

Telfer International Exchange Questionnaire
Uppsala University
Fall 2023

A) Your Program of Study

While completing my exchange at Uppsala University, I took three courses for the semester: International Business from a Swedish Perspective (15 credits), Business in Networks (7.5 credits), and Scandinavian Leadership (7.5 credits). The schedule is different than at the University of Ottawa, and the semester is split into two parts (September to November and November to December).

For my first half I was in the International Business from a Swedish Perspective course, which was a course designed for international students. We had a seminar and assignment once a week, as well as a reflection and seminar once a week based on assigned readings. It ended up being about 4 hours in class (plus however long it took you to complete your weekly assignment with your group), as well as self-dedicated time for readings, reflection, and seminar preparations. Other than the weekly schedule, there are two quizzes and a final literature exam based on all accumulated readings.

For the second half of the semester, I enrolled in Business in Networks and Scandinavian Leadership. Both courses run simultaneously, and includes seminars and group assignments as well. Once again, the classes are scheduled at about 4 hours per week, but there is an assumption that you are doing work from home as well.

The time in class is much less than in Canada, and I was excited at the prospect of travelling as I had seen many past students were able to. However, attendance is kept quite strictly, so be sure that you do not plan trips that overlap with your schedule too often.

B) The Timetable

The Fall 2023 semester was set to run August 28 to January 14th; however classes end in December and many are accompanied by take-home exams for students who are not returning after the Christmas break. Such is the case for my classes, which are designed for international and exchange students. For my class that took place in the first half of the semester, I completed an in-person exam.

There are no official holidays or breaks during the semester, although it is likely you will have a short time off between the two halves of the semester.

As ending dates cannot be confirmed before arriving, it is best to choose a date closer to Christmas if possible, or after the official semester end date should you be staying over the break. One of my courses had a final class on December 8th, while the other concluded on December 20th. I have my return flight booked on the 22nd.

C) Procedures to Follow Upon Arrival.

The Uppsala University exchange coordinators correspond with students before arrival with updates and recommendations for your journey. For Fall 2023, and we were given “welcome days” of August 17th and 18th. On these days, representatives were waiting at the Arlanda Airport for incoming students and offered shuttle services to campus and student accommodations. It is not required to arrive by those dates, but allowed students to meet potential new friends on the way there, have an organized plan for getting to their new home, and included a bag of helpful supplies.

During the week between arrival and the start of classes, there are lots of events organized in the student ‘nations’ in Uppsala. It is a great opportunity to get a feel for the student life and meet new friends!

During the weeks after the semester officially starts, the business department has their own homecoming activities, which includes a Swedish crayfish party, traditional Swedish games, going out to nations, and a dinner banquet.

D) Budget outlining the cost of studying abroad

Airplane Tickets

There were no direct flights available to get to Sweden, so the cost for tickets depends on where your connection(s) are located and the total travel time taken. I flew with Lufthansa from Montreal to Munich to Stockholm and it cost approximately \$1100 to book. I flew with my family and while they were to be returning in 10 days, my return flight was changed to December – from Stockholm to London to Montreal.

I waited quite a while to book the flights, which I do not recommend. I flew out on August 17th and booked the tickets the month prior, as I needed to confirm dates with my CO-OP placement regarding leaving early.

If possible, I recommend booking flights as soon as you find out recommended arrival dates to ensure the lowest prices and more flexibility in choosing connections.

Housing

If you reside in Flogsta, your monthly rent will be around \$585CAD (4682SEK). Housing rates will vary if you opt to live in another resident complex, although Flogsta is the lowest. You pay your monthly residence costs the month before, and they give you an invoice that you pay electronically. I would definitely advise applying for residence through the Uppsala University Housing Office because it is tough and expensive to locate on your own accommodations in Uppsala.

Vacation and Daily Travel

There are significantly cheaper options to travel in Europe than in North America, and many exchange students take advantage of this while at Uppsala University. I would recommend looking at RyanAir and Flixbus for affordable options for your trips. Nearby destinations such as Estonia, Latvia, Norway, and Denmark were popular for many people I talked to, and there were some student excursions and cruises offered during the semester.

Getting to the Arlanda Airport was not difficult, either. By bike or a single bus ride you can get to the Uppsala central station. You can get tickets at kiosks or service desks at the station, or through the SJ app (tickets are cheapest on the app). There are options to get a train ride that stops directly at Arlanda, and there is an efficient shuttle to the airport from the Stockholm central station if you happen to be there.

As for daily travel, the bike is your best friend. Busses run smoothly and on time in Uppsala, but ticket prices can be expensive. You are able to pay with your credit card on the bus if you do not have a pass or are taking the bus in a one-off trip. With the UL app you can buy tickets and passes, as well.

