

Mobility Scholarship Questionnaire
University of Mannheim, Germany

October 16, 2017



Table of Contents

A) Program of Study	1
B) Timetable.....	2
C) Arrival Procedures.....	2
D) Cost of Studying in Mannheim	3
E) Application Procedures Before Arrival	4
F) Description of Housing	5
G) Comments and Recommendations	6
H) Summary of Experience in Mannheim.....	6

A) Program of Study

My program of study at the Business School at the University of Mannheim is significantly different than what is known to be standard at the Telfer School of Management. During my semester, I had a total of seven (7) courses, but not all last the duration of the fall semester. Here, the Mannheim Business School offers traditional lectures that run for the entire semester, and offers “Intensive Seminars”, that usually only last two (2) to three (3) full days.

Here is a brief overview of the courses that I took part of, and their organization:

Name of Course	Number of ECTS	Course Format	# Number of Hours	Examination Type
German Level A1.1	6	Lecture (twice per week)	3 hours per week (1.5 hours x 2)	3 mini-tests No final exam
International Economics	6	Lecture & Practice Session (DGD)	1.5 – Lecture 1.5 – Practice Session (DGD)	100 % final exam (90 minutes)
FIN 365 – Risk Management and Financial Institutions	3	Lecture	1.5 hours per week	100 % final exam (90 minutes)
TAX 352 – Taxation of Multinational Firms	3	Lecture	6 hours per week (3 hours x 2 for 3 weeks)	100 % final exam (60 minutes)
FIN 357 – Corporate Valuation	4	Intensive Seminar	5 hours per day for 2 days (10 hours total)	1,500-word essay
MAN 358 – Strategy and Sustainability	4	Intensive Seminar	5 hours per day for 2 days (10 hours total)	1,500-word essay
MKT 353 – Brand and Product Management	4	Intensive Seminar	8 hours per day for 3 days (24 hours total)	100 % final exam (60 minutes)

As it is seen, the courses range significantly in the number of credits received per course as well as the type of course. It is inevitable that the intensive seminars overlap certain weekly lectures, so it is important to make sure that you can miss a lecture for a given day. For example, I was only allowed to miss two days of the German A1.1 course, so I had to make sure that the Intensive Seminars don’t overlap that course more than twice. All in all, the course hours per week are short at 1.5 hours and there are no other assignments in the courses. All my chosen courses had a final exam or essay worth 100 % of my final grade.

B) Timetable

The fall semester timetable at the University of Mannheim resembles the timetable at the Telfer School of Management.

The academic calendar for the Fall 2017 semester was as such:

- **Enrolment Week:** August 24th – September 1st
- **Course Registration:** August 28th – September 7th
- **Orientation Sessions:** August 30th – September 1st
- **Lecture Period:** September 4th – December 8th
- **Exam Registration Period:** October 11th – October 25th
- **Exam Period:** December 9th – December 22nd

Here are a few remarks:

- The University recommends that you arrive in Mannheim **one week prior** to the start of the lecture period (I strongly recommend doing so)
- **Course registration** is very different. Some courses require you to register via the Portal and others require no registration at all. Courses with no registration, you simply show up to the lecture. Courses that require registration, you must “apply” for them and wait until the Friday of the first week of lectures to see if you have been “admitted” to the course. Intensive Seminars have a limited number of seats, so it is a completely random selection process – you may not end up with a spot in your selected courses. I would recommend “applying” to 2 – 3 extra courses just in case, and then dropping them after your course selection is finalized. Note, some lectures you will have to register for, but you are “admitted” immediately.
- **Exam Registration:** Even though you are registered in a course, you **MUST** register for the exam (whether it’s a written exam, a presentation, a paper, etc.) to write the exam and receive your credits.

There is no “reading week” or break during the fall semester in Mannheim, but there are three public holidays where classes are cancelled:

- Day of German Unity – Tuesday, October 3rd, 2017
- Reformation Day – Tuesday, October 31st, 2017
- All Saints’ Day – Wednesday, November 1st, 2017

C) Arrival Procedures

On arrival, you must enrol with the International Office. During the orientation week, you need to visit the International Office, who is responsible for incoming exchange students. You will receive plenty of detailed emails prior to your arrival explaining the documents that are required for enrolment, like letter of admission, passport, proof of insurance, etc. At this office, you will receive enrolment certificates as well as a folder full of helpful resources to find your way around the city and get involved in the school’s activities.

