you get settled as well as bunch of fun touristy trips. In the advisory course they will help you to matriculate, I actually had already managed to matriculate by this time. It can seem super overwhelming as there is quite a bit of admin to complete but its super manageable especially

as there are no classes that week.

Accommodation

Like most of these reviews I lived in WHO. It was a great place to live there was a bar, kebab store, bank and supermarket within 100m of where I lived and it was a 10 minute bus to Uni which came every 5 minutes. I found it fairly straightforward to apply the accommodation through studentwerk despite my lack of German.

Some of the rooms are in Flats of 6 people, which was what I was in and what I would recommend some other people had their own bathroom but shared a kitchen with significantly more people which seemed a lot less social and the kitchens could get fairly heinous.

If you do want to live in WHO I'd recommend building 18 – if you have the opportunity to put a preference this was really nice new building where the flat was shared with 5 other people but each room had its own bathroom.

Whilst WHO was really cool it is also worth considering other options, Froschgasse and Prinz Karl are both really cool and right in the Altstadt in cute German buildings. If you lived here you could bike or walk everywhere you needed to go. I also had a lot of friends who lived in Franz Viertel which was really pretty however the buses did not go here as often as they did to WHO however it was possible to bike from there. I would not recommend Lustnau the buses rarely went there and whilst it was nice inside was quite far out of town. In saying that the public transport is so good that wherever you ended up would be manageable and I didn't hear of anybody living in any accommodation that was gross.

Expenses and Visas

I found Tübingen to be a cheap place to live in comparison to Dunedin, My rent was cheaper and included power and internet and most food was comparable in price whilst meat and alcohol were both a lot cheaper. Excluding travel you could live on less than in Dunedin.



I spent around \$6000 whilst I was away excluding my flights there, that included a week in California and a month in the UK before hand plus all the travel during.

I had a British passport which at the time was still a member of the

European Union so I didn't have to do anything about getting a visa so best to read other people's reviews for information on this.

Travel

I travelled a lot whilst I was in Tübingen, it's a great location in this respect as it's very centrally located. To give you an idea regarding my budget I spent weekends in Amsterdam, Croatia, Paris, Manchester and Copenhagen. I also did a ten-day road trip in the spring break through France and Italy (Annecy - - would highly recommend as the Queenstown of Europe), Gorges du Verdon, Aix-en-Provence, Nice, Cinque Terre (amazing!) Tuscany, Pisa, Florence, Bologna) and took a week off university to go to Greece as well.

I was super lucky to get my timetable so I only had class on Tuesday and Wednesday which meant my weekend trips were actually 5 days long. When you are in campus portal you can see what days and times classes are and it's definitely worth trying to get the majority on the same day if you can because for a lot of classes you are only allowed to miss two classes.

Honestly in my last month I only went away once and promised myself some time in Tübingen as it was such an awesome city with so much to do and I wanted to make sure I fully experienced it before I left.

I'd highly recommend the websites, blindbooking, goeuro and skyscanner as well as the company flixbus for finding the cheapest way to get places.

Language

I'm going to be honest and say I spoke no German. Most of the other exchange students did speak German as they were there on a language exchange.

After about two weeks I could order food and drinks but even when I left most places I went for anything complex I would just ask them in German if they

spoke English and go from there. Almost everyone does - I think I had two people that didn't and everyone is more than happy to help you in English and very accommodating.



Food

The cheapest supermarket is Kaufland, if you want some international food which includes things like curry and sweet and sour for most Germans Edeka has a pretty good collection. They also sell a lot of fruit and vegetables in the Altstadt.

My favourite restaurants when I was in Tübingen were Die Kichererbse and Vegi both amazing falafel places AsianHaus also did some great Thai food, Neckarmüller does traditional Swabian cuisine and has great views over the

river and across from there is Kalender which is the classic place to stop off on the way home from town on Saturdays.

Classes

Most of the classes are worth 6 ECTS depending on how much work you do, you get 2ECTS from attending the class with no more than two absences 2 ECTS for some form of internal assessment normally a presentation and then a further 2ECTS for either a big final essay or exam. You can choose to get either 2 4 or 6 and most lecturers are really helpful and flexible if you're an exchange student. Make sure before you leave that you are super clear about how many ECTS you need to achieve to get credit for the right amount of papers in Otago.



These are the classes I did and brief description of them, if you're looking for classes in English – law students have to take at least one class in a foreign language so they always have English classes, the master politics programme and Islamic studies students do too so they will always have English classes.

Global issues and ethics and Science of Ethics both really straight forward papers worth 3 ECTS each. Quite a lot of internal work but nothing that was ever too laborious, had to submit a 1500 word essay at the end and do a test, the professor is really nice and super interesting.

Ethical challenge of refugee 4 ECTS for attendance and a presentation further 2 ECTS if you wrote an essay of 2500.

Civil Society and Democracy and Islam these were both masters level politics papers the readings were pretty heavy.

The Unwritten British Constitution – this is the classic law paper to take its fairly straight forward with one class a week and an exam at the end its worth 6ECTS highly recommend it the lecturer was really cool.

Faith and Reason in Islam and Christianity and History of Philosophy in Islam these were both run by the Islamic studies department both were reasonably easy to keep up with worth 3ECTS each

On a general note I had a few friends who studied economics and the exams were really late in the semester so look into that before you sign up.

If you want to do some German when you're there especially A1 its really important to sign up at 22 Wilhelmstrasse as soon as you can because they fill up really quickly