Meals

Living costs in Sweden, as in other Nordic countries, are not cheap. However, I did not find it incrementally different from in Canada. As long as you budget and make a list before grocery shopping, you should not have any issues. In Flogsta, I would receive weekly flyers in my mailbox from local grocery stores around the neighbourhood. These would let me know of any deals I may want to take advantage of.

There are a few grocery stores in proximity to my building, namely ICA, Willy's, and MAXI. ICA is the closest, being on a two minute walk away, but is more expensive than the other two.

Visa

There was a \$100 application fee when doing the online Visa application, but no other fees were necessary in my case.

E) Application procedures before your arrival

Visa

The Visa process was very smooth for me. The Swedish Migration Office has an online application tool that you can use to apply and I was able to obtain my residence permit confirmation after a month.

In the application, you are required to upload your letter of admission from the university, passport, bank statement, proof of insurance (the university provides insurance so the letter of acceptance was acceptable again), and supplementary written information.

After completing the online application, I was notified to present my passport at the Swedish Embassy here in Ottawa. It was not long after I received my confirmation and next steps. Coming from Canada, you do not need your Visa to enter Sweden. Once settled in Sweden, I was able to book an appointment in Stockholm (it can also be done through a walk-in in Uppsala) to get my photo taken and my fingerprints scanned. I received my residence card in the mailbox in Flogsta a week later. You must obtain this within the first 90 days in the country.

Course Registration

Registration for classes is done in advance of arriving (unless you opt to take a Swedish language course). In my case, I had to apply with my course selection by April 15th. As this date is far in advance, be sure to have your course selection approved by the Telfer Exchange Committee beforehand. At Uppsala University, there is no drop or change option with courses, so it is imperative that you choose wisely. The Uppsala International Mobility Office provides a list of course offerings and a guide on how to appropriately choose courses in their half semester model.

Housing Deposit

I paid half a month's rent after accepting the residence offer for the period I would be staying in residence throughout August. All rent payments are due the previous month.

F) Address and description of housing. Cost of housing.

While in Uppsala, I resided in the Flogsta neighbourhood:

Sernanders väg 1

752 61 Uppsala

Sweden

This is the cheapest student accommodation and cost me 4682SEK per month (approximately \$585CAD at the time I write this).

This residence is by far the most popular for international students and is comprised of 13 apartment buildings, each with 7 floors and 24 students on each floor. In more detail, each floor is split into two corridors, both composed of a living area, kitchen, and 12 rooms. There is also a balcony that connects the two corridors.

In your personal room you have a desk, shelves, bed, side table, chair, and mirror. You also have your own bathroom and good-sized closet. I was worried of the state of the room, as this is the least expensive accommodation and is known as such, but was pleasantly surprised by the amount of space I had, how large my window was, and the furnishings I got (rooms do not all have the same furniture).

The prospect of sharing a kitchen with 12 people can seem daunting, but it is a great way to keep yourself responsible of cleaning up after cooking and a great change to try interesting food from your corridor-mates.

Flogsta is an incredible opportunity to make friends. Since it is mostly international students, everyone arriving is in the same boat and is eager to make the most of their time there. You are able to make quick bonds since everyone is new and you can get to know each other through the orientation activities.

The buildings are located about 3km from the centre of the city, so it is highly recommended that you buy a bike. There are bus stops just outside of the complex, however, so there is the option to buy monthly bus passes as well.

G) Work term (if applicable).

While on my exchange, I also completed the process of applying to CO-OP jobs and completing interviews.

The CO-OP office does have records of who is studying internationally, and reached out to me to confirm the time difference between Ottawa and where I was staying, to ensure there were no issues with the interviews I booked.

The internet in the room is not an issue for Zoom/Teams/Google Meet, and getting to share of where you are studying and that you are completing an exchange only makes you stand out as a candidate!

H) Other comments or recommendations

A big part of Uppsala University's student life is the "student nations." These are clubs that you may join to gain admission to the country's clubs, pubs, and events. There are 13 to pick from, each with their own buildings, events, and characteristics. During orientation week, you can visit all of them and decide which one you wish to join. While at the university, my friends and I joined Snerikes and Stockholms nations, as they were the nations whose clubs we would visit the most often. This is something I strongly advise you to look into as it plays a big part in the unique student environment.

I) Experience Summary

Overall, it is an absolutely amazing opportunity to go on exchange, and I am very happy with my decision to come to Uppsala University. I was able to meet such great people, explore interesting places, try new foods, and truly experience something I will never forget. I can't recommend it enough!