Once you've officially enrolled with the International Office, you will need to get your student I.D. (eCUM Card) printed. There is information on that in the folder that would will receive, and helpful signs and students who will guide you there. On the day **after** your enrolment date, you can go to the library and retrieve your login data for the student portal "Portal2".

Portal2 is where you will be able to register for your courses. You will find all the Business courses that are offered and the respective timetable. As mentioned previously, course registration is different. In most cases (mostly for the intense seminars) you will have to "apply" for a spot in the course and wait until the first Friday of classes to find out if you have been randomly assigned a seat. Other courses you will admitted automatically, guaranteeing you a seat. More information about course registration is discussed during the orientation sessions that will be taking place from Wednesday to Friday of enrolment week.

If you wish to register for a language course, you must do so through the International Office. You will receive an email from the International Office stating the registration dates for these courses and how to register for them. For me, the registration was from August 14th – August 25th. But note that there is a very limited number of spots available, so I would strongly recommend booking your language course the very minute registration opens. For language courses, a €15 fee needs to be paid once you've enrolled at the International Office.

The International Office offers a Buddy Program, where they match you with a local buddy to help you navigate the city and help you meet new friends!

On the more social side, you will receive a calendar with all the events offered by the University and different student associations, like *Visum*. Plenty of social activities are planned, like *Schlossfest*, *wein* tours, and visits to German Cities!

On the legal side, you must register with the Registration Office! They will need your passport, a registration form, and your rental agreement signed by your landlord. This is simply to advise them that you are living in the city. This is separate from your enrolment, but the International Office will remind you to do it.

D) Cost of Studying in Mannheim

Living in Mannheim is relatively cheap! Besides the plane ticket, which can come at a hefty cost, Mannheim is a cheap city to live in and is great for a student budget.

Here is a brief outline of the cost of living and studying in Mannheim:

Plane ticket (round-trip)	\$1,225
Rent (monthly)	€294
Meals	€2 - €50 – Doing your own groceries is the cheapest way to eat in Mannheim. With low food costs, you can eat 3 meals per day for about €30 – €50 per week. Healthy food is cheaper than junk food – but beer is also cheaper

than water. There are plenty of restaurants and cafes that offer great food, some for cheap, about €2 or for a nice restaurant about €20.

Daily travel

Free if you live close by and can walk to school or €165 for a Semester ticket (bus and tram pass valid within a 50-km radius) Daily tickets are anywhere between €2 to €6 depending on your destination.

Vacation

Varies! But there is a train station in Mannheim where you can buy short or long distance train tickets. Depending on your destination the prices will vary, but it is affordable. (ex: cost me €50 to go to Luxembourg and back and Switzerland €40). You need to search the internet for good deals on hotels, but usually for around €100 you'll get a nice hotel at your destination!

Textbooks

Only needed to buy one - €20. Most professors follow a textbook, but do not require the students to buy them.

Laundry

If you live in student housing, you will have to load money on you eCUM card. A full load of laundry is €3.

Cell phone

€9.99 per month, I got 2.5 GB of data, 200 minutes or texts with Vodafone. Tip – Use WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, or iMessage to communicate – it's free over Wi-Fi or data.

It is safe to say that with €6000 you can live, study, and travel extremely well! It's all on how you want to spend your money! I love to travel, so my travel costs per month ranged from €300 to €800, and made sure to save by making my own meals and walking to school. The CAD to EUR exchange rate is not the best, so when creating your budget, take this rate into consideration! The cost of €100 is \$150 - over €1000 that's an extra \$500!

E) Application Procedures Before Arrival

There are a few steps to do before your arrival in Mannheim.

If you wish to reside in the student housing, you must book your room online with the *myunima* system. Rooms are limited, so I recommend booking your room the second registration opens (for me, it was on May 10th at 2pm GERMANY time, so 8 a.m. in Ottawa). To stress this, rooms were fully booked within an hour of registration opening.

If you get a room with the student housing, you will need to pay a deposit fee. (Mine was €550) No worries, they will refund it 6-8 weeks after you move out if you fill out the refund form. The University will ask that you open a German bank account so they can directly withdraw your month's rent, but will offer for you to pay it all upfront while you are still in

Canada. I did this and saved me the hassle of opening a German bank account – but it is up to you. If you decide to wire the money from your home bank, just note that they mostly charge \$30 per transaction in fees.

As a Canadian you are not required to have a Visa to enter Germany. But know that you will need to apply for a residence permit once you arrive in Mannheim. From experience and talking with Canadians from other universities that did not get a Visa, I recommend you get a Student Visa (not a Travel Visa). This Visa will be valid for your entire stay in Mannheim, making legal matters simpler for you. To apply for a Student Visa, you must visit the German Consulate's website and book an appointment. The only Consulate you can go to is in Downtown **Toronto**! Student Visas can take up to three months to be issued, so book your appointment for May or early June (for the fall semester). Mine only took one month to get processed, but it is not always the case (the Consulate takes your passport, so if you wait too long, you won't have your passport to leave the country). The cost of a Student Visa is approximately \$95.

F) Description of Housing

I was fortunate enough to get a room in the Student Housing. The University of Mannheim is in a Palace, so the apartments are located across the City and not directly on campus.

I lived in G 7, 28, 68159 Mannheim, Germany. It is a small apartment building located in Mannheim's Downtown core about 1.2 km from the University. It is one of the closest housings to the University. The building has 4 floors with three to four flats on each floor (there is also building 26 which is right around the corner). In each flat, there are three rooms. The flat is very basic, with a washroom and a separate shower room. It has a common kitchen, equipped with four stove burners, under-the-counter fridge (with a tiny freezer), and a sink. There is NO oven. In my flat, a previous student has bought a microwave, so we had one, but it is not necessarily the case for all flats. There is a table with four chairs to eat. This flat does not have a living room. Within your room, you have all the necessary furniture for your stay! There is a decent bed, desk, two chairs, 2 dressers/wardrobes, a night stand, and your own sink and mirror! The room is a decent size, and has lots of storage. My room overlooked the backyard which is shared with the student housing building G 7, 26. The apartment has underground parking for vehicles and bikes (unsure of the price). There is also a common laundry facility, where I mentioned it cost €3 per load.

As for the cost of housing, my monthly rent is €294. It is important to know that some rental contracts start of August 1st and others on September 1st. Mine started on August 1st, even though I didn't move in until August 28th. So, I owed five months of rent instead of four. If you choose a room that has a move in date of September 1st, you will need to find a hotel to stay in for a few days prior.

The best part of this housing is its location! It is close to the school, shops, restaurants, cafes, and local, national, and international transit.

G) Comments and Recommendations

Participating in an International Exchange is extremely rewarding, but it comes with its challenges. Adapting to the culture is not overly difficult in Mannheim, as it is a busy city with lots of students – but what can be difficult is trying to navigate around without speaking the language! I was surprised, seeing as Mannheim is a decent size city, that most store and restaurant employees speak little to no English. I recommend downloading Google translate on your phone and being patient when trying to communicate something to employees or citizens. Most of the time, simply pointing is enough to be understood by the locals.

Just like in the old days in Canada, all grocery stores and merchants are closed on Sunday in Germany! Make sure to go grocery shopping on Saturday and run other errands during the week.

If you're like me, you want to travel everywhere! To do so and manage school, I would recommend trying your best to organize your classes so you don't have school every day. I only had school on Mondays and Wednesdays (and the very occasional Thursday for Intense Seminars). This allowed me to travel from Thursday to Sunday almost every week. It isn't always possible, but having Friday off at the least will give you plenty of time to travel.

Life in Mannheim is much more relaxed than in Ottawa. People don't seem to rush (except at the grocery stores) and everyone enjoys their time in cafes and restaurants.

H) Summary of Experience in Mannheim

Mannheim is an incredible city filled with plenty of restaurants, cafes, shops, and night-life. My experience here has been so rewarding by allowing me to meet lots of new people from around the world! I have learnt so much about the German culture and learnt how to relax and enjoy my time here. Being in Mannheim is ideal for world travellers, because of its proximity to France, Switzerland, and so many other countries and is centrally located in Europe! I have discovered so much about myself through my experiences in Mannheim and my travels across Europe. This International Exchange has pushed me passed my limits – and I am so thankful for it!